

Leeming RAF Primary School

Newsletter



June 2018

Dear All,

We are rapidly nearing the end of term, but so much has been going on that I thought it was worth trying to squeeze in another quick newsletter now! The hot weather has brought a lovely feeling of summery joy to the school, although sticky children and sleepy afternoons are an unfortunate side effect! The end of term play practices are in full swing, and June has also seen some great visits and experiences for the children.

The month started with some brilliant Key Stage 2 trips to the Dane Law centre. The children had a fabulous time and came home brimming with facts and stories of their experiences, not to mention some rather super clay pots that they'd made (and subsequently painted). There have been some great 'stone age stories' being written, based on the characters that they encountered, and fantastic drama going on too!

We also saw the installation of the long awaited Trim Trail, as funded by the RAF Benevolent Fund. This was much needed, and has been a long time in coming; the children have been writing persuasive letters to me for a while to try to bend my ear to invest in a new trail... It's been a great opportunity to model the impact of pupil voice to the children; we've worked hard to secure the grant funding required, and particular thanks go to all involved in this. Kate Davies (one of our governors) and Mrs. Scott in the office both worked tirelessly on securing the funding and getting the trail in place; my thanks also to Simon Lewis who helped remove the old, condemned trail, and to everyone who contributed to the launch event. The children are loving the challenge of the new trail, which becomes progressively harder and more physically demanding as it goes along – this was evident when some of the staff tried it on the first night...

June saw a visit from Laura Samuel, British Triple Jump champion and Commonwealth medallist. She came in to work with the children for the afternoon to really inspire them. She was superb; the pupils responded really well as she put them through their paces on circuits and demonstrated the amazing challenge, and thrill, of being involved in the highest levels of competitive sport. The visit really was inspirational, and I know many of the pupils were genuinely enthused with a new attitude of determination to aspire!

I was also hugely privileged to attend an event at the Houses of Parliament, along with three of our Year 4 pupils and Mrs. Clark last week. We were invited by the office of the Children's Commissioner, following a contribution we made to a report 'Kin and Country' that she compiled into the experiences and lives of service pupils in the UK. Dozens of schools were involved, but we were one of only three invited to the launch of the report. As part of the day, we were able to visit the London Eye, tour the Houses of Commons and the Lords, meet our local MP Rishi Sunak (who kindly bought us all tea and cake!), and the children were able to ask questions of a panel of MPs (including Defence and Shadow Defence ministers) regarding the features of the report. We were also featured on BFBS in an article, in which the children represented themselves brilliantly. This was a real opportunity to have a 'voice' at the highest levels of government and policy – and for children to see democracy and citizenship in action. It was a really proud moment for me, as the headteacher, to listen to our children (who were the youngest there) challenge MPs and leaders to act to do more to support military families, in terms of deployments, schooling, housing and welfare. See the **Videos** tab on the website for both the BFBS article and a montage of our day!

Lunch Alternatives – a quick reminder that, if your child doesn't like the choice on the menu, other options are available. If you want them to have a jacket potato, please order this 48 hours in advance via the office. If you want them to have a sandwich (ham, egg or cheese), this can be ordered on the day. We do encourage all children to take up school dinners – Mrs. Taylor does a great job and they are delicious and nutritious!

MSAs – staying with the lunch theme, we are short of MSAs (Midday Supervisory Assistants) at the moment. If you would be interested in working as an MSA, please contact the office and Mrs. Scott will discuss this with you. We also say farewell and thank you to Marion Greenwood who has been our kitchen assistant and wish her all the best as the family are posted.

Private Fostering during Deployments – a reminder to all parents that if your child is living with someone who is not a close family member (parent, grandparent, brothers/ sisters, uncles/ aunts, step-parents) for 28 days or more, this is classed as a 'private fostering' arrangement. If this is the case, you must notify the Children and Families' Service. *Please note, that a parent's unmarried partner is not a step parent in this context.* We are aware the such situations do arise, especially during deployments, and just ask that parents notify the Local Authority by calling 01609 780780 and let the school know. Many thanks.

Tesco 'Bags of Help' Scheme – please pop your blue tokens in our box when you're in Tescos in Thirsk, Northallerton and Bedale. The grant application states that this is for a 'trim trail' – in case anyone is confused, this is not the same one as we have just had built! This is to renew our *Early Years* trim trail and outdoor area, which is in desperate need of some TLC and improvement. We could receive as much as £4000 if we are the 'most popular' in the public vote (via the coupons), so please spread the word on social media, and ensure that every token gets dropped in our slot! Many thanks!

Mental Health – we have recently been undertaking some staff training on supporting children's mental health and wellbeing via the 'Compass Buzz' scheme. One of the key aspects of this related to awareness raising – and ensuring that *all* members of the school community (children, parents, staff etc.) feel able to openly discuss mental health issues without stigma or embarrassment. 1 in 4 people will suffer from mental illness at some point in their lives. Please support us by helping to create a climate of openness in which such issues can be discussed. If you wish to talk to someone about this in school, please contact the office, or myself and we can try to direct you to sources of support.

End of term, 2pm – a reminder that we will break up on Friday 20th at 2pm. Please collect your children at this point. If you are unable to pick up your children, please notify the office and we will care for them until the normal end of the school day; however, I encourage you all to start the holidays and enjoy the sunshine!

And Finally...

I rather enjoyed a moment during the launch of the Trim Trail when, whilst I was standing *next to* Ben the Elephant (the Ben Fund mascot) who was waving happily, one of our Year one children looked at me and said "Is it you in that elephant suit?"! I know I try to be in two places at once, but that would be some serious superpower!

Best regards,



Rob Campbell
Headteacher

