



*Learning to encourage, aspire,
persevere and succeed.*

SINCLAIR PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

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Dear Families

As we embark on our shared journey into 2024, it is with great excitement and anticipation that we extend a warm 'welcome back' to each member of our school community. The start of 2024 marks not only the beginning of a new year, but also a fresh chapter filled with hope, possibilities and opportunities for learning and growing as a family. As we come together with renewed energy and commitment, let us collectively embrace the challenges and triumphs that lie ahead, fostering a spirit of togetherness and excellence that defines our mission to fulfill our calling to be Architects of a Better World.

Charity Collection

To add to the festivities on our Christmas dinner day, the children and staff contributed to a charity called, Save the Children through having a day where the children could choose to wear a Christmas jumper to school. Coinciding with the school Christmas dinner this helped to make the hall feel very colourful and festive indeed. Not only did everyone enjoy a delicious special menu for the day, but the school collected an astonishing amount of food items for our local food banks. Thank you for your generous donations. The charities were very appreciative.

House Competitions

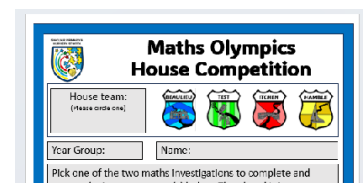
This half term, our houses have a variety of opportunities to earn house-points, support charities, make links with the community and compete in a sporting event.

Charity Focus: We will be growing seedlings to sell once they have germinated later in spring using our £5 challenge money. We are also raising money for the School Council's chosen charity: NSPCC

Creative Challenge: We are designing some Poetry themed art to be used to decorate our library with some of the best pieces being donated to our local library.

Academic Contest: Maths Olympics is a challenge to do some problem solving at home. Every entry earns a house point and correct answers earn double!

Physical Competition: This half term the children are competing in their year groups in a house Dodgeball tournament.



Reading Quiz & Poetry by Heart

Our KS2 children will be taking part in a competition to be held at Mansel Park Primary School. They will be answering questions about books, authors, and their stories. Eight children from years five and six have been specially selected to take part. If they do well, we may be able to enter in the national competition too!

POETRY BY
HEART

We are also very excited that all pupils in school will be participating in 'Poetry by Heart' during the spring term. We are holding our own partnership version of this national event where every year group is attempting to learn two poems (short and long) off by heart. Each class will be recorded and some who have done particularly well will be selected to be our school finalists and will be entered into the national competition. All classes will also be performing their poems in a special event that parents will be invited to in the second half of the spring term. You can find out more about the competition here: <https://www.poetrybyheart.com>

National Literacy Trust

We were thrilled to have received a trophy from the National Literacy Trust and Penguin Books, to celebrate our work on the Chase Rewarding Futures School Libraries Programme.

As part of the scheme, school staff received training from the National Literacy Trust to support promotion of reading for pleasure and of reading across the curriculum. Chase Bank also funded a substantial number of books for our school library as well as donating shelving and seating, to ensure our library is well stocked, comfy and cosy!



Curriculum and Enrichment

Nursery

In nursery this month, we have been welcoming more new friends. It has been lovely watching the current children show their kind and caring manners 'nursery love' towards our new friends. We really are one big happy and loving nursery family. Please say a warm welcome to our new friends and their parents if you see them at the beginning or end of the nursery day.

We have been exploring winter this month as it has been the perfect weather to really help us understand and engage in hands-on experiences. With the recent freezing temperatures, we even experienced a little snow! We have loved exploring pretend snow and watching what happens when we drop ice on the playground floor. Recently we have been reading and talking about the traditional tale, The Three Little Pigs. We have been practising our best 'big bad wolf' voices and 'little pig' voices when exploring the story with our nursery practitioners.

The practitioners at nursery are continuing to support the children with developing their self-care and independence. With this in mind, we have been teaching the children the 'whoosh and swoosh' method when putting on a coat. Please ask a member of the nursery team to show you how to use this method at home.

Nursery have a growing collection of unlabelled clothing, please label your child's clothing so we can safely get them back to you. If you have lost an item of clothing, please ask a nursery practitioner to look through the lost property with you.

Year R

Year R children have had a lovely Spring Term. Our role play corner has been transformed into a Chinese New Year house and the children have loved playing in it. We have learnt all about Chinese New Year, role played the story of the animals and made labels. In writing we have been looking at stories by Jill Murphy including *Peace at Last*, *Five Minutes Peace*, *Piece of Cake* and *Whatever Next!* We have linked these to our units of work and written party invitations for our own versions of the story. We looked at the book *Oi Frog!* and wrote our own rhymes. In mathematics, we have been learning how to tell and read the time to o'clock. We have been looking at adding, repeating patterns and ordinal numbers. We loved racing our toy cars and giving them a 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th rosette. We had a fantastic visit from the teddy bears hospital. They taught us all about the importance of healthy eating and about the different parts of our body. We learnt about how doctors can help us when we are sick and we got to use some of the doctor's tools on our teddy bears.

Year 1

Year 1 have been working consistently hard this term and making lots of progress in their reading, writing and mathematics. In English, we have been writing WANTED posters about the Gruffalo who has been spotted getting up to mischief in the school. Luckily, our posters have warned everybody he is on the loose and included a description of what he looks like and what naughty things he has done! Our next task is to write our own Gruffalo story.

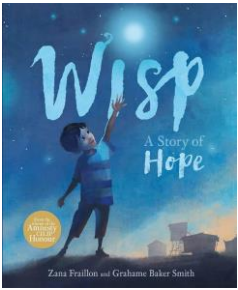


In maths, we have been learning about place value to 20 and adding numbers by counting on. In other subjects such as D.T. we have started to investigate mechanisms and created our own gingerbread men sliders. The class have really enjoyed learning about the continents in Geography and specifically what life is like in Africa. Well done Year 1 you have made a great start to the New Year!

Year 2

Since our return from the Christmas holidays, Year 2 has been exceptionally busy, engaging in a variety of enriching activities. We had the fire service visit, who taught us about the critical importance of fire alarms and equipped us with essential knowledge on handling fire emergencies. In mathematics, we've been learning about multiplication and division, which has been building upon the knowledge acquired in Year 1. This has allowed us to deepen our understanding of these concepts. Our focus in writing has centered around crafting suspenseful narratives and in order to do this we've paid attention to setting descriptions and considered their impact on the reader's experience. The ever-popular phonics workshops, held once a fortnight, continue to be a favourite with the children. These sessions provide an engaging and interactive platform for enhancing phonetic awareness and literacy skills. We've showcased our artistic talents by creating chequered flags through the application of weaving skills. Inspired by the book, *The Snow Day*, we've also brought our own skiers to life, combining literature with hands-on creativity.

Year 3



During the spring term, we have become explorers of Ancient Egypt. How did they build the pyramids? Who discovered Tutankhamun? What did Ancient Egyptians invent? We have been finding out! As explorers, we have been getting into the role of people living during this time, from Pharaohs to priests to peasants. What a wonderful and different life they lived! Our most interesting debate this term has been around who built the pyramids? The children were exceptionally eloquent in explaining their opinions and were able to improve valuable speaking and listening skills at the same time.

In writing, we have been exploring a text called, *Wisp - A Story of Hope*. The illustrations are beautiful, sharing a story of hopelessness turning into hopefulness. The colours, rich vocabulary and illustrations have helped us to gain a clearer understanding of what hope is. As the topic has progressed, we have been linking the theme of hope to refugees. We care deeply as a school about being a School of Sanctuary and had a great opportunity to explore the concept in more depth – having rich discussions about our wider world has helped us to develop our empathy. We can't wait to share our final poems with you all.

Year 4

Year 4 had an excellent start to the New Year and have been excited to explore a range of fantasy and spooky settings to encourage use of figurative techniques. They have loved getting to write similes and using personification to describe the intriguing wizarding world, specifically the magical town of Diagon Alley. We are all very excited to create our final drafts of our writing next week and publish what has been an excellent writing journey.

Another thrilling topic was the Vikings and their invasion of Lindesfarne. The children have been having exciting debates over whether the Vikings can be remembered as brutal savages or a skilled civilisation. Since our lesson uncovering a range of items from Viking excavations, 21 out of 30 children have been persuaded that they were, according to our majority judgement, a civilised society! We have explored a range of non-fiction texts in reading, one of our favourites being, *Viking Voyagers*, showcasing beautiful pages full of intriguing Viking facts.

Year 5

In Year 5 we have been exploring living things in science. We have worked hard on understanding the lifecycle of both animals and plants, from variations of birth to full grown adults. It has been particularly interesting seeing how garlic can grow and sprout without an insect for pollination. In English, we have been understanding the vast, majestic wilderness of Alaska and creating settings that inspire awe and wonder within the reader. We have loved investigating the landscape and recognising our own emotions, responding to beautiful mountains and stunning valleys. In mathematics, we have been investigating fractions. We can now confidently find equivalent fractions, simplify and convert between mixed and improper fractions. Soon, we will be adding, subtracting and multiplying, using our accumulated knowledge.

Year 6

In writing, we have written an action-packed narrative of the Macbeth story: some children focused on a battle scene whereas others delved into Macbeth's mind to understand his feelings. Our work in mathematics has focused around ratio, fractions and algebra. The links the children have made between this have been encouraging and enabled them to be flexible in their approach to problem solving where these concepts are required. Our geography topic has been explosive! We have enjoyed learning about natural disasters such as volcanoes and understanding what causes them as well as the impact caused. We have had a particular moral question to investigate related to the White Island tourist incident off the coast of New Zealand. We have discovered that it is not easy to predict eruptions but that organisations also have a duty to safeguard the people they serve. In science, we have been looking at the history of evolution and understanding how we have gathered this knowledge about our past. We are very proud of the progress made by the children so far this year.



Year 6 Residential to Skern Lodge

Year 6 are becoming very excited about the residential to Skern Lodge in July. Many parents are paying in regular instalments and I would like to thank you for ensuring these are up to date. Full payment needs to be made by **Thursday 28th March 2024**, as Skern requires payment at this time.



REMINDERS

Lateness

We appreciate the commitment from the vast majority of our parents who ensure their children arrive promptly for registration and collect them promptly at the end of the day. This substantially reduces stress and anxiety for the children. We also appreciate that on occasion traffic and extenuating circumstances mean that lateness is unavoidable. Should you need to make alternative arrangements for the collection of your child at the end of the day please ensure you telephone the school office before 3.00pm. Our admin team are unable to leave the office after this time unless in an emergency.

Leave of Absence from School

Penalty notices will be issued for family holidays taken in term time or for 5 unauthorised days off over half a term. If you are planning to take your child out of school during term time please ensure you complete a leave of absence form, which you can collect from the school office. It is important that we know where your child is if they are not in school. Many thanks.

Start and end of the day

At the start of the day children can enter the building from 8.20am for an 8.30am start to our day. In order to ensure the safe handover of children at the end of the day, please put in writing any alternative adult you give permission, to collect your child/children and give to the school office. Teachers will be teaching and may not remember slips of paper and new instructions.

School packed lunches

Children having a packed lunch are encouraged to bring a healthy lunch box. Please do not include sweets and chocolate. The amount you put in your child's lunch box should be what they would usually eat for a sandwich type lunch. Please name your child's lunch box! And remember we are a NUT FREE school.



Pip and Pap Workshops



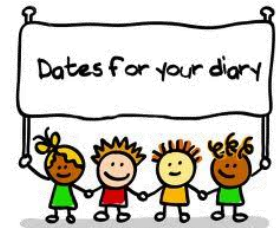
A reminder of the remaining dates of the Pip and Pap workshops for spring term:

Thursdays: 1st February, 29th February, 14th March and 28th March

These all start at 2:45pm and are for Year R, Year 1 and Year 2.

Dates for your Diary

- Thursday 1st February – Coffee morning and preloved uniform swap
-Our Mental Health in School Lead will be available to meet with parents.
- 12th – 16th February – Spring half-term
- 19th – 23rd February – Bikeability for Year 5
- Thursday 7th March – World Book Day
- Monday 11th March – Year 2 Duckling kits arriving
- Wednesday 27th March – Poetry by Heart parents' performances (2:30pm start)
- Friday 15th March – Y1-Y6 Reports out to parents
- Friday 22nd March – INSET day (school closed)
- Friday 29th March – Good Friday
- 1st April – 12th April – Easter holidays
- Monday 6th May – May Day bank holiday
- Tuesday 21st May – Tempest class photos
- 27th – 31st May – Summer half-term
- 3rd and 4th June – INSET days (school closed)
- 11th – 17th June – Scholastics Book Fair
- 8th – 12th July – Year 6 Residential trip to Skern Lodge
- Wednesday 24th July – Last day of Summer term



Have a wonderful term!



Gerida Montague

Executive Headteacher