

LEIGHTON ACADEMY NEWSLETTER



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Inside this issue:

February 2014

Message from the Principal



Newsletter Nostalgia

Below are extracts from the log book of the predecessor schools to Leighton Academy (Totty's Hall, Leighton Park and Leighton Primary) as we continue our theme of reflecting on the educational experiences of children from various decades since the 1950's. This was when a school was built on this site.

During January and February 1954, there were no entries in the log book worthy of note but on 02/03/54 the school was closed "...on the occasion of the Common Entrance Examination. Sixteen children were eligible to sit for the selection test."

A later entry in May provides the following information:
"Sixteen children sat for the Common Entrance Examination, 8 were selected for Grammar School – 7 will go to Crewe 1 to Nantwich and 8 to Ludford Street."

Even in those days there was much pressure on children towards the end of their primary school experience because of examinations. I recall sitting my 11+ in the early 1960's in another part of the country and the expectation of my parents and the community. This log book entry resonates with me!!! We waited with nervous anticipation for the letter indicating whether we had passed for grammar school. I recall neighbours standing in their front windows as the postman came and signifying, with the traditional 'thumbs up or down,' whether children were successful.

Again in February 1964, the school was closed for the Common Entrance Examination and "...35 children sat (the exam), there being one absentee." Unfortunately, there is no analysis of the outcome later on in the log book so we have no readily-accessible way of telling how many children went to grammar school that year.

On 04/02/74 the following entry ushers in a new era for the school:
"Notice has been received that the name of the school has been changed to: - LEIGHTON PARK COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL."

During February 1984 (11/02/84), "50 children and parents watch Crewe Alex v Blackpool at Gresty Road Stadium." First there is some exaggeration in describing Gresty Road as a 'stadium' at that time, plus the children must have been really naughty to deserve such a punishment.

* Message from the Principal	1 + 2
* School News	3
* Peer Mentors	4
* Nursery News	5
* Dates for your Diary	6
* Just for fun	

Message from the Principal

Sunday Times Top 500 State Primary Schools (2010-2013)

http://www.thesundaytimes.co.uk/sto/Parent_Power/

The above link should take you to the pages indicating primary school performance over the past three years as determined by The Sunday Times. It is wonderful to see we have achieved a creditable position at 374th out of 16000 schools given some of the challenges our predecessor schools have faced over the years

Communication

We have been working hard to improve channels of communication between home and the academy. The website and Twitter are supplementing newsletters and specific messages sent home for events such as visits or out of hours activities. The next step is to use text messaging and targeted emails to reduce an over-reliance on pupil post. A letter has been sent explaining this system and requesting updated information. It will only be effective, however, if we have accurate information which means informing the academy office if you change your email address or mobile number.

Sport Funding

We valued PE and sport in our school long before a recent government initiative. Since the late 1990's, we have worked very hard to elevate sport and competition through some difficult times. Over the past ten years, we have become the most successful primary school in the local area across a range of competitions. Of course, PE should be about more than winning so we have worked hard to expand the range of sports and to be inclusive of those children with additional needs or children less motivated to participate in activities. To show our determination to add to our provision, we have added a section on the website dedicated to PE and sport. Our competitive successes over the last three years can be found under the PE tab.

Academy Engagement

The governors are also determined to improve communication channels with parents. There is an emerging governor initiative to support a parents' forum designed to inform the strategic direction of the academy. The aim is to integrate more closely with the community as part of our academy's approach.

The children have influence through the academy council and the activities of groups such as the peer mentors. The KS2 children have also completed questionnaires and these are being analysed at the moment. For parents, we have used a questionnaire route in the past but we are recommending PARENT VIEW rather than sending out questionnaires in paper form. The link to this Ofsted site is as follows - please register using the highlighted section on the site:

<http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/parent-view-results/survey/result/127640/current>

A link to Parent View is also available on our website www.leightonacademy.com via the 'Academy Information' tab.

Finally

Thank you to those parents for all of your support with the flurry of PE and competitive events over the past few weeks.

School News

School lunches

As previously written in recent newsletters, too much time is being spent chasing up unpaid school dinners.

There is a new charging and debt policy on the website regarding outstanding payments for school lunches. From Monday 24th February ALL school dinners must be paid for on the Monday of each week or further in advance for the entire term.

Please be advised that all current outstanding accounts must be paid and fully up to date as soon as possible. More information will follow on the online payment system that should support these changes.

Knitted blankets

A huge thank you for all the blankets which you so kindly sent into school. We send these off to orphanages. If anyone would like to contribute any squares we use double knitting wool – size 8 needles, 25 stitches and 44 rows.

Thank you. Mrs Robertson, Mrs Midgley and Ms Steenkamp.



Supporting Key Stage 1 Readers- a course for parents and grandparents

I hope to run this interesting course after half term one morning. We usually meet 6 times and look into the process of reading and how we teach it. Many parents and grandparents have enjoyed this course over the years and have found it very useful in supporting their own child, as well as coming into school as volunteers. If you would like to chat about it please let me know. I have 2 parents who are interested so far.

Mrs Robertson



German feature

I am delighted to report children at Leighton continue to make excellent progress, in their understanding, use of written and spoken German and are making insights into culture and traditions.

New developments:

We will welcome two guest students from Germany in March, Lisa and Merle, who as well as learning about primary education in England will share aspects of teaching and add an extra dimension to the children's learning.

In March we will start lessons for parents and carers who wish to support their child's learning. The emphasis will very much be on enjoyment at a basic level.

We have a Sommerfest planned for Tuesday, 15th July, at which the children will showcase and celebrate their new skills for a wider audience. Please note the date. Angela Merkel has already sent her apologies! (Yes really!)

In order to raise standards plans are well underway for children in Y4-6 to have a named penpal from a German primary school. This will enable our children to develop their reading and writing skills within an enjoyable, motivating and realistic context. We will write using both languages. Our German partners and our own children are very excited! Y4 will be partnered with classes at the Unter den Kastanien Grundschule, Berlin; (www.grundschule-unter-den-kastanien.de) ; Y5 with the Grundschule Prettin, Annaburg and the Neue Grundschule Potsdam (www.neue-grundschule-potsdam.de) and all of Y6 will be partnered with classes from the August Macke Schule Kandern (<http://www.august-macke-schule-kandern.de>) We are hoping to undertake a joint Art project in the summer, looking at artwork by August Macke, a celebrated artist, so watch this space.....

And finally, a huge *danke schön* to you all, children and families. I am so overwhelmed by the interest and enthusiasm I encounter in school, and I know you as parents and carers are doing much to encourage your children and enthuse them with an interest in language learning, a vital skill that will open doors for them as they go through life. It is very true, learning one language makes learning another easier, and will hopefully enable your child to make new friends and gain new skills and confidence.

Bis bald,
Mr. Pearson

Peer Mentors

Hi to everybody from the Peer Mentors. We hope that you are enjoying your lessons. These are just a few quick reminders and messages about a few things.

First we are introducing a Happy Award, this is a certificate that Miss Dyer awards to classes who all come in happy every morning and greet everybody with a smile. Don't forget to be polite as well!



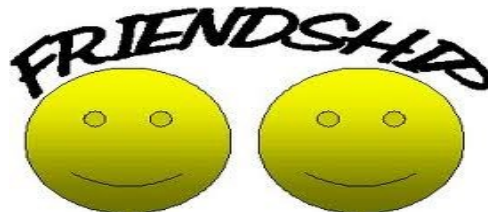
Another thing that we want to remind you about is Internet Safety Week. We will be giving badges out with the 'zip it, lock it, flag it' slogans on them to anybody who can guess what they mean. Good luck! Start trying to figure it out because Internet Safety Week is soon!



Roll up to see the newest celebrities in Leighton Academy! Our very own Hollie Lennon and Elle Machin went to the Winsford Police headquarters on the 5th of February to join the Speak Out group which means that they will be talking to a lot of people outside of school about Peer Mentor roles. We are very proud of them!

That's all for now. Try to keep up the good attendance, good work and good friendships and remember everything we have said.

Bye! From the Peer Mentors.



Here is a word search with some good words about the things all of the Peer Mentors like to see.

Try to find everything and use everything wisely!

H	V	R	N	E	L	L	A	S	R	M	B	S	I
Q	R	R	M	I	S	S	D	Y	E	R	E	U	V
W	O	R	R	Y	S	A	C	K	O	G	H	L	B
X	K	E	E	W	E	H	T	F	O	R	A	T	S
X	O	B	Y	R	R	O	W	E	Y	M	V	K	Y
P	O	T	S	P	I	H	S	D	N	E	I	R	F
S	R	O	T	N	E	M	R	E	E	P	O	T	A
Y	K	Q	M	W	O	R	R	I	E	S	U	K	S
Y	P	P	A	H	M	P	L	E	H	J	R	N	P
A	Q	E	X	A	M	P	L	E	U	K	W	E	Q
L	D	B	A	P	I	H	S	D	N	E	I	R	F
F	R	I	E	N	D	S	U	P	P	O	R	T	W

Behaviour

Miss Dyer

Example

Miss Allen

Friends

Peer Mentors

Friendship

Star of the week

Friendship Stop

Support

Happy

Nursery News

Nursery News!

Staff and children welcomed 20 new children and their families into nursery in January. All of the new children have settled in well and are enjoying exploring all the nursery activities we have.

Chinese New Year!

Nursery children celebrated the start of the Year of the Horse with a special celebration day. Everyone wore red clothes; there were Chinese activities to do and a fortune cookie to take home. The afternoon children welcomed a special visitor - Dylan's mum who came to tell us about the story of Chinese New Year and Chinese traditions!

Gung Hey Fat Choi!



The Morning children enjoyed a special story, read in Polish by Weronika's mum; We are very fortunate in being able to share in other languages and cultures!



We have been enthusiastically joining in with learning German with Mr Pearson!

Our colour theme days have been very well supported by everyone – thank you! So far we have had blue, green, yellow and red days and we are looking forward to pink and red day on February 14th!

Thank you to all parents for your continued support in helping us to create a very happy and fun learning environment for the children.



Friday 14th February 2014

Monday 24th February 2014

Academy Closes

Academy Opens

Just For Fun

Draw and colour in your own theme



This newsletter is now available in colour on our school website
www.leightonacademy.com
If you do not have internet access at home, please ask to look at
the school page on a school computer.