**FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER**

26th February 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome to our February newsletter. I hope that you have all had a lovely, restful half term and that everyone is refreshed ready for a busy second half of the spring term.

Please note events that are *underlined and in italics* are new since the previous newsletter.

**Thursday 27th February –** KS2 football festival, Book Fair in school 8:40 – 9am and 3:30 – 4pm

**Friday 28th February** –Year 4 swimming begins, Book Fair in school 8:40 – 9am and 3:30 – 4pm

**Monday 2nd March** – 6:30pm Finance and Resources Governors’ meeting, NSPCC ‘Speak Out’ Assemblies to children Book Fair in school 8:40 – 9am and 3:30 – 4pm

**Tuesday 3rd March** – Year 3 visit to Celtic Harmony 8am – 4pm, Triple P Parenting Course Session 2 (6 -8pm, Book Fair in school 8:40 – 9am and 3:30 – 4pm

**Thursday 5th March** – World Book Day come to school dressed as your favourite book character and join in with lots of fun reading activities and themes running in school, Open the Book assembly

**Friday 6th March –** NSPCC Sponsored Circuits event

**Monday 9th March** – PTA Meeting 7:30pm

**Tuesday 10th March** – Triple P Parenting Course Session 3 ( 6 -8pm)

**Wednesday 11th March** – Year 4 Swimming Festival

**Friday 13th March** – Design an egg competition begins, KS1 Multi-skills Festival

**Monday 16th March** – British Science Week begins, Curriculum, Learning and Standards Governors’ Meeting at 6:30pm

**Tuesday 17th March** – Triple P Parenting Course Session 4 (6 – 8pm)

**Wednesday 18th March** – Year 3 Sharing assembly to parents and Year 4 – 3pm

**Thursday 19th March** –Year 4 trip to Verulamium, Open the Book Assembly

***Friday 20th March*** *– Rotakids Bake Sale*

**Monday 23rd March** – Full Governors meeting – 6:30pm

**Tuesday 24th March** – Year 2 sharing assembly to Year 1and parents at 3pm

**Wednesday 25th March** – NSPCC Assembly to children, Height and Weight for FS children

***Friday 27th March –*** *Saltmine Theatre Company in school (am), PTA Discos*

***Saturday 28th March*** *– Ladybirds Easter Fete*

**Monday 30th March –** Year 3 Netball Festival, Easter Assembly to children

**Thursday 2nd April** – Open the Book Assembly, Egg Judging Day

**Friday 3rd April** – Easter breakfast morning 8am – 10:30am, Easter hunt (gifts from PTA), Easter Raffle drawn, Break up for Easter at 3:30pm

**Easter Holiday 6th April to 17th April 2020**

**Monday 20th April –** INSET Day – NO CHILDREN AT SCHOOL

**Tuesday 21st April –** All children back at school today, , 9am and 2:45pm Parent Helper sessions

**Wednesday 22nd April** – Y4 Bikeability and Y2 Scooterbility, Big Pedal begins

**Thursday 23rd April** - St George’s Day (Cubs and Scouts can wear their uniform to school), Y4 Bikeability and Y2 Scooterbility, *Pbone lessons for all Year 4 children every Thursday this term*

**Friday 24th April** - 9am Condover Hall Year 4 Residential Trip meeting, Year 4 Bikeability, Year 2 Scooterbility

***Monday 27th April –*** *Finance and Resources Governors meeting at 6:30pm*

***Thursday 30th April –*** *Open the Book Assembly, Outdoor learning day*

***Monday 4th May –*** *Russell Lower School VE Celebration Day (more information to follow)*

***Tuesday 5th May to Thursday 7th May –*** *Year 4 Residential to Condover Hall*

***Thursday 7th May –*** *Police and Crime Commissioner Elections – SCHOOL OPEN*

***Friday 8th May –*** *BANK HOLIDAY – SCHOOL CLOSED*

***Tuesday 12th May –*** *Year 4 Quadkids, Year 3 Faith Tour*

***Thursday 14th May –*** *Open the Book Assembly*

***Monday 18th May –*** *Walk to school week*

***Wednesday 20th May –*** *Y4 Kwik Cricket*

**Please see the school website for more dates beyond this**

**More detailed information on the above events will follow in due course**

**Keeping in touch:**

Please be aware that we now have the technology to send the main contact on a child’s new starter form a ‘Text Message Alert’. This is something parents have been asking for, to use for reminders and updates. For example, if a school trip is going to be back late we can text you and let you know. Mrs Summerfield plans to test this after half term, so we will let you know how it goes. In the meantime, please download the Eschools App (if you haven’t already – it is the same one we use for booking parents’ evening appointments) as this will enable us to send the messages free of charge, saving school money to spend on the children. Thank you in advance.

**Governor Update and election:**

As you know, we had a vacancy for a Parent Governor recently. I would very much like to thank Mr Day for stepping forward at this time. The governors and I look forward to working hard with Mr Day to continue to make Russell Lower School the best school it can possibly be.

**Snack Policy:**

As you will have seen from my letter sent out just before half term, we intend to get ‘stricter’ with our snack policy. As you know, children are provided with a piece of fruit or vegetable from the government every day in FS/KS1.  Also, children are allowed to bring in their own piece of fruit, chopped vegetables or a piece of cheese as a 'home' snack in each year group.  These are the only options for a 'home snack'.  Fruit winders, cereal bars, yoghurt bars, popcorn etc. are not allowed.  This is because we are a NUT FREE SCHOOL, we want to be fair on everyone, but also because we know from experience that for policies to be effective they need to be very clear and simple.  A food type is either 'allowed' or 'not allowed' otherwise we lose a lot of precious school time discussing it as you can imagine! The snack initiative was brought into schools to get an additional one of children's '5 a day' not because children get hungry.  The very essence of the idea is that children who may not choose fruit and vegetables naturally, will do so because it is all that is on offer and they see other children doing it.  Of course, if there is a medical reason why your child needs additional food during the school day, this can be accommodated with prior discussion. Please support us with this policy.  We will be returning snacks that do not meet this criteria home. Thank you in advance.

**CHUMS – Shine Bright. Wear Bright – Friday 14th February**

Thank you for your support on the last Friday of half term. Lots of us wore very bright attire and raised £258 for this very worthy cause.

**Book Fair in school:**

From Thursday 27th to Tuesday 3rd March, both before and after school (8:40 – 9am and 3:30 – 4pm) yet again the book fair will be in place near the library/kitchen serving hatch. Please do come along and spend your book tokens. Reading is a wonderful habit to foster – and it raises money for school to buy more books too! Thank you in advance for your support. A big thank you to the office staff, Mrs Summerfield, Mrs Appleby and Mrs Bremner for running this for us.

**Behaviour and play update:**

As you know, we are committed to ensuring all children experience positive playtimes that are happy, creative and stimulating, and where all children demonstrate care and respect for each other and the equipment and environment. We organise games and toys for the children to use during lunchtimes and we have certainly seen calmer play as a result of this and the new outdoor gym in KS2.

However, there is still a small minority of children who want to play rough and aggressive chasing games. We intervene and stop these sorts of games in order to avoid injuries and we have a zero tolerance policy towards aggression, bullying and hurting others. We will continue to support children to make good choices during these times. Please could you also support us by talking to your child about the choices that they make on the playground? We believe that working in partnership with parents and giving the same message is the best approach. Thank you in advance.

**New Outdoor Gym and Artificial Grass:**

A massive thank you to everyone who has supported us to raise enough money to be able to install the outdoor gym and grass. The PTA have been an incredible support in transforming the outdoor areas around school – and continue to do so. Thank you! We also spent a large portion of our Sport Premium on this (some of it known as the ‘sugar tax) as well as some school money too. This was a huge joint effort – a big thank you goes to everyone.

Please do now support us with instilling the rules into the children to ensure it is used safely and stays in good condition. Please ensure no one uses the equipment before or after school please, and equally children do not dive, roll or skid on the artificial grass.

**Triple P Parenting Course – The Positive Parenting Programme**

Don’t worry if you missed the first one – come and join us for the others!

We are very lucky to have been able to secure some in-house training around positive parenting (Triple P) and would like to offer you the chance to attend this much sought after course. The seminars are an introduction to the strategies of Triple P through a series of four seminars. These are talks that will provide you with some valuable strategies and knowledge around positive parenting as well as enable you to hear from and share with other parents in a friendly and supportive environment.

**We think it’s really helpful for every parent**

Each seminar content aims to support parents to improve relationships with their children, set boundaries, develop effective responses to poor behaviour and effectively plan for future behaviour.

**Let’s be honest, it’s the hardest job in the World!**

Look out for the separate letter coming out soon and save the dates (all Tuesdays and all in the main hall at Russell 6 – 8pm):

* 25th February
* 3rd March
* 10th March
* 17th March

**PE/Festival news:**

Festivals coming up this half term are:

* KS1 Multiskills festival
* Year 3 football
* Year 3 netball

You will be contacted via letter if you child/ren has been selected to attend one of these festivals.

This half term the children will be working on a variety of areas including dance, gymnastics and games skills including attacking, defending and shooting. Year 4 will also begin their swimming lessons this half term, where they will receive 6 sessions at Flitwick Leisure Centre.

**Coming Soon:**

VE Day celebrations at school (on Monday 4th May) and in Ampthill (Friday 8th May)

Please see below Ampthill’s initial plans to celebrate 75 years since Victory in Europe Day.

The Flitton Potato Race and Tatties in Buckets Competition – please see below for more family fun events

Thank you for taking the time to read this newsletter, and for your on-going support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs. N. Walker

Headteacher





