



Weekly Bulletin – 6th March 2020

Headteacher's Message

I thank all of you who took the time to respond to our recent parental survey. The views of our parents are very 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 Vision 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 (with the exception of 'My child can take part in clubs and activities at this school' where 90% strongly agreed or agreed) 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 couple of recurrent issues were raised in the survey and we respond to these below:

- Clubs and activities. 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 considered reviewed these issues and the statement outlining the provision the school makes and the rationale behind this is on the website and shared 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 Yoga Club being one example. We will continue to source additional opportunities as we are able.

- A few responses requested that we undertook additional charity activities. Throughout the course of the school year, in consultation with the School Council, we make arrangements to support charities in line with our Christian ethos. This year we are working hard to raise money for solar lamps for our Kenyan partner school and this work supports our rich international curriculum. We balance the opportunity to support charity with the need to 'poverty-proof' school life as far as we are able in order to remain inclusive and accessible. We believe we strike the correct balance.

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 as we continue to work with our children's first educators, their parents, for their continued growth and development.

Best wishes

Mr Tait

Diary Dates

Friday 6th March – World Book Day and World Book Day Lunch
 Friday 6th March – Y2 Great Fire of London Workshop
 Friday 13th March – Y5 Viking Village Day
 Monday 23rd March (12:30pm – 2:45pm) – Y2 and Y5 Dance Festival at the Gala Theatre
 Wednesday 25th March – Y5 Visit to ICKSON Hindu Temple
 Thursday 26th March 09:10am – Y3 and Y4 Easter Worship – Parents Welcome
 Monday 30th March 09:00-10:00am – Reception Zoolab
 Wednesday 1st April – FOSS Easter Coffee Afternoon
 Thursday 2nd April 09:15am – Easter Eucharist – Parents Welcome
 Friday 3rd April – Final day of Spring Term 2 - Easter holiday
 Monday 20th April – School re-opens for Summer Term 1
 Thursday 7th May – **SCHOOL CLOSURE** - Police and Crime Commissioner Election
 Friday 8th May – May Day Bank Holiday
 Friday 15th May – FOSS School Disco

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

World Book Day

We enjoyed celebrating World Book in school today. Our children have been busy selecting their favourite books to recommend to others. The completed class book suggestion lists can be found at:

<http://www.shincliffe.durham.sch.uk/parents/our-curriculum/reading-and-phonics/>

In this section of the school website you will also find further information about how reading is taught in school and resources for you to support your child in developing their reading skills.

Police and Crime Commissioner Election - School Closure

Durham County Council have confirmed that they will require use of the school hall as a polling station for the Police and Crime Commissioner Election on Thursday 7th May. School will, therefore, be closed on 7th May as we will be unable to safely open the school. We do not take the decision to close the school lightly. We have again requested that the Council seeks alternative polling venues, but this has not been possible. As the owners of the school building, the Council have the right to request the use of the school premises. Safeguarding is our first priority. The school hall is to be used for voting and we have no way of safely opening the building in a way that can separate pupils and the voting public. The decision to close is therefore the only available option.

Smart Watches

Following advice from the Local Authority, we are not permitting the use of smart watches in school. Children may continue to use fitness trackers that count steps and tell the time, but we cannot permit any internet-enabled devices. This is for safeguarding reasons.

Traffic in the Vicinity of the School

As you will be aware, we work in partnership with the Parish Council and Durham Police to address issues of parking and access to the school by car. We have received a number of complaints from residents and parents that cars are driving along the pavements. I ask all parents to consider the safety of our children and drive responsibly when using the roads within Shincliffe. This is in order to ensure the safety of all of our children.

Noticeboard

- School holidays for 2020/2021/2022 now available on the School website.
- **IMPORTANT** - If your child is wishing to change to *Packed Lunches* please inform the school office with one week's notice. Please do not hesitate to contact the school office if you need any assistance. Thank you.

Durham County Council Online Safety advice

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 exploring the value of justice and worship will be led by Mr Tait, Mrs Matthews, Fr. Peter and the pupils.

Some further information on this half term's value:

Justice is

Looking after each other so that everyone has a fair share of what they need.

Justice and mercy are key themes of the writings of the Old Testament prophets. Biblical justice is **more** than fairness and equality, it is a strong bias towards the weak, the poor and the socially disadvantaged are cared for, whether they 'deserve' it or not. In God's eyes every person is precious and oppression or discrimination, on any grounds, has no place. God's justice is gracious—He always acts justly and he calls on people to do the same.

Some things to think about:

- *How can we take responsibility for one another?*
- *How can we ensure all are treated fairly?*
- *How and why do we support charities in our school?*
- *How can we be inspired to recognise injustice in the world and think about our own role in fighting it?*

'Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.' Martin Luther King, Jr.

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

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