

Thomas Johnson Lower School

Newsletter 19
27th January 2023



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Headteacher's Introduction

Today, as part of our **Year of Inspiration** initiative, we were very excited to welcome **The Right Honourable Nadine Dorries MP** to visit our school. During a tour of the school, Nadine spent some time in classes talking to the children - and then she joined us for assembly.

In assembly, Nadine talked about what an MP (*Member of Parliament*) does, what it is like in the House of Commons, and why it is important for children and young people to take an interest in trying to make our world a better place. She also answered some really insightful, thoughtful and challenging questions from our children.

Nadine commented on how lovely our school was, that the children's behaviour and attitude was wonderful, and that she thoroughly enjoyed spending her morning with us. She also took a moment to congratulate us on our recent Ofsted inspection and said that the outcome was very impressive.

This visit had zero political motivation or bias. Instead, it was an opportunity for our children to meet someone with a significant role in our local community - as Nadine is the MP representing everyone who lives in mid-Bedfordshire.

I am so excited about our future visitors and the experiences the **Year of Inspiration** will give all of our children.

*Simon Bolger
Headteacher*

SPLAT

It was fantastic to see so many parents and carers in school on Wednesday this week for our first ever SPLAT event. The children were excited and delighted to be able to show you their learning and also some of the resources and displays around their classroom.

A special thank you to all of the Year 4 children who helped with the organisation.

As this was the first time we have held an event like this, it means we can look at what went well and what we can do better next time.

We have decided that for the next event, if you have more than one child across the school, that when you arrive you will be able to spend the whole 30 minutes with all your children in school. You can go together as a family to each classroom, or if you wish, stay in one classroom and look together at all your children's books.

We hope you enjoyed being able to spend some time in school with your children.

Icy weather

The weather continues to be very cold at the moment - and with the plummeting temperatures comes the risk of icy pathways and roads.

We are doing our best to keep on top of gritting the pathways and driveways around the school - but please continue to be very careful and assume that everywhere may be slippery.

Weekly Awards

Due to the visit of Nadine Dorries today, we will hold our Celebration Assembly on Monday next week. The award winners will be announced in a separate letter on Monday afternoon.

Children's Mental Health Week - 6th - 10th February

As part of this week, we are offering a parent/carer workshop on **Wednesday 8th February at 2pm.**

This will be led by Mr Bolger, and we will explore what wellbeing is and isn't, the science of happiness and things we can all do every day to thrive, instead of just survive. This session is informed and underpinned by the latest research in positive psychology.

To attend this session, [please fill out this form](#) so we know how many people to expect.

Eco-Schools

This year our school has made the decision to work towards **Eco-Schools Green Flag Accreditation**, you can find out more on the Eco-Schools website here: <https://www.eco-schools.org.uk/>

With the world beginning to experience the effects of climate change; different species of plant and animals becoming extinct every day; and micro-plastics being found in the most remote locations on Earth - now, is the time to educate future generations about the impact of our actions on the planet we call home.

The Eco-Schools programme does this through providing a simple seven-step framework that has been designed to raise awareness of environmental issues whilst empowering young people to make a positive difference by taking a lead on environmental actions and projects in their school and local community.

This will be introduced to all children next week. In the meantime, please take the time to speak to your child about whether they would be interested in becoming an **Eco-Ambassador** and joining our **Eco-Committee**.

Further information on how to apply for an Eco-Ambassador position will be released next week.

Schools for the Future

I have been asked by a few parents/carers about where we are up to with this. The letter about the consultation was circulated to parents/carers on 30th September 2022 - and the window for that consultation is now closed. The next step is for the initiative to be approved by the Department for Education Regional Director for the East of England.

When a decision has been made at the next level, I will receive notification from Central Beds Council and the Department for Education. They will provide me with a parent letter that is to be circulated to the school community.

At this point, I don't know anything other than what has been published into the public domain - and you can see all this information by using the following link: [Cranfield area — Schools for the future](#)

Online Safety

This section of the newsletter will be a new weekly addition. It will provide some reminders, guidance and advice for how to ensure your children can stay safe online.

Be Kind Online

It can be very easy online for children to behave in a way that they wouldn't if they were face-to-face with each other. Talk to your child about how they are speaking to others online and encourage them to talk to people online with respect and kindness, like they would if they were face-to-face.

Dr Linda Papadopoulos (*Internet Matters Ambassador*) provides tips on how you can help your child to be kind online in this YouTube video, such as teaching them how to be inclusive and think about how they would like to be treated online themselves: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1BqKi3J7g6Q&t=9s>

Ensure that your child understands that if they receive unkind messages (*or see something that worries them*) then they should not reply or engage in conversation with them, but that they should tell a trusted adult. You can use the tools within an app to report any offensive or hurtful content as well as block people so they cannot contact you again in the future. Unicef have a comprehensive area on their website, which talks about what Cyberbullying is and how to stop it: <https://www.unicef.org/end-violence/how-to-stop-cyberbullying>

Childline also have a lot of information about Cyberbullying on their website: <https://www.childline.org.uk/info-advice/bullying-abuse-safety/types-bullying/bullying-cyberbullying>

Dates for your diary - new dates added will be written in green and highlighted in yellow

1 st February	School closed for industrial strike action
6 th - 10 th February	Children's Mental Health Week
7 th February	Safer Internet Day
8 th February	Mental health and wellbeing event for parents/carers - 2pm
10 th February	Last day of half term
20 th February	School REOPENS for Spring 2
22 nd February	Year 2 SATs information session - 2pm
1 st March	School closed for industrial strike action
2 nd March	World Book Day. Dress up as a children's book character.
6 th March	Progress Consultations for Parents and Carers
8 th March	Progress Consultations for Parents and Carers
8 th March	International Women's Day
13 th - 17 th March	Science Week
15 th & 16 th March	School closed for industrial strike action
17 th March	Coffee Morning - 9.15-10am
31 st March	Easter Bonnet Parade
31 st March	Last day of term
17 th April	INSET Day - School CLOSED to children
18 th April	School REOPENS for Summer 1
18 th April	National offer day for children starting in Reception
19 th -26 th April	Scholastic Book Fair
1 st May	Bank Holiday - school CLOSED
1 st - 31 st May	KS1 SATs period
4 th May	School referendum
8 th May	Bank Holiday for the Coronation of King Charles III
8 th - 12 th May	Art Week
17 th May	SPLAT session - 9-9.30am. Your child will give you a tour of their classroom.
26 th May	Last day of half term
5 th June	School reopens for Summer 2
5 th - 23 rd June	Year 4 Multiplication Screening Period
12 th - 16 th June	Year 1 Phonics Screening Period
16 th June	Coffee Morning - 9.15-10am
21 st June	New Reception starter information session - 1.30pm
29 th June	Sports Day - 9.30am
6 th July	Sports Day Backup should there be poor weather
12 th July	Transition morning - meet your new teacher
12 th July	School Picnic
14 th July	End of year reports sent out to parents and carers
17 th July	SPLAT - your child can share their learning from this year with you - 3.20-3.50pm
18 th July	Transition morning - meet your new teacher
19 th July	Year 4 Leavers Assembly - 9.30am
21 st July	School closes for summer holidays

Dream - Discover - Flourish

The aim of our curriculum is to open doors of opportunity for our children