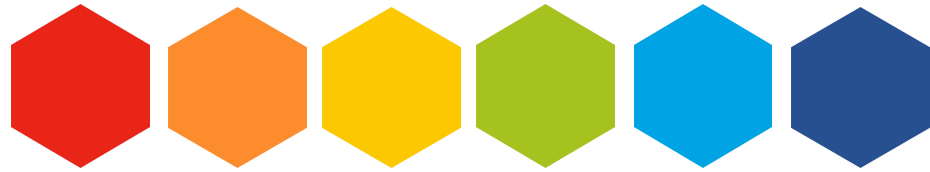


Curriculum News

June 2016



What an adventure!

The Outdoor and Adventurous Activities element of the PE curriculum is important (and neglected in some schools). As well as using our own grounds, and specialist sites such as Herd Farm near Eccup and Fanwood Activity Centre (Gomersall), we take children on residential in Years 5 and 6 and take OAA to a different level!

Before half term, Year 5 spent an enjoyable and successful week up in the Yorkshire Dales completing a range of walks, caving and mountain biking. Many thanks to Chris Young (British Cycling), Matt Asquith (East Bradford Cycle Club) and Charlie Pyatt (West Leeds Sports Partnership) for their support with this once again. Congratulations to Mrs Hawkhead for her excellent organisation of the residential.

Year 6 are enjoying a new OAA residential this week: three days for each class at How Stean Gorge near Pateley Bridge. They are camping (lucky with the weather) and are engaged in some very challenging OAA including abseiling, gorge walking, kayaking and 'via ferrata'.



6CH 'Gorge Walking' at How Stean on Monday

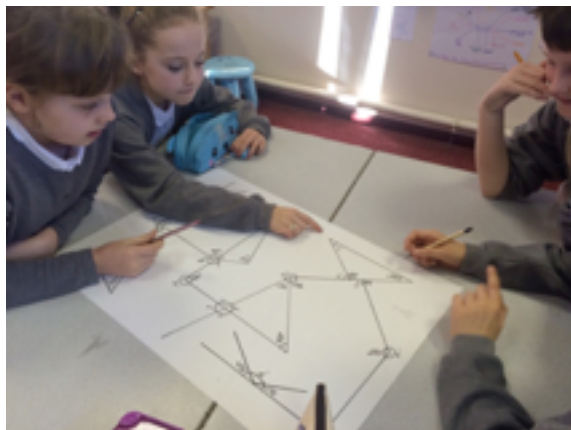


Y5 Megan caving at Ribblehead in May



Academisation?

Since my last newsletter, the government has performed a 'U Turn' as regards its plans to force all schools to become academies. This is to be welcomed. We will be looking to form one or more 'learning alliances' with other, probably local, schools but intend to continue to play an active role with the local authority and local cluster arrangements.



Year 5 collaborating on an angles investigation

A new family at school...

We usually welcome new families to Farfield but this one is already causing some problems! You may have noticed, or heard of, a large amount of carcasses and 'dead bits' around the juniors: chickens (not ours), rabbits, rats... It seems a fox family has had a successful breeding season and is based under Fun Club. They are proving a bit of a distraction to 6CH when they come out to explore!

These arrivals have led to a mini-topic in 6CH and debate in school council and assembly. At the moment we intend to let them be and simply ensure that our livestock and bins are secure.



Good job s/he didn't pop out like this during the SATs!

Sex and Relationship Education consultation

In my last newsletter, I suggested that an SRE consultation was imminent. This has now been delayed as we have been informed of a new model scheme of work being published in September by Leeds/Islington Councils and we intend to base our policy and practice on this.

This half term, Year 5 will learn about puberty and year 6 will recap their learning on puberty and develop their understanding of conception, pregnancy and birth (without the live film of a birth previously shown).

Staff and governors have had input into a revised draft policy on this area, but I have decided not to share this with parents until I can make amendments based on the publication of the new model scheme of work.



Year 3 investigating the purpose of a plant stem

School News



Sports and PE News

In the past half term, we have:

- Attended the West Leeds football finals as local champions. We played well but didn't progress this time to the city finals
- Competed in U9 and U11 cricket tournaments
- Visited Fanwoods (Y4) and Herd Farm (Y5) as part of our adventurous activity curriculum
- Taken part in sports festivals with other schools in Y1, 3, 4 and 5

Years 2 and 6 have sports festivals this half term. We also have Sports Day coming up on Wednesday 13th July as well as football, tennis and cricket competitions.

PTA News

The Race Night on Friday 6th May was a big success and raised over £400! Many thanks to all our sponsors and to those that supported the event. Special thanks to all the volunteers, especially to the Rose family who did most of the organising and hosting.

The Camp-Over is coming: June 18th/19th. We have a brilliant range of entertainment again this year: singing, world-class juggling and a sheepdog exhibition. The best bit of Camp-Over, whether you are staying overnight or just for the day, is the chance for the children to play outside with so many other children for hours and hours and hours...

Day tickets and camping tickets are selling well - don't miss out! If you have mislaid the booking form, please check your emails or visit either office. Please don't leave it to the last minute as that makes food and drink planning very difficult.

Olympic Hopes

Fingers crossed for former pupil Nile Wilson who continues to excel for the Men's British Gymnastics Team and hopes to be part of the British team in Rio. Most recently, he triumphed at the 2016 European Championships, taking individual gold on high-bar as well as being part of the team that won silver.

Best wishes also to former pupil James King who has just completed a season as a first year professional at Bradford City Football Club.

School News



Local football champions



Matthew Tiffany - booked to appear at the Camp-Over. Not to be missed!



Nile: On his way to Rio?



Attendance and holidays

Attendance at school continues to be good: 97.3% last half term and 96.7% so far this year. Thank you for your support with this.

Holidays in term time were in the news again recently. Our position is unchanged: we would rather families didn't take their children out of school but we are not inclined to seek to fine families except in the most exceptional of circumstances (and have never done so). We are not allowed to authorise holidays in term time and do agree with the government that a two week holiday in term time **every year** is likely to be educationally damaging as it would equate to about two full terms of missed schooling by the time they reach 18.

Budget and minibus

Our new school budget does project in-year deficits due to government policy around staffing costs, but we have decided to invest some of our balances in things like learning resources in Foundation Stage and Year 1, some interactive panels to replace ineffective classroom projectors, investments in repairs and enhancements on the grounds and a new wheelchair accessible minibus (with considerable help from the PTA). We hope to be able to see these investments by September.

Assessment

Although the more formal tests in Year 2 and Year 6 were completed in May, teachers will still be assessing reading, writing and maths during June (as well as writing reports) against very strict and challenging new criteria. Year 1 will also be completing statutory Phonics tests and a maths assessment for a project that we are involved in with Oxford University assessing the efficacy of a Year 2 maths intervention that we hope to be part of next year.

Reports

Reports will be published at different times for different year groups across July. This will be better for us administratively and also gives families with multiple siblings the chance to focus on one report at a time. This year, we hope to include in the reports more assessment information for parents by attaching a curriculum report for Writing and for Number from our new tracking system: Classroom Monitor. This report should demonstrate areas of progress and those specific areas where a child may need additional work.



From the top: Reception at Meanwood Valley Farm; Year 1 at Rodley Nature Reserve and Year 2 learning about newts at Skelton Grange.

We welcome the increased emphasis on plants and animals in the new science national curriculum. We intend to develop the current Farfield Farm classroom into a more generic resource to support nature studies.

**Mr Harris, on behalf
of the governors**