

# Hillside Newsletter



17th February 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

They do say, time flies when you're having fun, and this half term we have had lots of fun learning opportunities. I can't believe we're nearly at the end of February!

This half term we've had a fabulous Science Week and the children have enjoyed our visiting Scientist who came in to do many exciting experiments including making slime, understanding energy and much more.

As well as our science week, Year 5 have visited Reading Museum to support their Creative Curriculum learning. The children dressed up as Victorian school children, took part in a Victorian Treasure Hunt and learnt more about the history of Reading. The children in Year 1 have been learning to ride bikes with the Bikeability team and Year 2 have been making cars for their Whacky Races project. Year 2 were also very privileged to have a 100 year old motor car visit the school to compare how differently cars are made today. A huge thank you to Ellie's Grandad for sharing his historical car with the children.

Last week, the school underwent a Peer Review by 4 Head teacher's from the Future Thinking Partnership, of which we are part of. This was a rigorous assessment of the school's outcomes and school improvement priorities. I am pleased to say the day was very successful and the visiting head teachers were very impressed by our school, especially our fantastic children.

The head teachers agreed with the areas we are prioritising on improving, especially the focus we have on improving boys' writing outcomes. Nationally, boys do not perform as well as girls in writing and we are working hard to close the gender gap in this area. If you are a parent of a boy, we would ask you to support your son with this target by encouraging them to write more at home. Try the following: Make writing purposeful e.g. write a film review/poster on something recently seen at the cinema or on TV. Make notes and draw diagrams about models they make. Boys often need more breaks when writing, so try incorporating 5 minute rests when writing. Have a word bank available to support with the spellings and don't focus too much on the handwriting, praise the content. Also, try writing one sentence each and creating a list of fantastic words that can be used in their writing. Just as important in improving writing, is the amount of exposure children have to good quality stories. Not just stories they read to themselves but stories you read to your children. Take time to discuss the quality of the grammar, punctuation in stories and magpie (borrow) great words to be used in their own writing. If you have any further questions about writing please talk to your child's class teacher or ask at Parents Evening.

**Mrs Morris, Headteacher**

## SPELLING AT HILLSIDE

It has been really great to see all the children in year 2 up to year 6 enjoying their new spelling scheme 'Read, Write Inc. Spelling'. Your child's log book should be coming home with them every day with a list of words, which they update regularly, to learn and apply the spelling rules at home. It has been great to see the interaction between the resources used in class and observing children articulate the spelling rules. If you have any questions regarding the new scheme then please do come and see me or make an appointment with the office and I'll be happy to answer them.

**Miss Barnwell, Leader of Teaching and Learning**

Last week was **National Story Telling Week** and some of the staff wanted to share with you their favourite children's books.

Miss Crye; The Giving Tree by Shel Silverstein

Mrs Morris; Folk of the Faraway Tree

Miss Barnwell; Secret Garden

Mrs Cox; The Gruffalo

Mrs Jewell; Charlotte's Web

Mrs Yarrow; Dogger Mrs Beeton; Only one Woof

Mrs Monger; Kensuke Kingdom

Mrs Hinatchi; Charlie and the Chocolate Factory

Miss Dellman; Green Eggs and Ham

Mr Yapp; Wiffy Wilson the wolf who wouldn't wash

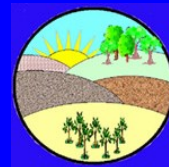
Mrs Binks; Giraffe, Pelly and Me

Mrs Collins; Matilda

Have you read all of these? The week of the 27th February is Book Week at Hillside and there will be an opportunity to dress up as your favourite character so get thinking !!

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## VALUES BASED EDUCATION

Alongside House Points that are given out to children, we have introduced gold Star Tokens. Star Tokens are given to children who demonstrate our school values of Resilience, Respect, Learning, Independence or Collaboration. These value tokens are added to our House Point collection tubes. Star tokens are worth 10 house points, The House points are counted every two weeks and the winners are declared in assembly. The House with the most weekly wins, earns their house a non-uniform day at the end of each half term. Our Value for Spring 2 is **Learning**. We will be focusing on the different ways we learn.

A Hillside parent has donated 10 free tickets to the John Farnworth Live showcase next week. John is a World Champion and Guinness record breaking football freestyler. The live shows are Wednesday 22nd February 2017 Maiden Erlegh School, Earley (Main Hall) 5:30-6:30pm & 7:30-8:30pm. If you are interested please contact Mr Pyle ([lester@tekkersfootball.co.uk](mailto:lester@tekkersfootball.co.uk))



## STOP AND DROP

Please be reminded that this facility may only be used by parents who have gained permission via the office. To maintain the safety standards we pride our selves on, please ensure the following:

- Cars are not permitted to turn in the staff car park
- Taxis are not permitted to enter the car park without prior permission from the office

## THANK YOU

We would also like to thank Mrs Aitken for a donation of biscuits towards the Year 6 Boosters.

## READING BOOKS- Please help us !

Over the last 2 years we have spent around £4000 on reading scheme books and it's hard to believe that some of the book boxes are nearly empty! This means that some books are not being returned. Over half term, please look in school bags, under beds and on book shelves to see if you have any of our reading books at home. Thank you for your support, as I'm sure you can appreciate we can't afford to keep buying new books.

## PARENTS' EVENING

Please remember to sign up to Parents' evening on the 27th and 28th March. This is an opportunity to discuss your child's progress, ask any questions you may have and understand how you can best support learning at home. We really look forward to seeing you.

## After School Wrap Around facilities

For booking please contact 01344 860868 or contact [www.getactivesports.com](http://www.getactivesports.com)

Please be reminded we have new Facebook and Twitter pages. Please follow us.

