



Dear Parents and Carers

SHIRE OAK
C of E (VC) Primary School

Thank you to the families and friends who joined us this morning for Y1 assembly. It was good to see the wide range of learning that the children are doing in Miss Miller's class and to see the class explaining about it so confidently. They also gave us a timely reminder of the reasons why we participate in the national **Children in Need** day- thank you for your help with finding spotty clothes and helping children to accessorise in such a cheerful way today whilst raising money through donations. (As an aside, we never check that a child has 'paid' in order to dress up because we simply have donation pots in class. Similarly, we do not want to put pressure on children who don't want to take part in these types of event and respect their choices and their family's wishes.)

As **Anti Bullying Fortnight** draws to a close I am very pleased to tell you that the children have been discussing this issue with a great deal of sensitivity and maturity. The older children in particular are becoming very skilled in properly identifying bullying as someone repeatedly trying to make someone upset. This distinction is important because we know that all children will have the occasional falling out and may even experience behaviour that is unwelcome and unacceptable in school – but is not bullying. When these poor behaviours get called bullying it makes it much harder to identify real bullying and make sure that it is stopped. The children worked together in assembly to answer the questions 'What is bullying?' 'What is not bullying?' and 'What can we do about bullying?' These have been turned into a charter for our school and we are now making sure that all children are given the opportunity to sign up to it and receive a badge as a token of their pledge. When you see you child wearing the badge, please ask them about it and help them to be clear that if they, or anyone they know, is being bullied that our message is to **TELL!** Please also help us by telling us straight away if your child has told you something of this nature, and never approach another child about it yourself at school.



The **Anti Bullying Policy** and the **Behaviour Policy** have both been worked on a lot and we are now in the final consultation stage. The policies set out the way we work in school to promote positive behaviour that allows for good learning and prepares children well to be responsible citizens - and also how we tackle the issue of bullying, as explained above. We know that these important skills are a challenge for some children so we need to be clear both how we teach it, encourage it and also how we teach children the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. We have also been working on our **Single Equality Scheme**. This policy is a new requirement that sets out how we try to be inclusive and value diversity in our school. All three are available to view on the Have Your Say page in the Governor's section of our website. Do have a look and let us know what you think!



<http://www.shireoakcofepriaryschool.co.uk/have-your-say> At the Winter Festival of Fire on the 1st December the theme is Discovering Shire Oak. There will be the opportunity at this event to talk to the governors face to face, if you'd prefer.

Nomination forms for the position of **Parent Governor** are still available from Susan Koyuncu in the office, but you could come to see me first or contact the chair, Janie, if you would like an informal chat about what it entails. The closing date for nominations is on Monday, after which point we would ask you to put together about 50 words about yourself to let the other parents know who is standing in the election. The governors are vital to running our school and it is important that the views of parents are well represented in this group, so do please consider standing – whatever year your children are in! There is further information from the council here <http://www.educationleeds.co.uk/DisplayText.aspx?section=7&pageno=3> if you would like to read more over the weekend.



Finally, I'd like to tell you about some exciting work we're trying out at the moment. You will know that we think that it is vital that we concentrate in school on key skills. These obviously include reading, writing and maths skills but also include problem solving and the ability to reason and explain thinking. In Year 1 and Year 4 the children and staff are working with a philosopher called Grace Robinson who has helped lots of children to become philosophers too. Tackling questions like 'What is beautiful?' 'What does a baby need?' and the paradox of the Ship of Theseus she is encouraging all children to learn to reason, explain and respectfully argue their points, whilst

listening well and learning from the thinking of others. Some of the techniques she has been using with the children are already being used across the curriculum and we are very pleased with how it is going. The children have been enjoying the lessons too and we are seeing some very mature thinking. After Christmas we are hoping to extend this work to other classes and also as a specific group for children who show a flair for this.

I am going now to meet the children who have been at **Robinwood Activity Centre** in Todmorden on the Year 6 residential. They have had cold, crisp weather for their activities that included archery, climbing, scrambling, the infamous piranha pool and lots more. I am looking forward to hearing all about it, just as I am looking forward to finding out what the other Year 5 and Year 6 children have learnt today on their trip to **Bradford Media Museum**. There will be a lot of tired children this weekend and I suspect some very tired staff who have given so generously of their free time to make this residential possible. A very big thank you to Ian Martin and Judith Swiers and also to Kathryn Welford and Alun Davies who have made sure that the few children who didn't go had worthwhile and fun learning activities to do to.

Have a good weekend!

Yours sincerely

Jane Astrid Devane

Jane Astrid Devane
Headteacher
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We take the safeguarding of children very seriously at our school and we appreciate your help with this. If you have any concerns or observations regarding **health and safety**, please contact Jane Astrid Devane, Rachel Powell or Liz Craven. If you have any concerns or questions regarding **child protection** issues, please speak to Jane Astrid Devane or Hilary Whitehead.

The governors are always interested in hearing the views of parents. If you would like to speak to a governor, then please email the chair, Janie Percy-Smith janieps@aol.com (Janie is also in school most Monday afternoons if you would like to talk to her.)

DIARY DATES

Sunday 20 th November	Roundhay Music concerts at St Theresa's School (details from tutors)
Monday 21 st November	Nominations close for Parent Governor
Wednesday 23 rd November	Y5/6 Cricket in the Classroom at Headingley Carnegie Stadium
Friday 25 th November	Y6 Class sharing assembly 9am. Family and friends very welcome.
Monday 28 th November	New date for training day. Teachers will be working on phonics, spelling and reading and we needed to move the date to get a really good trainer.
Wednesday 30th November	Proposed joint unions industrial action day. It is very likely that school will be closed or partially closed.
Wednesday 30 th November	Y3 Class sharing assembly 9am. Family and friends very welcome.
Wednesday 7 th December	KS1 Christmas production, morning and afternoon
Friday 9 th December	Stay and Play in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
Tuesday 13 th December	Christmas Disco. KS1 4:15-5:15 KS2 5:30-6:30 (to be confirmed)
Tues 13 th & Thurs 15 th December	Carol singing at Wheatfields Hospice
Thursday 15 th December	Carol Service at St Michael's Church 10:45 am.
Friday 16 th December	Homework and attendance celebration assembly in school

New items are marked with *

Please also see the attached flyer about a free football festival this weekend run by Pro-Skills who we have worked with before.

