



Drapers' Pyrgo
Priory School

Summer Term 2017 Newsletter for Parents, Friends and Governors

The sun is shining, SATs are a distant memory and weary parents, children and staff are anticipating a well-earned, six-week rest: the end of another successful and eventful school year has arrived. And what a year it has been! Apart from excellent academic progress and attainment across the school, we might reflect on the many successes and achievements of our children since September 2016.

Sporting achievements

Maintaining our traditions of sporting excellence in a wide range of disciplines, Drapers' Pyrgo Priory sports teams have once again completed a highly successful year, competing in numerous competitions and winning many. The teams deserve to be congratulated on winning The Harold Hill Schools boys' football league, girls' football festival, mixed rounders competition, mixed basketball competition, mixed cricket contest and the Year 6 section of the Drapers' schools' athletics tournament. Perhaps our most noteworthy and memorable sporting events, however, came during our hugely enjoyable sports days in which the traditional pursuits of egg-and-spoon racing, sack racing and obstacle courses provided spectacular entertainment and pride for the children and parents alike. We should also commend those present and past pupils who have excelled outside school in sport, such as Nick Nkansa-Dwamena who, as part of his West Ham United juniors team won a European football competition in France, or Brook Eaton, an ex-pupil who is now a British boxing champion.

Creative achievements

During this academic year, we were reminded once again of the superb creative talent we nurture in our school. Our t-shirt designing competition – the brain-child of the entrepreneurial Ileana Sharpe – which culminated in a democratically chosen winner during a fashion-show style celebration assembly, was one of the many highlights. If you attended our Open Day Art Exhibition, you will have marvelled at the artistic creations on display whilst those who experienced any of our creative arts performances over the year will have been equally impressed: parents, carers, staff and governors were wowed by the recent Year 6 production of 'Flares', our choir graced the 02, Queen's Theatre and St Francis Hospice with their harmonious voices and the younger children in the school dazzled us with their annual Nativity plays. Our inaugural 'open mic' poetry contest was a rumbustious success, whilst the long shadows cast by twirling children beneath a setting sun towards the end of our annual country dancing celebration, emblazoned unforgettable images of joy and community spirit in our hearts and minds.

Trips and school events

This was also another year in which the children enjoyed a great range of out-of-class learning opportunities. Most memorable, perhaps, were: our young entrepreneurs' trip to a London-based company called Accenture to design and market a mobile phone app; a special Year 5 workshop at Tate Modern in which an array of sensory art was experienced; our eventful, character-building residential trips to Thriftwood and Danbury; the eye-opening agricultural show in Peterborough; our participation in a creative D.T. workshop at Maylands Drapers'; the gastronomic extravaganza provided by the 'Roots to Food' road show; a host of road safety theatrical events; Christmas carol church services and many other events.

Our responsibilities towards the wider community were, once again, reinforced over the year. Thus, the children observed several 'two minutes of silence' occasions, deepening their understanding of the suffering of others and how to pay respects to victims of tragedy and war. Democratic values were also learnt during the election of a new head boy and girl (Michael-Tyler Watson and Bobbi Harrington) following lively hustings and election by secret ballot. We also carried out a number of fund-raising activities, sometimes led by the School Council, in which money was raised for causes such as St Francis Hospice, several Red Nose Day charities and MacMillan Nurses, or for internal improvements such as our play equipment or new books from our bookfairs – an amazing £2,500 worth of new books acquired over the academic year! Of course, without parental support, none of these would have been possible and our thanks are, therefore, duly extended.

The Drapers' Multi-Academy Trust

To conclude this section of the newsletter, we might reflect on our deepening involvement with the Drapers' Multi-Academy Trust over the past year and the development of strong links with the new governing body whose contributions and support to date have been greatly appreciated. On this note, there is currently a vacancy for a parent-governor on the governing body. If you might be interested in standing for this position, please contact our office for further information.

Reminders and Notifications:

Fond Farewells and Warm Welcomes

Sadly, the academic year will end with the departure of many valued members of staff. At the end of this term, we will say our fond farewells to five highly regarded teachers – some of whom have been here for many years. Veterans of Drapers' Pyrgo Priory, Mrs Etheridge, Miss Whelan and Miss Keen, have all found opportunities to further their careers elsewhere, Mr Folan will be returning to his native Ireland to continue teaching and Mr Suleman will be taking up a teaching position in a nearby borough. Along with the governors, children and parents, we would like to extend our thanks to all five departing teachers for their hard work and contributions towards the successful running of our school and wish them the very best for the future. We are sure we speak for all the children, parents, staff and governors, too, as we send our best wishes and prayers to Mrs Collins, our dedicated Pupil Premium Champion, who has just commenced a period of extended sick leave.

To fill the vacancies left by the departing teachers, we will be welcoming a number of staff from September. Miss Freeman, Miss Patten and Mr Bannon will take up positions as NQTs whilst Mrs Read will provide cover and work as our Pupil Premium Champion during Mrs Collins' absence. Mrs Persaud will begin training within the school as an NQT. We are sure that they will all prove to be invaluable additions to our school community.

Of course, we will also be saying goodbye to the current Year 6 cohort of children who will be furthering their education in their respective secondary schools. We wish them success and happiness in their endeavours.

Class Changes

This year, all parents and carers will receive written confirmation of their child's new class and teacher on Wednesday 19th July. The children will meet their new teachers and visit their new classrooms on Friday 21st July.

Spelling Bee

Congratulations to our KS2 team – comprising Y4 and 5 children – for winning the recent competition held at Drapers' Academy, and to their KS1 counterparts who came a commendable second.

Reading books and library books

If you have not already done so, please ensure that these are all returned to your child's class teacher by the end of this week.

Summer Reading Challenge

Please note that all children have been encouraged to participate in Havering Libraries' Summer Reading Challenge. The children have been provided with information on how to take part, or you can find further information by visiting one of the local libraries.

Life-saving award

Mrs Persaud, our HLTA who is about to train as a teacher, recently won the Workplace Hero award from St John Ambulance commending her on a life-saving manoeuvre that she conducted on a choking child earlier in the year. We are, of course, very grateful for her actions and are pleased to note the value of having an ongoing first-aid training programme in our school.

sQuid Reminder

Please check your child's account to ensure that outstanding debts are paid and that it is in credit for the commencement of the Autumn Term. Due to an increasing number of high debts on sQuid, from September 2017, if debts go over £10, then your child will be provided with a sandwich if they order a school dinner until the debt is cleared.

Children moving into Year 3 will no longer be entitled to Universal Free School Meals. Letters have been sent out with your child's sQuid registration details, please ensure that they are registered before September.

Snack Money

Snack money of £2 for the Infants will be due at the beginning of the Autumn Term.

After-School Clubs

A list of all after-school clubs will be sent home at the beginning of the new term. As usual, these will include a range of sports activities as well as art, dance, choir etc... Please return your applications to the office or your child's class teacher. Other clubs held during the day, such as our advanced readers' club, match attacks, Scrabble, chess etc..., will also continue in September.

Sale of Uniform

Uniform is sold in the Hall every Monday morning from 8.30am. If you wish to buy at other times, please note the Office cannot sell uniform between 8.30am and 10.00am as it is very busy.

Guitar lessons

We currently have a few spaces available for guitar lessons for Juniors. Lessons cost £3 a week and are invoiced per half term. Please see the Office if you are interested.

Cool Milk

If your child is starting in Reception, they are entitled to free milk until their 5th birthday. You need to register their details at www.coolmilk.com or ask the Office for a registration form. Once they reach their 5th birthday, you will be contacted by Cool Milk asking you to pay for their milk.

Donations of tissues

At the start of the new term we would be very grateful for donations of boxes of tissues for classrooms. Please give these to your child to hand in to their teacher.

Parent and Carer Conduct Policy

It is with some regret that recent events across the MAT schools have compelled us to introduce a Parent and Carer Code of Conduct policy. There will now be an expectation for all parents and carers to read and agree to our policy which will be distributed at the beginning of the Autumn term.

Next year's INSET days:

4th & 5th September, 24th November, 2nd January, 25th May

We hope that you and your children have a safe, restful and enjoyable summer break and look forward to welcoming you back – bar the Year 6 children who we wish every success in their new schools – in September.