

Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2019

Dear Parents and Carers

We have had a busy first two weeks back this half term and hope that lots of you have already attended parent stay and learn sessions with more still to come. We are already looking ahead and beginning preparations for the festive period and our special performances later in the term.

### Children in Need

We had a great day of Children in Need fundraising fun on Friday. Mrs Watson and the school council organised a morning of special fitness sessions with prizes awarded later in our celebration assembly. We enjoyed hearing about the 'Super-heroes' that children had come dressed as and the cake sale was a big success. In total we raised **£285.66** so thank you to everyone for their donations and support.

### Christmas Fair Helpers

FOSS have already begun preparations for our Christmas fair however we are a little concerned that we will not have enough helpers for the event to take place. The Fair will be on **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December** from **2.30-4.30pm** and we would welcome further volunteers to help run stalls. In addition, FOSS members will be preparing at various times during the week leading up to the fair. If you will be able to help in any way, please could you let Mrs Sherwood, Mrs Pitts or myself know as soon as possible – thank you.

### Year 2 Assembly

Year 2 put on a fantastic class assembly last week which was all about homes and houses. They shared the different types of house we live in from caravans to detached houses as well as houses through the ages. They showed some great colourful artwork based on Paul Horton and some wonderful models of different houses. The children all sat so beautifully and have clearly enjoyed their learning.

### School Improvement Update - Outdoor Learning

You will remember from my letters at the end of last term and start of the year that one of our key school focuses this year is the development of greater opportunity for outdoor learning. Due to the new OFSTED framework introduced in September, like most schools, we are taking the opportunity to review our curriculum offer across the school. Outdoor learning now forms a key part of our curriculum statement.

*The primary intention of our curriculum is in line with our school vision - Include, Inspire and Achieve. Development of key learning behaviours is the core of all learning to ensure that learning is deep and embedded. Specific teaching of key aspects of learning – empathy, managing feelings, self-confidence, motivation and social skills underpin all learning. We ensure that learning is based around engaging and fun topics and themes and in addition to class-based learning, we ensure that there is a whole school entitlement for all children to learn outside the classroom.*

Learning outside the classroom is proven to enhance motivation and to be beneficial for mental health. During this academic year, we will be reviewing all subjects – how they link to our themes and topics and how **skills** and **knowledge** progress across the school. As part of this review we will be identifying and planning regular opportunities for learning to take place outdoors – within our fantastic green and wildlife spaces and grounds but also in the local area and as part of educational visits.



We have already completed a review of Art and RE and will aim to share examples of learning with you whenever possible – especially via Facebook & Twitter where we can include photos and videos.

Mrs Watson also recently visited one of our trust schools based in Keighley who have a Platinum Level award for Outdoor Learning. Her focus was especially on Science learning opportunities and her findings will now be disseminated to enhance our own science offer.

### **Year 6 Mobile Phones**

As you may be aware, as part of transition to Year 7, we allow our Year 6 children to carry mobile phones with them into school if authorised by parents in writing. Many of the children walk home alone and we understand that parents like to be in contact with them. We do however have a strict policy of phones being handed to the teacher as soon as children enter school. They are locked away and returned only as children leave. We have recently spoken to Yr 6 and requested that phones are not used for videoing, photographs or social media use first thing in the morning in the playground before staff arrive for 'hands up' to bring children in. If your child is in Year 6 and brings a phone with them, please could you remind them of this request. Unfortunately, should any child not follow these instructions, they will need to begin handing their phone in to the school office before entering the playground. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Academy Advisor Visit**

Mrs Wheatcroft, our new advisor from Northern Star Academies Trust, visited last week for her first of 6 school improvement visits that are scheduled for this school year. She was delighted with our progress and attainment from the summer which put us 'well above national average' for progress in Reading and Writing and 'above average' in Maths. She complemented us on our learning environments, children's manners and learning behaviours that she saw in class and for our on-going inclusive approach. She was especially pleased with our new Early Years Foundation Stage provision and complemented the team on all the hard work that was put in over the summer to get the new indoor and outdoor spaces ready for the new school year. Well done everyone.

Your Sincerely,

Garry de Castro Morland  
Headteacher



High Street, Harrogate, HG2 7LL

Tel: 01423 884 780 | Fax: 01423 880 612 | Email: [admin@starbeck.n-yorks.sch.uk](mailto:admin@starbeck.n-yorks.sch.uk)

