



Durand Primary School

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Headteacher - Mrs H Kilbourn

February 2024

Dear Parents / Carers,

Wow - what a busy half term we have had, I can't believe we are halfway through the spring term already which means only one thing...summer is on the way! January has seen a significant amount of professional learning for staff as we continue to implement Curriculum for Wales and continually strive to improve the learning experiences for our pupils. We've been excited to take Y1, 3, 4, 5 and 6 on school trips - the excitement of the pupils getting on the bus was a joy to see! I am so proud of the behaviour of all of the pupils, they made the adults accompanying them very proud indeed. Year 2 have continued to experience learning in our local community, applying real world maths skills on their visit to town. We have welcomed rising 3s into our Nursery cohort and our Reception children have certainly found their feet, making the most amazing progress in their learning.

Change of email address: A reminder that the main school email address has now changed to durandprimary@monmouthshireschools.wales

Parent Pay and Dinners: Dinners must be ordered via ParentPay before 8:30am. If you haven't ordered a meal, you will need to provide a packed lunch for your child. Despite the offer of a free school dinner, we still urge you all to apply for the Free School Meals Grant if you think you might be eligible (please see below).

Cost of the school day: Might you qualify for the School Essentials Grant? Have a look before you think not. You get £££ and the school gets £££ to support your child. Over 30% of our children do and the grant makes a real difference to you and us. [Free School Meals & School Essentials Grant - Monmouthshire](#)

Parent Teacher Association: Thankyou to those parents who are attending meetings and planning future events to support our school. Please feel welcome to come along to meetings when you can. Details of the next meeting will be shared on Schoop.

Upcoming events are:

March:

Friday 15th - Red Noses and Red hairspraying for comic relief followed by a coffee morning in the school. 50p each for nose/hair, percentage of profit will go towards charity.

Thursday 21st - Odd socks for Downs Syndrome (raising awareness)

23rd March- 7th April (EASTER HALF TERM)

Easter trail - theme is well known Kids TV characters

April:





Friday 12th or Friday 19th - Cake and Tea, a treat for you and me - parents/guardians pre book tickets for cake and tea with their child. 2 slots available in the afternoon.

May:

Friday 24th (last day of term) - Dress down day - will be an item donation event

July

Friday 12th Colour Run merging with Summer Fayre.

Further details of each event will be shared nearer the time.

Breakfast Club: Thank you to those of you who responded to the breakfast club survey. Responses were positive and showed enough uptake to provide this service. I plan to open a breakfast club and am currently working on staffing and resourcing in preparation. I will confirm an opening date as soon as I possibly can but am aiming for the start of the summer term. Watch this space for further details, I will send a separate letter with all you need to know.

World Book Day and Eisteddfod

We will be celebrating both of these events in school. We want to make sure no child is left out of either celebration and understand that that families may be under significant financial and time pressures. We will be providing fun, classroom-based activities that provide an alternative to dressing up. We aim to ensure that every child can participate in World Book Day, and can celebrate the stories they love, without an expectation for families to provide a costume. If your child would like to dress up for either event they can but they are also welcome to bring a 'prop' that would give a clue to their favourite character, access costumes and props we already have in school or wear their red school jumper. If you have pre loved costumes that your children have grown out of that we can make use of in school please donate by bringing to the school office.

Safe Parking: To support the safe arrival of children and families at the start of the school day, the school gates are being opened earlier to allow for a less congested flow into school. A polite reminder that classroom doors will not open until 8.50am. Supervision of children until this time to ensure a calm and safe arrival is appreciated. I discourage ball games on the yard prior to school starting, preventing accidents or injuries at this time. Please manoeuvre cars with great care, leave disabled spaces for badge holders and support our active travel plan by walking or park and striding.

I wish you all a relaxing half term and look forward to seeing you back on Monday 19th February.

Kind Regards,

Mrs Kilbourn

(Headteacher)





Nursery update:

We have welcomed 10 new children into our nursery and they have all settled in very well. In Nursery we have been exploring the season winter. We have enjoyed investigating ice outside and what melts ice the quickest, warm or cold water. Also the children have been looking at the book "The Polar Bear and the Snow Cloud". The children enjoyed making a friend for the polar bear. In Nursery we have learnt about polar bears and their different features. The children have been working hard practising writing their name, recognising numbers and shapes.



Reception update:

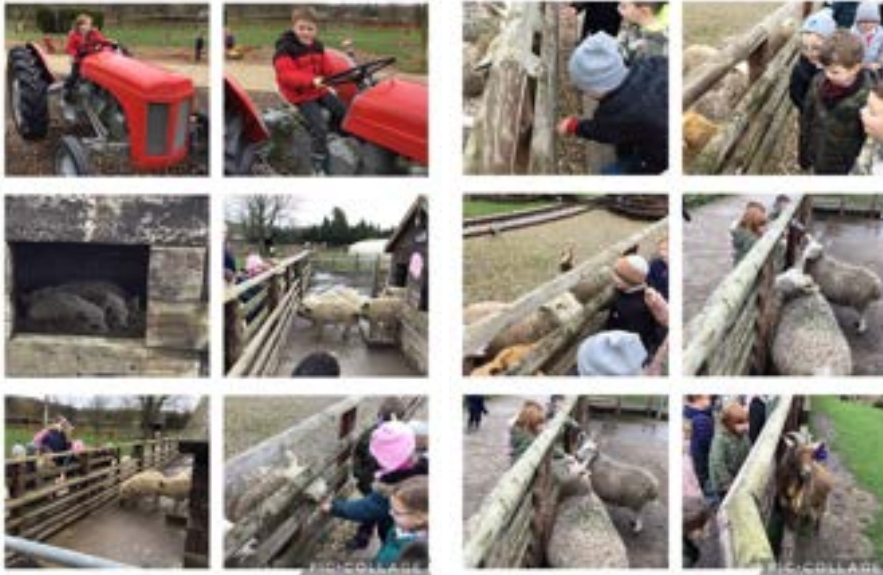
In Reception, our topic has been Winter. Our main class books have been 'Here comes Jack Frost' and 'Dragon loves Penguin'. The children have been learning simple facts about penguins and Antarctica. They have done simple experiments on melting ice and how to make a volcano.





Year 1 update:

In Year 1 we have been reading the story The Little Red Hen. The children received a letter from The Little Red Hen asking for their help to make bread. They researched what ingredients are needed for making bread on a supermarket website and created a poster of the ingredients. In maths we have been discovering coins and their values. We have been exchanging 1p's for larger value coins and have had fun in the bakery role play buying bread products. We visited Cefn Mably Farm where the children had first hand experiences of a farm and we even practised animal names in Welsh on our way around. The children were extremely well behaved all day and were a credit to our school.



Year 2

In Year 2 we have continued with our Winter theme, carrying out lots of ice experiments making predictions and drawing conclusions. We have been learning about how global warming is having an effect on the polar ice caps and we created posters on how we can do our bit to slow global warming. In Literacy we have been writing our own Arctic stories and creating Winter poems. In Mathematics we have introduced the topic of money using the skills of addition and subtraction to buy items and give change in our class shop. To practise these skills we made a trip to the local ASDA to buy some treats!





Year 3 update:

In Year 3 we have started our new topic 'Space'. We have looked at the planets individually, finding facts and then using our chromebooks to create posters. We have been working in pairs to complete this. In our Literacy we have been writing an adventure story. We have written about explorers going to a different planet. We have had to describe the planet and decide on a 'problem' that the explorers would encounter and they need to resolve before the end of the story. We have looked at many ways that we could make our story exciting! In maths we have looked at adding and subtracting. We focused on the column method. We have now moved onto multiplication. We have used equal grouping to help us answer our questions, we have now moved onto using an array to help us answer multiplication questions, we have not decided yet which method we prefer to use though! In our PE sessions we have been gymnasts, we have learnt a few gymnastics skills and we are really enjoying it. Our recent visit to Technquest was fantastic, everyone who went was exceptionally well behaved and we really enjoyed ourselves. We enjoyed looking at the different exhibits and increasing our science, technology, engineering and maths skills!

Year 4 update:

In Year 4 we have started our new topic 'Discover and Explore - A World of Food'. This topic looks at the importance of a balanced diet and nutrition and the impact of our choices on our own physical health and wellbeing and the impact on our world. We started by looking at the healthy eating plate and explored a range of different fruits, evaluating them and making fruit kebabs. We have also explored where the different fruits come from and how far they have travelled. Our book for this topic 'A World of Food - Discover Magical Lands Made of Things We Can Eat!' by Carl Warner has inspired us to write poetry using prepositions and develop our use of adventurous adjectives to describe our own imaginary world made from food. We have also started to work collaboratively, in groups, to create our own fitness workouts that we will use in our PE sessions with our classmates. Year 4 also had a superb time at Technquest, our first school trip. We explored a range of exhibits that developed our science, technology, engineering and maths skills and especially liked the hurricane simulator.





Year 5 update:

It has been a very busy time in Year 5 since Christmas. Our new topic of 'Discover and Explore' has enabled us to develop and enhance lots of new skills. We have been reading Michael Morpurgo's *Kensuke's Kingdom* and have used this to write debates and suspense stories. We have used a new IT programme 'Digimaps' to track the main characters journey around the globe. We have also used digimaps to track our journey to and from Technquest and to map Caldicot. We also had the best day at Technquest - we explored lots of exhibits that developed our learning, we really liked the giant slide! Even Mr Moses had a go! The rest of our topic will involve exploring and discovering what happens to our food after it enters our mouth as well as finishing off our class novel. Alongside our Topic we will be having a Diversity week and Welsh week in readiness for St David's Day.



Year 6 update:

Year 6 have begun our new topic 'Discover and Explore- How To Live Forever'. This topic centres around discoveries in science and technology over the years. We have begun by learning all about the heart and circulatory system and how these function and exploring our heart rates. We have been really enjoying our book for this topic - *How To Live Forever* by Colin Thompson. The illustrations have inspired some wonderful descriptive writing, using adventurous words such as 'festooned', 'hue' and 'musty'. We had the best day at Technquest also, we explored lots of exhibits that developed our learning, we really liked the giant slide! The rest of our topic will involve more exciting exploration and discoveries about living a healthy life, Victorian medicine, learning CPR and looking at the nutrition in our foods and how they help us.





Forest School

It was year 2's turn at the forest this term. They have learnt all about animal habitats and had the opportunity to build their own habitat for their chosen animal. They got messy making bird feeders to hang around the forest, went on a mini beast hunt and built a new bug hotel for the forest area. The children had a great time for their fire day, the bacon sandwiches especially went down well. We would like to say a huge thankyou to the parents who donated materials for us to make our new bug hotel. A very successful and fun filled forest school had by all.



Pupil committees:

Our Sports Ambassadors have worked really hard this half term to plan and prepare a series of actions to promote the health and wellbeing of all the children in school. Their ideas include trialling the Daily Mile initiative, implementing a playground charter, structuring play into zones with non-competitive activities and leading warm-ups and games with classes to encourage participation and enjoyment. They are ready to present ideas to pupils and staff and have organised new play equipment ready to launch in the new half term. I applaud their dedication, enthusiasm and independence and look forward to seeing their plans in action after the half term break.

Our Language Leaders have been very proactive in inspiring others to use Welsh around school. They have set a challenge for the rest of the school, to create a CROESO poster that will be displayed around the school. There are prizes for the top 5 posters. The rules of the competition are - posters should be drawn on A3, should include the word Croeso (Welcome) and the school logo. Closing date for this is 23rd February.

Dates for your Diary:

Monday 12th February - Friday 16th February - Half term

Monday 19th February - Pupils return to school

Friday 1st March - School Eisteddfod

Thursday 7th March - World Book Day

Friday 22nd March - Last day of school before Easter holidays

Monday 25th March - Friday 5th April - Easter holidays

Monday 8th April - **Training Day - School closed to pupils**

Tuesday 9th April - Pupils return to school

Thursday 2nd May - TRAINING DAY DUE TO SCHOOL BEING USED FOR ELECTIONS - WE HAVE HAD TO CANCEL THE TRAINING DAY ON THE 19TH JULY





Monday 6th May - May Day Bank Holiday - School closed

Friday 24th May - Last day in school before half term

Monday 27th May-friday 31st May - Half term

Monday 3rd June - Pupils return to school

Friday 19th July - **Children are in school as training day has been cancelled. Last day of school before summer holidays.**

All dates are provisional and subject to change.

