

Spring Meadow Newsletter

September 2015

Welcome back to the new school year! I hope you had a great summer and managed to spend some quality time with your children. I know some of you did, as I saw you in and around Ely as I was familiarising myself with the city!

Thank you to all the parents who took the time to attend our Year 1 and 2 welcome meetings. I would like to reiterate the importance of the parent-school partnership in the interest of the children.

Well done to all the children who took part in the Summer Reading Challenge. It is really encouraging to know that so many children are reading not just at home but over the holidays. Keep it up! If you are interested in supporting the school with our drive to improve reading as a reading volunteer, please speak either with your child's class teacher or myself, Mr Cooper.

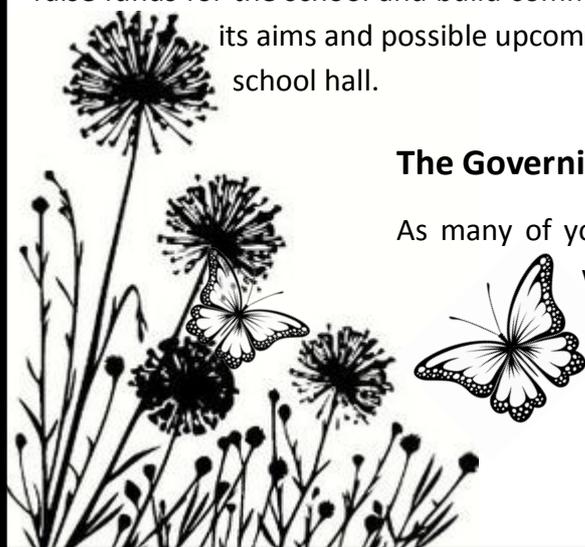
One of our main focuses for school improvement is writing. Last year 93% of our year 2 children achieved age-related expected or above in Reading, Writing and Maths. This is great news and worthy of celebrating. The school has done equally well in Reading and Maths across the school, but our achievement in Writing across the school is a little bit behind the other core subjects. This tends to be the trend nationally. So this year we will be looking at lots of ways to improve children's writing across the school including training for the staff team and a higher focus on writing when we are celebrating our children's achievements. Every newsletter will feature a sample of writing from a child who has shown exceptional skill in their writing or has made significant progress. The idea behind this is to promote good writing and to celebrate achievements. All children progress at different rates, so there is no need to compare the chosen writing with your child's efforts.

PSA

Our Parent Staff Association is set to be re-launched this month but we need to establish a committee. Many of you have expressed an interest in joining. The main function of the PSA is to raise funds for the school and build community relations. There will be a meeting to discuss the PSA, its aims and possible upcoming events on **Thursday 1 October 2015 at 6pm** in the main school hall.

The Governing Body

As many of you are aware, there are three parent governor vacancies with our governing body. We are particularly keen to have any parents with a background in finance. If you are keen to support the school in this way, please attend our prospective governors' presentation on **Monday 28 September 2015 at 6pm** in the main hall.



Congestion at the start and end of the school day

A number of you have complained about the traffic congestion, particularly at the start of the school day outside the school. The school have contacted PCSOs in an attempt to provide some supervision. I will be contacting both the Headteachers of St Mary's and The Isle of Ely school to see how we can tackle this issue together.

We would also encourage you where possible to Park and Stride i.e. park away from the school and walk the rest of the way with your children.



Attendance

It is so important that your children attend school regularly. Persistent absence has a serious impact on your children's achievement and social well-being. At Spring Meadow, our overall attendance is currently 91% which is below the expected 95%. A number of parents have requested term time leave before the holidays and since we have started back at school, which I have not authorised. I am happy to discuss individual cases. The advice from the government and the County now is the fines should be imposed to any family taking term time holidays. I will be meeting with parents if their child's attendance that dips below 90% now, not 85% as it was before the summer. If absence is much below this, then the education welfare office will be involved.

To improve attendance, I have introduced an attendance cup, which will go to the class that has the best attendance each week. I have already mentioned this to Years 1 and 2 in assembly and they were quite excited about it. We will be using the attendance teddy until the cup arrives!!

'New to You'

Thursday 24th September

@ 2.45p.m.

Do you like a bargain?? Useable school uniform for sale from only 50p!!

Congratulations to all our budding gardeners!

Mr Cooper has received an email informing us we have been awarded joint 2nd place in the Bernie Parker Gardening competition and won £150 for the school garden project. Well done.



Dates for your diary!

School Term Dates 2015/2016

Autumn Term 2015

2nd September	Professional Day
3rd September – 23rd October	
26th October – 30th October	Half Term
2nd November	Professional Day
3rd November – 18th December	

Spring Term 2016

4th January	Professional Day
5th January – 12th February	
15th February – 19th February	Half Term
22nd February – 24th March	

Summer Term 2016

11th April	Professional Day
12th April – 27th May	
30th May – 3rd June	Half Term
6th June	Professional Day
7th June – 21st July	