



Mrs Delia Sheppard
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Dear Parents

I do hope you had a good Christmas time and I wish you all a Happy New Year. I must start by thanking you all for the very lovely gifts, cards and expressions of thanks that I and my staff received at Christmas; we really appreciate your kindness and support. During the children's visit to the Ashmolean on Thursday they discovered the theme of this term's mystery topic ...



Japanese Samurai Warriors!



The teachers have a stimulating curriculum planned for the children. As well as studying the Samurai Warrior and his way of life the children's investigations will include, - armoured animals, people who protect or help us, Japanese art and customs, origami, history and present day life – to name but a few!

Visiting the Ashmolean and seeing a genuine samurai suit of armour has certainly helped bring the topic alive. To further enhance the theme, on **Monday 19th January 2015** we are having a Japanese day when the children and staff will come to school dressed in Japanese outfits. The children will spend time during the day taking part in various Japanese customs and activities including a Japanese tea party.

This is an exciting topic that we believe will grab the children's imaginations; I look forward to seeing the results that they produce in their work over term three.

Parent Workshops

We have two Parent Workshops coming up. The workshops are designed to help you gain a deeper understanding of the school's approach to a subject and so improve the support you can give your child.

The first workshop is on **Thursday 22nd January 2015 at 7.30pm**. This workshop is on Big Write. Big Write is the school's approach to Literacy and the workshop is an opportunity to find out, what and how, we teach your child. The road to ensuring a child has robust writing skills starts a long time before pen is put to paper and skills that lead to improvement can be taught to children at any stage or ability. Therefore this workshop is for all parents of children in all year groups and I would encourage you to join us.

Our second workshop is on **Thursday 26th February 2015 at 7.30pm** (which is the first week of term four). This workshop is on 'Mathematics'. For many of us, ideas children learn in mathematics today, seem very different to what we learnt at school. This often makes the concepts children need to know and why they need to know them seem like a mystery! Our workshop is designed help clarify our approach to mathematics. Come along and learn the school's approach to place value, measure and calculation. This workshop will help you understand how to broaden your child's knowledge of mathematics whatever stage they are at and we hope to see many of you with us.

Academy

A new date has been added to the date list (which you can find on our website). On the **Tuesday 13th January 2015 at 9.15 am** Bishop David Jennings will be coming to school to take an assembly that will celebrate our new academy status. With him will be the Chair of the Board of Directors of ODST, Cathy Winrow; the Director of Education for the Diocese of Oxford and CEO of ODST, Anne Davey and ODST Director of Schools, David Cousins. A number of the school's governing body will also be in attendance including Rev. Keith Nicholls and Louis Kunzig the Chair of Governors.

The Bishop will visit and bless each classroom and our outdoor learning areas. This will be an important occasion for the school and, while we recognise it may be difficult for many of you, we warmly invite you to attend. If you are able to join us please could you inform the office so that we can have an idea of numbers as this will help with the organisation of the morning, thank you.

Parking

Thank you for your considerate parking. Councillor Maureen Hunt is investigating ways that the volume of traffic travelling through the village during peak periods might be reduced.

Please remember that if you have reason to park in the staff car park you should inform Mrs Derrett at the beginning of each term, thank you.

Booking your Summer Holiday

This year we have added three of our INSET days, (these are days that the school is closed to pupils), to the end of the summer term. Therefore the last day of the school year will be July 17th, 2015 rather than July 22nd, 2015. This means that parents can book earlier holidays without incurring unauthorised absences. We hope this will be helpful to you and will avoid requests for Leave of Absence. Before booking your holiday please consult our Leave of Absence Policy which can be found on the school's website.

Ice Hockey

On the first Thursday of term four that is **Thursday 26th February 2015** children in Y2 will start their Ice Hockey lessons. Children will travel by coach and during term four they will not swim. Past Y2 children have really enjoyed their Ice Hockey lesson and I'm sure they will be a hit again!

Lent

This year Lent begins on Wednesday 18th February which is during the holiday therefore on **Monday 9th February 2015** before we break up Rev. Keith will be visiting each class to teach the children the about Ash Wednesday, the festival of Lent and its place in the Anglican Church today.

Fund Raising through Recycling

Mrs Budge continues to keep money coming into the school through her determined recycling efforts and we are very grateful for the work that she does and the money that she raises.

Some schemes have now closed so we are no longer collecting baby wipes packaging or yogurt pots.

We are continuing to collect Air & Home Care trigger heads, pumps and caps and flexible home cleaning wipes packs. We are currently in place to win 3rd prize for our efforts with this which could mean a £450 boost to our fundraising. However it would be wonderful to win the top prize of £1,000. Please speak to anyone you might have contact with who could help us. People could include office cleaners and other industrial cleaner or maybe you have cleaner at home who cleans elsewhere and could collect for us. Also remember to send in your own recycling in too.

We now collect Ink Cartridges & Branded Toner Cartridges and throughout January we are collecting mobile phones (working or not). So start your spring cleaning early and turn out your draws and cupboards!

Over the last six weeks our collected rubbish has generated £181.43!

Dance Festival

On **Thursday 12th February 2015** Y2 will be taking part in the Ascot & Maidenhead School Sport Partnership Dance Festival. They will perform an Irish Dance and considering their wonderful owl dance in the Nativity I'm sure they will steal the show!

End of Term

This rather short term will end on Friday 13th February 2015.

Kind regards



Mrs D Sheppard