

Emmbrook Junior School Newsletter

Friday 16th October 2020

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Hello from Mr Usher



Thank you to all of you for your kind words of congratulations. It is truly wonderful to be part of such a friendly and supportive community and while the fortnight I was on paternity leave seemed to pass in a flash I have missed Emmbrook Juniors a great deal during my brief stint away.

I would like to thank Miss Scales and Mrs Brant for leading the school so brilliantly while I was away and to all the staff here for their continued hard work and resilience during these difficult times.

I've noticed since my return that you have listened to our requests regarding dogs on site and we are very grateful for your support and understanding on this matter.

We are still having some minor issues with children and parents congregating on the playground or drive way at the end of the day. The majority of us are following the one-way system and helping to reduce the potential for transmission. Please continue to help us keep the whole school open by ensuring you are following social distancing measures on site.

We continue to try and make school as normal as possible while following our risk assessment to reduce the chances of transmission. The vast majority of the curriculum continues to be taught and gaps arising from lockdown will be addressed over the course of the academic year, however, we are aware that some of the milestones that children enjoy such as Christmas Productions; the PTA Christmas Fair; discos etc. may not be able to happen in the usual way, if at all. As with parents' evenings we are hoping to utilise technology as much as possible to ensure that these events are not missed out on entirely.

Coats, Snacks, Lost Property

As the weather becomes increasingly cold please ensure children are wearing an appropriate coat or jacket to school. Please make sure these are labelled along with the rest of their school uniform.

Could we also remind you that our uniform policy states that **skirts should be knee-length**, it has been noted that the length of some skirts being worn are shorter than this.

Children can eat a snack brought in from home during their morning break. At Emmbrook Junior School, we encourage our children to eat healthily and the following healthy snacks are permitted in school: - Portion of **fresh** fruit or veg (this does not include fruit Winders or Paw Paws or similar processed items) - Plain bread sticks - Plain rice cakes - Chunks of cheese.

Children should not bring in nuts, seeds, high sugar or high fat items such as chocolate, crisps, cakes etc. (this includes snacks such as malt loaf).

We are finding increasing amounts of lost property left around the school including snack boxes. **Please ensure all items are labelled with your child's name.** If your child is missing an item please remind them to check lost property at playtime or lunchtime.

Black History Month

Year 3 have been investigating the plight of the Kayapo people in Brazil who feel marginalised by the rest of Brazilian society and have chosen to make a stand. They have chosen to block a highway that cuts through the Amazon as the Brazilian government is not complying with a list of demands that includes aid to help with the impact of COVID-19. Year 3 discussed whether we should always stand up for our own communities which led to further discussion around sections of our own society that may feel marginalized and our responsibility to them.

In 4 Elm, we had a talk about equality and how it's important to treat people fairly no matter who they are. We spoke about how things are getting better but we all need to do our bit to help improve it more. We recognised that having role models that we were familiar with is important. We watched some videos featuring role models from history.

For Black History Month the children in **4 Cedar** watched the Horrible Histories film on BBC iPlayer with sketches, music and humour to retell stories of the famous lives of interest. The children enjoyed a quiz to test them on what they had learnt about the famous characters from boxer Bill Richmond to Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King.

In 5 Maple, we have been talking about identity. Race is one element of a person's identity. As a class, we discussed why it is important to talk about race. Here are a few of our responses:

Eva – I think it's important to talk about race because some people just know the races and not about how to act around them, how not to be racist and how to treat people the same.

Daisy – To know that we are all equally important in our own way and no-one bullies people about their skin colour.

Nathan – So people know how much it hurts if we make fun of their skin. So we can learn about people's histories and know how important they are in everyday life.

Sophia - It is important to talk about race so people know that it doesn't matter what you look like. So you know for brown people it's really hurtful to call them names about their skin. It can also be hurtful to just talk about race with a brown person.

We will have further discussions about race throughout and beyond Black History Month. Feel free to continue these conversations at home.

Times Tables Rock Stars

This week's Top Earners

Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Pola Debska	Abhinav Mannava	Finlay Siggins	George Cowell

Overall Most Correct Answers

Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6
Oscar Earl	Isabella Jones	Aidan Thomas	Eden Matthews

All change for our weekly earners – well done, but can anyone catch our overall leaders? The gaps are getting smaller in some year groups but you may have to work hard to catch up.

Covid-19 Safety at EJS

We have been made aware of some children starting to bring in items from home that have not been sanctioned by school. In order to reduce the chances of transmission between home and school we need children to only bring in those items that have been agreed: PE kits; lunch boxes; reading books; homework etc.

Stress toys, fiddlers, trading cards etc. must all be left at home except in those circumstances where a fiddler has been agreed as part of child's specific learning needs by our Inclusion Leader and their teacher. Please note that these items will be provided by the school and so do NOT need to be brought in from home.

You received a letter last week explaining how we have reviewed and updated our guidance for visitors to the school. The key things to note are that parents / carers must drop forgotten items off into a box outside

the office from now on and that face coverings must be worn by visitors to reception; in areas of the school where social distancing is not possible and when in prolonged close proximity with a child. We will only invite a visitor or a parent into the school if we deem it is essential and only one parent / family will be allowed in Reception at any one time. Our visitor safety guidelines have also been issued to parents for your information.

Online Safety



It has been reported to us that there have been some issues with the use of 'WhatsApp' by a small group of children in a particular year group. While we continue to talk to children about appropriate use of social media, it is important that these discussions also take place at home. When having these talks, it is worth noting that **the official age rating for WhatsApp is 16 years old**. This means that the developers of the app themselves don't believe it is appropriate for anyone under that age.

You can find out more about WhatsApp here: <https://www.net-aware.org.uk/networks/whatsapp/>
We strongly encourage all parents to monitor their children's internet and phone use.

What's been going on this week?

Year 3 have been focusing their skills on creating their own mythical monster ready to include this character in our latest story writing project. We have listened to a variety of myths from Ancient Greece and identified how creatures from tales thousands of years old are still used today. Did you know that Fluffy - the three headed dog in Harry Potter - originally came from a myth about Hades and the Underworld? Cerberus was a giant guard dog at the gates! We are half way through making 3D masks of our creature using a variety of resources. Mrs Hatherley said that they are very colourful, creative and slightly frightening. We are going to learn about Pandora next. Would you be as curious as her or would you choose to keep the box closed?

In **Year 4**, we made mosaics and they look like Minecraft characters. They were hard to make because we had to make them with squares that were cut from long strips. There are lots of different colours but the Romans only used a few. We could make a lot of different patterns around them. We used a lot of glue that got all over our hands! - Alexander & Thomas, 4 Elm



In Bikeability we learnt how to cycle safely on the road. We learnt how to react to traffic. We practised how to communicate with the drivers so they know our next step. Before Bikeability we never knew how a helmet could impact on our lives. Even if we fell, we got back up, excited to try again. Going up the hill was such hard work but going down was the best. We had such a great time. - Sumaiah and Elena -**Year 6**

Bikeability is the best. You can learn tricks (only one or two) and how to cycle on the road. We were out all day. It is a very good learning experience whilst having fun. We learnt all the proper road positions so we were riding safely. My favourite part of Bikeability was when we had to do things without help. The instructors watched and the best bit was when we had to go around a roundabout with everyone watching.
Harry M and Tommy – **Year 6**

Halloween Dress Up Day – Friday 23rd October

Another reminder that on Friday 23rd October, we will be having a non-uniform dress up day across the Infants and the Juniors! Children may come into school dressed as a Halloween character or they can choose to dress in their clothes from home if they would prefer. We respectfully ask that your child comes into school in appropriate footwear for the daily mile and for the playground – which means **no high heels or open toed shoes**. Lessons will continue as normal although we hope to get some great pictures.

Your child will also need to ensure that they can fit their coat on over their costume as the weather is due to turn colder. We are hoping the event will raise some much-needed funds for the school and therefore we suggest a minimum voluntary donation of £1 from each child. Thank you so much for your support.

The Conqueror Challenge!

So far, we have completed over 300km and that is just in the first week. This means that as a school we have completed two challenges (English Channel and Inca Trail).



It's been a great effort from everyone that has got involved. It's amazing to see the children (and parents) challenge themselves to do that little bit extra and help raise much needed funds for the school.



Thank you again for your support.



What do I do if my child is unwell?

You can find the guidance we shared last week here:

<https://wsh.wokingham.gov.uk/resources/assets/inline/full/0/535887.pdf>

Dates for your diary:

Wednesday 21st October – Parents Consultations (via Teams)

Thursday 21st October – Parents Consultations (via Teams)

Friday 23rd October – Halloween Dress Up Day

Monday 2nd November – INSET day – no school

Tuesday 3rd November – First day of term

Wednesday 4th November – Year 6 trip to Sea City in Southampton to the Titanic Exhibition

Thursday 5th November – Year 5 Tudor Day in school

Friday 13th November – Children in Need – Super Yellow Pudsey Day

Friday 11th December – Christmas Jumper Day

Friday 17th December – Last Day of Term