

FROM THE HEAD TEACHER...

Welcome to the first addition of 'Headlines,' my first newsletter to parents and carers. This publication is designed to enhance communication by providing timely information and to celebrate the many **successes that our children achieve**. I will also use it to inform parents of what the school is doing to improve and how it is working in effective collaboration with the Trust, NPAT. Headlines will be issued twice per term, every three weeks. From term 5, it will be distributed through School Comms and the noticeboard and on our new school website (to be launched at the beginning of term 5). Watch this space...

Upcoming dates:

- 3 Feb – Y6 at Newton Fields
- 4 Feb – Class 3 & 4 visit St Peter's Church, Weston Favell
- 8-9 Feb – SEN Audit
- 9 Feb – Motivate Recording Day with John Bowman
- 15-19 Feb – Half Term
- 24 Feb – Phonics information sessions for Parents/Carers
- 25 Mar-8 Apr – Easter Break
- 11 Apr – Teacher Training Day

Again, I would like to thank you for your warm welcome. I recognise that from speaking to you on the playground, at TLCs and at Parent Forum last week, that I am leading a school that is highly regarded. I look forward to taking it further forward. My priority as a Head is to ensure that children love coming to school and develop as effective learners, responsible citizens and confident individuals. I will ensure that we achieve this by offering an exciting, ambitious and engaging curriculum that meets the needs of all children. It is our shared vision to 'Pursue academic, artistic, athletic and pastoral excellence for all' and within the wider NPAT family of schools that Headlands is proud to be a part of, we want our 'Extraordinary children doing extraordinary things.' I have the privilege of working with an amazing, highly committed team who are making the vision a reality.

Whilst we can be immensely proud of so many things that Headlands achieves for the children, we do need to improve the school's academic achievements when compared with schools nationally. In this regard, we have made some immediate changes by having three classes for English and maths in Year 5 and 6. Our amazing Year 6 team are supporting the year group intensely to ensure that they leave Headlands able to access the secondary curriculum. The children are rising to our grand expectations admirably! We are also introducing a new approach to reading and writing in the early years, this will be built on by a rigorous approach to spelling and the technical understanding of English throughout the school. In maths we are working with the Trust on a mastery approach to the subject. The school is being supported with this through training and coaching. Further details of these initiatives and how you can support your child will follow shortly.

The new initiatives in maths and English will enhance the foundations for learning by ensuring that children have the tools to explore and be creative within the wider curriculum. We will be doing lots of inspiring things in all aspects of school life. We will be working together on whole school projects, including parents in the learning process. We will also continue and enhance how our older children support and nurture the younger ones. Exciting times.

My intention is to be accessible, open and honest as we take our school into the future together, to ensure the best possible outcomes for all of our great children.

Darren





Children enjoying the new approach to early reading

A NEW APPROACH TO EARLY READING AND WRITING

To improve the outcomes for children in early reading and writing for children in Reception and Year 1, we have introduced a new strategy- Read, Write Inc. This radical new approach will ensure that all of our children, by the end of Year 1, will be competent and confident readers. This is an ambitious statement that I am confident can be realised. We will inspire the children and nurture a love of reading by immersing them in quality books and by cherishing storytimes. All staff in Reception and Key Stage 1 have been trained and we started the new approach last week with great success. The children are really enjoying it. Last year 67% of our children achieved a pass in the phonics check. Nationally, 78% achieved the standard and so the school needed to take a different, proven approach to ensure children’s ability and confidence to read is achieved at an

early age. This has an impact on how we would like parents and carers to support reading at home. We would therefore like to invite you to an information session on **Wednesday 24 February at 2.00pm and 6.30pm**. We would strongly urge you to attend. A letter will be sent out before the end of term. We look forward to parents and carers engaging with this new, exciting project.

‘I like learning new sounds and I like Fred Frog.’

Kian

IMPROVING SPELLING

We have identified the need to improve how we teach spelling from Year 2 upwards. Our new spelling strategy, that all teachers have been trained on, will ensure children understand spelling patterns and conventions. A short 15 minute spelling lesson will be taught each day to teach new skills and to practice them. By assessing children we recognise that within Key Stage 2, children are at different stages with their spellings. Teachers will group the children to enable gaps to be plugged quickly, to enable children to be at least working at year group expectations. Ultimately, as children become more secure with their spelling, they will be more confident to use more expressive language in the wider curriculum. This new strategy will have an impact on how we would like parents to support at home. Further rationale and how parents can support will be sent to parents before we start the strategy next week.

-----✂-----✂-----✂-----✂-----

NAME THE TEDDY- OUR NEW SCHOOL MASCOT

On Friday I introduced our new school mascot to the children. He/she is yet unnamed! Teddy will accompany the children on all of the outside school events that we take part in. Teddy will have his/her own display board to show all that the children have been up to. Please help your child to consider an appropriate name for teddy. School Council will consider all entries and decide before the end of term. Suggestions to be posted in the green letterbox at the front of the school. Closing date: Friday 5th February.

I think that our new school mascot should be called:

Suggested by:

Class:



UNIFORM EXPECTATIONS

The school colours of royal blue and gold are well established. It is great to see that the majority of children are dressed appropriately in school uniform. They look incredibly smart and is a further sign of their readiness to learn. However, a significant minority of children are wearing a variation to what is expected. I thought it would be useful, therefore, to state what the uniform expectations are and from after the upcoming holiday, we will be expecting children to be dressed appropriately.

School uniform is:

Royal blue school sweatshirt/ cardigan with logo	Gold polo top with logo
Grey trousers	Grey skirt
Grey tights	Black shoes (definitely not trainers)

Please note that the following items are **not** expected to be worn as uniform:

Any black clothing (skirts/ trousers)	Trainers
Tight leggings/ jeggings	

Please also note that if you wish your child to wear a headscarf for religious reasons, then this item must be royal or navy blue. Headscarves must not have any embellishments, such as diamante decoration etc.

If your child has shoulder length hair, then please for health and safety reasons, ensure that it is tied back in a pony tail.

Jewellery is also not expected to be worn although watches are permitted. Nail varnish and other make up is not expected to be worn and again for health and safety reasons, children must only wear stud earrings. Such earrings must be removed by the child for PE. (We expect that if children have their ears pierced, then this should be done at the start of the summer holidays, so that they can be removed independently by the child when they return to school.)

As you are aware, we operate a second hand uniform shop from the music room located on the top playground on a Thursday morning. Our school uniform can be readily purchased at the uniform shop in town.

As you will appreciate, the presentation of all of the children collectively is really important and contributes to children feeling proud of being a part of the school with a strong identity. I have asked staff to keep a close check on uniform and we thank you for your support with this.

NPAT (NORTHAMPTON PRIMARY ACADEMY TRUST)

The school continues to work in partnership with the Trust. Presently, we are working collaboratively on an assessment programme following on from 'Life without levels'. We continue to work with a very respected consultant, Sarah White on a whole school approach to maths and with Anna Carter on 'Drama for learning'. The Trust are also presenting a show at the Derngate on the theme of 'Dreams.' More details about this nearer the time.

A FINAL WORD...

At parent forum last week and with staff at the beginning of term, I used the following quote from the American author Henry David Thoreau. It describes the ambition that we all share for the children at Headlands Primary School. We will ensure that with every exciting thing we do, in all aspects of school life, that we will first build the secure foundations to ensure that EVERY child thrives and achieves their potential.

If you build castles in the air, your work need not be lost; that is where they should be. Now put the foundations under them.

Henry David Thoreau, American author 1817-1862

SAFEGUARDING

It is of paramount importance that we safeguard the wellbeing of all of our children as our number one priority. I would, therefore, like to inform parents that I (Darren Smith, Head Teacher) am the Designated Lead for Child Protection. In my absence, Sue Heasman (Family Support Worker) will be the point of contact. In the unlikely absence of both Sue and I, Carol Clarke will be the point of contact. If you have any concern about a child's wellbeing, please do not hesitate in contacting us in the strictest of confidence.

Safeguarding Children



“Our school is committed unreservedly to safeguarding and protecting all of our children.”

Designated child protection members of our staff are:-

Mr Darren Smith
Headteacher



Mrs Sue Heasman
Family Support Worker



Mrs Carol Clarke
Unit Phase Leader