



Weekly Bulletin – 8th March 2019

Headteacher's Message

It was a delight to see so many parents at our Eucharist Service to mark the beginning of Lent yesterday. My thanks go to Fr Peter and the Year 6 Worship Group for leading worship. It was wonderful to hear the choir sing and we thank Dr Fleming for his continued support.

World Book Day today was similarly successful. We have enjoyed celebrating the power of reading and I thank parents for their support with providing appropriate bedtime wear.

I thank all of you who took the time to respond to our recent parental survey. The views of our parents are vitally important to us and the information gathered from the surveys will enable us to continue to work successfully with parents and carers for the benefit of your children. It is by working in partnership that we can fulfil our Ethos Statement to encourage all to 'use their gifts and talents' and 'develop the highest levels of academic achievement and personal well-being within a loving Christian context'.

The results of the survey were overwhelmingly positive, with over 95% of responses in all categories either strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statements. This is testament to the strong partnership between home and school. It is heartening to see that the efforts and dedication of the staff combined with strong parental support is bearing much fruit.

A number of issues were raised in the survey and we respond to these below:

The School provides appropriate homework for my child. The 'strongly agree' responses were lower in this category than in others. Some parents feel there is too little, others too much and this is reflected in written comments. We believe that the amount of homework is well matched. Should any parent wish to discuss their child's homework then please speak to the class teacher.

The School provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The 'strongly agree' responses were lower in this category than in others. We understand that offering both before and after school care would assist many parents with their childcare arrangements. However, the only space we have available at school is the hall and were this to be used for either before or after school care then we would be unable to offer the clubs and extra-curricular activities we currently offer. Our view is that after school clubs are to provide *enrichment* and *opportunity* rather than simply childcare.

The Governing Body has in the past considered these issues and the statement outlining the provision the school makes and the rationale behind this is on the website and copied below:

'Upon occasion, parents raise the issue of before and after school provision. This is something that has been considered by the Governing Body. As a school we are aware that offering 'wrap-around' before and after school care would assist many parents with their childcare arrangements. Similarly, we greatly value the current range of after school activities that we provide and the notable impact they have on both the depth and breadth of the educational experience we offer and pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

The need for teachers to use their own classrooms as spaces for planning, preparation and assessment activities both before and at the end of the school day means that the only space we have available at school is the hall and were this to be used for either before or after school care then we would be unable to offer the clubs and extra-curricular activities we currently offer. After careful consideration of the situation, therefore we intend to continue with the current provision and arrangements for before and after school clubs and activities.'

As part of the commitment detailed above, we constantly look towards offering additional clubs. The recent development of the Coding Club being one example.

There were a few further additional written comments.

Regarding access to water bottles, this is not necessary as all pupils have access to fresh cooled water via the water fountains throughout the school.

A couple of parents requested additional outdoor resources for play. I'm pleased to say that we have been successful in obtaining a grant for £5000 for additional outdoor play equipment and are working with the School Council and contractors to develop this. Additionally, the Year 6 SSOC (School Sports Organising Crew) are busy leading additional 'Active 20' activities during breaktimes in order to enhance provision.

Similarly there were a couple of requests for direct email correspondence with individual teachers. I do not believe this to be necessary or appropriate in terms of staff workload. Teachers are always willing to speak in person, or over the telephone with parents. This must however be organised via the school office in order to enable teachers to focus on their core function- leading teaching and learning.

At Shincliffe we aim to work in partnership with parents for the benefit and well-being of your children. If parents are concerned about any matter then please do make an appointment and I will be more than happy to meet with you.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Best wishes

Mr Tait

Diary Dates

Friday 8th March – Y5 Viking Village Trip
Friday 8th March – World Book Day and World Book Day Lunch
Monday 18th March – Y2 St. Cuthbert Workshop
Monday 1st April – Reception Zoolab
Wednesday 3rd April – Easter Lunch
Wednesday 3rd April 3pm-4.30pm - FOSS Easter Coffee afternoon
Thursday 4th April – School closes for Easter
Tuesday 23rd April – School re-opens

For a full list of school holiday dates please see the school website.

Noticeboard

- The Library team are looking for new volunteers to support the running of the School Library on a Wednesday lunch time. If you are interested in helping, please contact the School Office for further information.
- We are running short of newspapers for art activities. If you have any suitable old newspapers to spare please send these into school. Many thanks.

Durham County Council eSafety advice - TikTok

TikTok is in effect the replacement for Musical.ly and this app seems to have developed a big following in the last few weeks. It is not “more dangerous” than some other apps, but to help keep our children safe we draw parents’ attention to current advice. Parents are advised – as with other apps- to help their child review their privacy settings and to be aware that: “Even with a private account, profile information – including profile photo, username, and bio – will be visible to all users. Counsel your teen not to reveal personal information such as age, address, or phone number in his/her profile.”

Internet matters.org provides useful advice – <https://www.internetmatters.org/hub/esafety-news/tik-tok-app-safety-what-parents-need-to-know/>

Durham County Council eSafety advice - cyberbullying

The school will help children to learn about staying safe online, but recognises that the primary responsibility for online safety at home lies with parents and carers. Your help is now needed to help your children adopt safe use of the digital technologies at home.

We have recently been made aware of concerns relating to “a challenge” which is a form of cyberbullying that spreads through social media and phones mostly using Whatsapp. Phone users are enticed to contact a user through WhatsApp where they receive graphic threats from the user and are instructed to perform a series of dangerous tasks. Despite claims that the phenomenon was reaching worldwide proportions in July 2018, the number of actual complaints is relatively small and no UK police force has confirmed anyone was actually harmed. The UK Safer internet centre has been aware of this as an issue for UK schools over a year.

It is important that we are all vigilant when children are using devices and act to ensure they are protected from people who may pose a risk to them. Children can accidentally or deliberately be exposed to illegal, unwanted or unpleasant content, comments or activity online and there are steps you can take at home to minimise this risk. It is always good advice to monitor and support your child’s online life and to know who they are communicating with. Careful use of privacy settings also helps reduce risks.

We know that new apps and sites appear daily online and it would be unrealistic to ask parents and carers to understand all of them. The sites and services that your child likes to use may change regularly, but the messages they need to keep themselves safe will remain the same – think before you post, be kind online and ask for help if something makes you feel worried, upset or uncomfortable.

At times some unpleasant sites or activities are highlighted on social media, whilst helping to inform parents it unfortunately has the side effect of generating even more hits and drawing even more children’s attention to the activity. If you have safeguarding concerns relating to an app or website these should be shared with professionals, (Police or CEOP) and not shared on social media.

If your child wishes to download a new app, then we would recommend considering some of the following points:

Listen

- Take an active interest in your child's online life and talk with them about how they use technology.
 - Ask your child why they want to use the app? How did they hear about it?
- Discuss with them how they will keep themselves safe and make sure they know:
 - How to block and report other users and content
 - To speak to a trusted adult if they see anything or something happens online that makes them feel worried, upset or uncomfortable.
 - About websites such as ChildLine and CEOP? www.childline.org.uk and www.thinkuknow.co.uk

Functionality

- Make sure that you understand how the app works so you can decide if you are happy for your child to use it. You may even wish to set up an account yourself first.
- Consider:
 - Does it allow video chat or the sharing of images?
 - Does it allow user to communicate with 'random' strangers?
 - Does it allow anonymous chat?
 - Does it allow in-app purchases?
 - Can you restrict access to the content that your child shares?
 - How will your child's personal data be used by the app?

Reviews

- What do other people (i.e. other parents and carers) have to say about the app?
 - Ask your friends and family members or take a look online. You may be able to find reviews via search engines or using tools such as www.net-aware.org.uk and www.commonsemmedia.org

Age Restrictions

- You can usually find age restrictions within the apps terms and conditions. This is not the same as the app/google store rating.
- The age limit for many popular social networking sites is thirteen. This is due to American Legislation called COPPA. The age limit is not based on suitability of content and instead applies to any website, app or online service which collects, stores or uses children's personal

information. Some apps will have age limits of 18+ as they are exclusively designed for use by adults.

- If children use apps that are aimed at an older age group then this may leave them vulnerable to being exposed to unsuitable content (including advertising), as well as being contacted by strangers.

Safety

- Many popular apps will have 'help' and 'safety' sections, either within the app itself or via its website. Some apps will even have content specifically designed for parents and carers.
 - www.saferinternet.org.uk has some useful parent guides which highlight safety tools on popular devices, and signpost to report mechanisms.
- Does the app have any privacy settings? If so then help your child to apply them appropriately – for example is it possible to set the app so that only trusted friends can see information they post?
- Explore the block and report features. Can your child block or report concerning users or inappropriate behaviour?
- If the app doesn't have safety or help sections or doesn't provide the ability to report and block then you may wish to consider if it is safe for your child to use.

Boundaries

- Talk to your child about safe and appropriate online behaviour.
- Consider setting up a family agreement regarding how their internet use will be supervised and how long they can spend online. Resources to help can be found at www.childnet.com and www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/
- Apply appropriate parental controls to all devices: www.saferinternet.org.uk and www.internetmatters.org
- Discuss your expectations about the types of content and information they should share online, rules relating to adding friends and meeting people in real life.
- Do they understand:
 - That content posted online should never be considered to be private and may be copied and shared?
 - That they should behave online the same as they would in "the real world" and be kind?
 - How to be secure online such as by using safe and strong passwords. You can visit www.getsafeonline.org.uk for more advice

If you are worried that your child is at risk of harm or criminal offence has been committed then you can report your concerns to the Police or First Contact (Durham County Council). Please do not notify

suspicious profiles of your actions, as this could enable them to delete material which might be required for any Police investigations. You can contact the Police via 101 or via 999 if there is an immediate risk to a child's safety or First Contact (Durham County Council) on 03000 26 79 79. You can also report online sexual abuse to CEOP by visiting www.ceop.police.uk and using the "Click CEOP" reporting button.

Christian Values

We are continuing to explore the value of humility and worship will be led by Mr Tait, Mrs Matthews, Fr. Peter and the pupils.

We will be thinking about how the period of Lent helps people to demonstrate humility.

If you would like to receive a copy of the Weekly Bulletin by e-mail please e-mail the school. Shincliffe@durhamlearning.net

The Weekly Bulletins from previous weeks can be found in the parents' section of the website.