



Castor Church of England Primary School

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Monday 22nd July 2019

Dear Parents,

As we approach the end of the academic year, we wave goodbye to our older children in Year 6 as they start their secondary school adventure and we say “hello and welcome” to our newest recruits who will be joining us for the start of their primary school adventure. To everybody in between, we say see you in six weeks!

It has certainly been a term full of academic success, exciting curriculum events and whole school celebrations.

Academic attainment

All statutory assessments have now been completed and parents have been informed of their child’s individual results. Although provisional at the moment, we are now able to share our pupil outcomes with you. We are very pleased that the standards set last year have been maintained, and we are again above the national averages in almost every area throughout the school.

Year Group	Statutory Assessment	Castor C of E Primary 2019	National average 2019 (National average for 2018 used where 2019 is not yet available)
Reception	Good Level of Development	82%	72%
Year 1	Phonics Screening Check	83%	82%
Year 2	Reading	81%	75%
	Writing	74%	70%
	Maths	81%	76%
	Reading, writing and Maths combined	74%	65%
	Phonics Screening Check – retest where applicable	100%	92%
Year 6	Reading	83%	73%
	Writing	79%	78%
	Maths	88%	79%
	Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar	71%	78%
	Reading, Writing and Maths combined	79%	65%

Well done to the children, who always work so hard, and thank you for your support with your child’s education. It really does make a difference.

“We have faith in God, ourselves and everyone around us”

Church School

Earlier in the year, we set our Christian vision of 'We have faith in God, ourselves and everyone around us'. As the year has progressed, the children have become more and more articulate in their discussions around this and what it means to them as a child at our school. As parents within the school, and after more than 6 months with this vision in place, you should now start to see examples of this Christian vision within our practice.

Our Christian value for this half term has been 'Trust', and this links perfectly with our vision. We have related this to the Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30). Just like the master placed his trust on the servants, God places his trust in us to make the most of our God-given talents, and our children have done this in so many ways this year. If ever the children feel lacking in trust, this is a parable that they are hopefully able to relate back to, just as they are able to with Zacchaeus and the Christian value of forgiveness.

Attendance

We have always said that for the children to do well in school, they have to be here as often as they can be. For the academic year 2017-18, our whole school attendance was 96.74%. Whilst we were relatively pleased with this, we had really wanted to be above 97%. I am pleased to say that this year, our attendance is 97.29%, which is excellent. Well done and thank you for your support in achieving this.

Although not the intention behind it, the INSET day in June does seem to have helped with this, as we have had fewer requests for leave of absence for long weekends away. It was great to hear from the children what they had done on this day and feedback from parents is that you enjoyed having the opportunity to have a family day out or time away. For the staff, it was a very useful day and we feel well prepared for September and welcoming the children back. Please note that there will be an INSET day at the same time next year - Friday June 26th.

Bank and Shop

We are at the end of our first year with the bank and shop, and it has become a central part of school. We are seeing increased motivation from the children to do well in school, whether that be in their spellings and times tables, or in their end of term tests or end of Key Stage tests. The children are becoming increasingly aware of the concept of financial management and we are seeing some great examples of children planning ahead with their saving and spending. We know that children very much 'live in the moment' so this is an important skill for them to develop. At the start of June, we welcomed Councillor Lynne Ayers, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Skills and the University, who came specifically to see the bank and shop - she was very impressed with what she saw and how motivated the children are to succeed in school.

Curriculum Enrichment

We recently had a mobile planetarium visit the school and lead workshops for the children in Year 1 and Year 5. The children were captivated by the show and the special effects created within the dome. I hope that they came home and told you all about it!

Our Year 4 children enjoyed a great day at the Peterborough Museum as part of their Roman topic. They were able to learn through experience about life as a Roman citizen, with lots of hands on activities to bring the past to life.

Our Year 6 children went on their residential visit to Hilltop at the end of June, and from what the children have said, it lived up to every expectation that they had of it. The adults that went on the visit said that the children were a credit to themselves and the school, and that they demonstrated every quality that we know they have shown all year. I hope this visit has been the perfect end to a great year for them.

One of the Hilltop instructors was unfortunately taken ill during the visit, and our children went to the trouble of making and sending a 'Get Well Soon' card, which I know was very much appreciated. An act of kindness typical of the staff and children at our school.

The Arts

Our dancers have again made us very proud with their performances at the Country Dancing Festival and the Dance Festival at The Cresset Theatre. The dances were very well rehearsed and the children performed them with such energy and enthusiasm. Their confidence and bravery when performing on stage always impresses me, and they make it seem almost effortless (although we know it isn't!). Well done to all those involved. We have also welcomed into school the Peterborough Music Hub who led a Samba drumming workshop for our children in Key Stage 2 - I think the sound created could be heard all round the village! The children certainly showed natural rhythm.

The musical talent within our school was also on display during the concert put on by our budding pianists and guitarists. These children have made great progress under Mr Agar and Mrs Atack. If this is something you would like your child to do, details of how to arrange lessons for your child can be found on the Autumn Term Clubs letter, which is coming home tomorrow.

Sports update

In addition to our UNICEF award, we have now also received the School Games Mark Gold Award. The School Games Mark is a government led awards scheme launched in 2012 to reward schools for their commitment to the development of competition across their school and into the community. This is a great achievement highlighting the wide range of PE lessons, sporting tournaments and extra-curricular clubs available at our school throughout the year. Well done to Mrs Brant for leading us to this award, and also to the staff who put on the range of extra-curricular activities that we have.

The children had a fantastic, sun-filled morning at the SOKE Athletics event this year. We are proud, as always, of all those who took part. They gave maximum effort in their running, skipping, throwing and jumping. Thank you to the many parents and grandparents who cheered everyone on, we hope you had fun! Our children's athletic talent was also on show during our Sports' Day. The event had the perfect balance of participation and competition, with lots of cheering and encouragement along the way. I still think I won the staff race, but the video replay seems to suggest otherwise!

Those of you who were in our Achievement Assembly last Friday will have seen the new football kits that the children were wearing. We are very grateful to the two companies who have kindly sponsored these kits – Halls The Chemist for the Year 3 and Year 4 Kit and the Selladoor Theatre for the Year 5 and Year 6 kit. The children look very smart in their new kits and can't wait to play some matches in them next year!

UNICEF

On the back of us achieving the UNICEF Silver award, we can now confirm that the total amount raised for UNICEF during the Soccer Aid Playground Challenge was £444.65. That is an incredible amount and will all go towards the work of UNICEF, helping to ensure that all children worldwide are able to access the rights of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child as we are able to.

An update from Friends of Castor C of E School

"Friends are delighted to announce that we raised £1000 from our summer disco. Over this year we have raised approximately £7000 - thank you for your fabulous support. This money raised has included our Race Night, discos, raffles, a Joules Seconds Sale and the sponsored read. We won't know the raffle total until the end of term, but tickets have gone out in book bags and the raffle draw will be on the last day of term. Any money from raffle tickets will hopefully go towards new playground markings in the new academic year.

Contributions from Friends have been to the bank and shop plus an ongoing stock commitment, Year 2 London trip, Doodles Circus Skills, Chicks in Reception, Easter egg donation to all children, new library books and we have committed to new performance lights in the school hall. The Mothers' Day and Fathers' Day shops were very popular amongst the children.

We will be holding our AGM in the autumn (date to follow) and we welcome anyone that wishes to be involved in our future fundraising"

Claire Pickett, Chair of Friends of Castor C of E School

School lunches

I am pleased to confirm that Nila Khunti, who previously worked for Michelle Taylor and then for The Farm Kitchen, has been employed by the school to serve the children's lunches from September. This is great news for us and the children, and will ensure continuity and familiarity for the children.

Please remember that all menus for September are now live and open for ordering. The last chance for ordering meals for the week beginning 4th September is Tuesday 27th August.

Farewells

At the end of this year we also say goodbye to Mrs McMenemy and Miss McAllister as they move on to their new positions. We thank them once again for their hard work and know that they will remain friends of the school. Mrs Boulton who has been teaching in Year 2 for the last two terms, will also be leaving her position. We thank her very much for her hard work in what is an important year for the children. As we know, Mrs Boulton never quite manages to get away from us, and we are delighted that she will continue to work with us on maintaining our strong links with the Church, continuing with the school choir, as well as being our RE Leader.

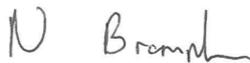
And finally...

With just a few days left of term, we are looking forward to tonight's performance of the Year 5 and Year 6 play, 'The Tempest'. Please can children return to school at 5.30pm the performance will start at 6pm.

We are also preparing to say our final goodbyes to our Year 6 children. Our Leavers' Service will be in Church at 10am on Tuesday 23rd July, and our final Achievement Assembly will be in school at 2pm on Wednesday 24th July. All parents are welcome to come to these events.

Thank you all for your continued support of the school. I hope you have a lovely summer holiday with your families, however you may be spending it, and we look forward to welcoming you back to school on Wednesday 4th September.

Yours sincerely,



Mr N Brompton
Headteacher

