



Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you so much to those of you who have taken the time to offer some very positive comments about the new Newsletter. You will know already that we are very keen to hear any feedback you may have to offer us, both positive and negative, but thank you once again for giving us such good feedback from this important change. The Year group updates were particularly positively received.

### **Time to say 'goodbye':**

It is with very mixed emotions we today say goodbye to Mrs Forse, who has been with us at Ark Dickens for almost 5 years. We are so grateful for all she has done whilst teaching with us and wish her every success as she moves to her new school.

### **Mobile Phones in school:**

Please could I just remind you that children must not bring their mobile phones into school. If there is any reason at all for these to be brought into school, we ask that the children hand their phones into the front office at the beginning of the day, where they will be locked away until the end of the day. There are no exceptions to this and if you feel there are then do please contact us in the usual way. Thank you for your co-operation with this.

### **Attendance Challenge:**

You will be fully aware of how important we view attendance to be at Ark Dickens. Our attendance as a school is currently 95.4% which is still short of the National minimum Expectation of 96%; this needs to improve. Of greater concern is our Persistent Absence figures which means 13% of our school community have an attendance figure of just 90% or less; this also needs to improve. The best of the Ark schools have persistent absence

figures of 0%, which is something we must aspire to achieve. In order to add some motivation to our efforts we are going to be offering a significant incentive to parents and children to improve attendance. From Monday we are going to be closely monitoring the attendance of all the children. All of the children who achieve 96% attendance or above between Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January and Easter 2017, will be placed into a raffle for a £100 Asda voucher. This raffle will be drawn on the final day of the Spring Term, which is Friday 7<sup>th</sup> April. We look forward to a very positive response to this new initiative.

### **Breakfast Club:**

We are delighted that we are able to offer a Breakfast Club to our children. Like all things we aim to do in school, we are constantly looking to make improvements. One of the most important changes we need to look at making involves the Safeguarding of our children, which although already strong, we are keen to make stronger. At the present time, we have a list of all of the children who usually attend Breakfast Club. These children are ticked off the list when they arrive. For those who often come, but do not turn up on a particular day, an assumption is made that they are not coming. On occasions, far more children arrive that are not on the 'usually comes' list which makes staffing and organisation quite difficult.

The change we want to make is that from the start of the Summer Term, we are going to ask you to book your child a place at Breakfast Club one week in advance, so that we know precisely who is with us and who is at home with you, thus tightening the Safeguarding of our children. There will, of course, be times when you have an urgent need for a Breakfast Club place. We will still be able to accommodate this, but for those who want a regular place at Breakfast Club, you will need to book this place from the start of the summer term. We would

really appreciate your thoughts on this from your perspective and would love to hear from you as to whether you feel this is a good idea or not such a good idea.

**Meet the Principal:**

The next opportunity to come in a meet with me informally over a cup of tea or coffee will be on Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> January at 8.45. I look forward to seeing you there; do please come if you are able. We will meet together in the Staff Room.

**Nursery Next Week**

We are continuing to have pets visiting in Nursery next week. The children loved the visitors we had this week. Don't forget to let us know if you have pet that can come in. For Maths we are learning about weight & capacity. If you have any opportunities to talk about heavy & light & full & empty at home this will help to support the learning your child is doing in school.



**Year R Challenge!**

Reception Reading Challenge!! We are really encouraging the children to read at home. We know that most children love to play games on the computer so why not get them to do their reading in just the same way by taking part in our Reading Challenge. Once they have read 10 books they will receive a bronze certificate! But we are hoping to give out silver certificates for children who have read 25 books and gold certificates for 50 books and a prize for over 50 books! Happy Reading!



**Year 1**

Ennis class are sad to say 'Goodbye' to Mrs Forse this Friday and wish her all the very best for her new job. Miss Page will be the new class teacher, starting from Monday and is very excited be working with such a wonderful class of children.

Just a reminder to parents that Nightingale's PE days are Tuesdays and Wednesday. The children will need to have PE kits on these days. Children will have a chance to change school library books on Fridays, so they will need to have library books in their book bags (School library books have Ark Dickens on the cover page). We will be drawing our baby portraits next week, so can children make sure they bring a baby photograph in for next week please. Thank you.

**Year 2**

We will be continuing to learn to tell the time (on analogue clocks) in maths. You can help your child by talking about what time it is as you go about your daily activities. In literacy we will be continuing to write diary entries and to learn about 'The Chimps of Happy town'. In Science we are learning about plants and growing. We will have a spelling test on Monday and the words for this were sent home with your child last Tuesday. There was a definite improvement in the results this week but there is still room for more! Our PE days are Tuesday (indoor) and Thursday (outdoor). On Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> January Year 2 will be going to Carnegie Library, please ensure your child has their book. We are also lucky enough to have a Steel Pan workshop on Thursday afternoon .Can you also please bring the reply slips and money to the office for our farm trip as soon as possible. Thank you. Year 2 team.

**Year 3**

In Year 3 this week we have started learning about our new topic, Lighthouses. We have been learning about the history of lighthouses, the purpose of them and how they work. If you feel like you have anything at home (books, etc.) that could aid us with our topic, we would love to see it.

In maths we are moving on from perimeter to multiplication, we would really appreciate it if you could practice times tables with your child as much as you can at home as it will really help them with this unit of work.

Finally, we would just like to remind you that our PE days are Monday and Thursday. Monday is outdoor PE and Thursday is indoor.

### Year 4

This week has gone very quickly indeed! The children have been working tirelessly this week in class. They have been writing their own myths, learning more about fractions, exploring Australia and have started to create their own aboriginal piece of art.

Next week, we will move on from writing myths and start our poetry unit in literacy. Fractions become decimals in maths and we will be researching the world's largest living thing: The Great Barrier Reef.

A gentle reminder that Year 4 PE days have changed to a Monday and a Tuesday afternoon, therefore full PE kit is expected to be in school for these two days. If there are any issues regarding this, then please do speak to a member of the Year 4 team.



### Year 5 News Flash

Next week in literacy, we will be working on writing our own flashback stories using all of the descriptive techniques we have learnt recently.

In maths, we will be furthering our understanding of fractions by beginning to multiply fractions by whole numbers.

In topic, we will continue to learn about chocolate and will be taking part in a taste test to find out whether the price of chocolate affects the taste.

PE will be on Wednesday (outdoor) and Thursday (indoor). Homework is due in on Wednesday. Thank you.

### Year 6

This week we have been blown away by the children's World War 2 writing - keep up the hard work. For homework, the children will need to complete their arithmetic practice and spelling sheets. If they need any extra sheets then please tell class teachers as soon as possible. Please also ensure the children have full PE kit with them on Tuesdays on Fridays.

Thank you to those of you that have already brought in recycling for our upcoming project - we still need lots more so get saving!

Next week, we will be learning about percentages and pie charts; writing speeches and The Battle of Britain.

Well Done to Peake class & Luther-King class on their highest attendance for the week beginning 13.1.17 – 19.01.17.

Also well done to Potter class & Dahl class for the least amount of lates for the week beginning 16.1.17 – 20.1.17



**Please can we remind you that the car park is for staff and deliveries only!! Please DO NOT use the car park to drop your children off to school. Please use the pathway to enter the school premises. For everyone's safety please DO NOT park outside on the white lines outside the school gates as this restricts drivers views when going in and out of the car park. This is also the entrance for Emergency vehicles and deliveries so needs to be accessible at ALL times.**