

# Shillington Lower Newsletter

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## Our value of the month is: Self-Control

FRIDAY 23RD FEBRUARY 2018

### Parents Evenings' feedback

Thank you so much for all your comments and ideas on the boards which were in the hall for parents evenings, where we asked you about what we do well, what your child enjoys about school and what would make things even better. Firstly I wanted to express my gratitude to all of you who took the time to add your comments and to speak to me in person. It is taking a bit of time to get to know you all but every conversation I have helps with that. The staff were all really encouraged by your positive comments and praise for what we do well here at Shillington. Many of you said communication was really good and that is very pleasing. Communication with parents and carers in schools is always really challenging to get right because we are all busy getting on with things in school and sometimes time just passes by so quickly and before we know it an event is upon us! We always aim to get clear, concise and timely information to parents and I believe we have the processes in place to do that. I am very pleased to hear that you also feel that in the main, we get it right. Another strength was the number of positive comments made about how we care for and know all the children really well and about how we are interested in making sure that we meet their needs. We were all really pleased that parents feel this is a strength. I agree with you, as a newcomer when I walk around the school, I truly get an overwhelming sense of this. The adults in our school really do care, all of them. We are delighted that parents recognise this. It was super to see the lists of subjects that the children enjoy and also that they really like the social time they get with their friends. Friendships made at school can become life long ones and are therefore really important.

Parents had a few suggestions about how to improve things. Parents evenings held in the hall raised a few concerns. There is a very valid reason why this needs to be the case. Teachers can easily feel very isolated and vulnerable in the classroom alone and have expressed that they feel more confident if there are other adults around. Generally (and not Shillington specific), this is especially true of younger or more recently qualified members of the teaching staff. If senior staff are close by then any concerns or challenges can be easily managed. The other operational reason is around management of the parents evenings. When our staff are all in one place, then we can direct parents when teachers become available, control the flow of the evening and ensure that waiting times are kept to a minimum. As it was these parents evenings flowed really well and both nights finished on time! This would be rare if the teachers were dotted about. We will always ensure that there is as much physical space around you as possible in order to maximise your privacy but please be aware of this. If you have anything especially sensitive to raise, then you can always address the issue separately. Teachers are always very happy to phone or see parents at other times. Parents please, therefore should you have anything sensitive to raise then perhaps alert the teacher to this and it can be addressed discretely either at the time or at another time. It is great to also hear that you appreciate the 15 minute slots, feeling this is a suitable length of time. A few comments centred around homework. From these we have all decided that a homework book is the way forward so that bits of paper aren't lost or mistaken for colouring ins or drawings. I asked teachers to tell me what homework they set which is detailed below.

Reception	Daily reading. Pencil words. A weekly phonics activity
Year 1	Daily reading. Spellings weekly
Year 2	Daily reading. Spellings/phonics activity weekly
Year 3	Daily reading. A piece of spelling/grammar/punctuation homework weekly. A 1/2 termly or termly project
Year 4	Daily reading. A piece of English weekly (getting children ready for the routines of middle school). A piece of maths weekly (as above). A half termly or termly project

\*Sometimes additional pieces in all year groups may be set to enhance the learning

I can't go back to weekly newsletters. I just wouldn't manage this! But to reassure you that anything urgent will always be sent out via parentmail as usual and so you will not be disadvantaged with this. We have also discussed having more after school clubs which cater for things other than sports. We have in the past offered these and they haven't been taken up by the children. I am mindful of overloading teachers work load after school, but we are discussing this as a staff to see if there are options.

The end of term report was another comment. Again, there are better options that we are looking at and we will try something fresh this year which gives you a more personalised feel to the reports as the comment requested. It is a challenge though, particularly in Reception class where we are required to say exactly what a child can do against each of the early learning goals when we report to parents. This can often feel like a list and not very personal.

Finally... Parent forum. I would love to have an active and productive Parent Forum. I am aware that one of the members of the PTFA was asking around and so we may have some news on this soon!

Regards Miss Woodham

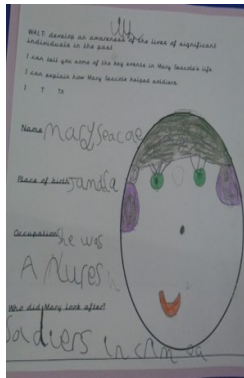
## Pixie News

In Pixie class this week we have been celebrating Chinese New Year. We have been painting with chopsticks, cooked and tasted noodles and made dragon masks. We also worked together to decorate and make a big dragon which we paraded around the school.

## Unicorns News

For our topic this week Unicorns have been learning about Mary Seacole. We have been researching how she has influenced the nursing profession, where she was born and the reasons behind why she wanted to become a nurse.

In Maths we have been learning about measuring length and height. We have focused on the language used to describe length and height and how we can measure accurately.



## Centaur News

In Centaur Class we have been learning about the different types of skeletons in science. We have grouped animals depending on their skeleton and discussed the pros and cons of each. In maths we have been investigating fractions, looking at how to half and quarter numbers. We have also had lots of fun creating our own persuasive advertisement for the Harry Potter Studios using the iPads and green screen.

## Rainbows News

In Rainbows this week, we have been celebrating Chinese New Year. We have been learning how to write our names in Chinese, making Chinese lanterns and finding out about the Zodiac years. In Maths this week we have been learning how to double numbers. We have been singing the Doubling Zoo song.

## Dragons News

In Dragon Class this week we have received a very exciting letter from a school in Kenya! They have written to ask us to help them learn about life in England. We are learning how to write letters so that we can reply to them. In Maths we have been learning about fractions, we designed our own 'fraction flags'. In PE we have been learning a dance from The Lion King Musical, it is very tricky but really good fun!

## Phoenix News

On Thursday 2nd February Phoenix class joined a choir over 7000 children at the O2 arena in London. They sang under the musical direction of conductor David Lawrence and performed with live bands. The children worked hard to learn a vast number of songs by heart including dance moves. The children had an amazing time and will have a fantastic memory to treasure for ever. They were a credit to both their parents and the school showing their values throughout the day.

**Diary Dates;**

1st March—World Book Day, dress in pyjamas or as bedtime story character (£1 donation to library)

5th March—Year 4 PGL Information Evening - 3.40pm

7th March—Pixie & Rainbows Stay & Play 2.45pm

8th March—Year 1 Phonics Morning 9 –10am

26th – 28th March—Year 4 residential visit to Caythorpe Court

**Term Dates;**Spring Term 2018

Wednesday 3rd Jan – Thursday 29th March 2018

Summer Term 2018

Tuesday 17th Apr – Friday 20th Jul

(Half term 28th May – 1st June)

May Day – 7th May 2018 – sch closed

Please note our school is open on the 4th June (some surrounding schools are closed)

On Thursday 8th March 9am - 10am we are hosting a **coffee and cake phonics** morning for Year 1 parents. The session will be an informal opportunity to find out about the upcoming Phonics Screening Test, watch how your child is learning phonics in school and ask questions, as well of course as a hot drink and lots of cake.

### Shillington Superstars

**Rainbows:**

MAX & ETHAN

KARA

**Unicorns:**

ETHAN A

CHARLOTTE

**Dragons:**

ALFIE

LOCHLANN

**Centaur:**

DYLAN

NATALIE

**Phoenix:**

ALL YEAR 4!

LOUIE

Well done everyone!

## Children's Mental Health week 5th-9th February

A huge thank you to those parents who attended or donated cakes for our Chums coffee morning. We were really happy to welcome so many parents, volunteers and members of the community, there was a lovely atmosphere. Thank you also for helping children to dress in bright colours. In total we raised a super £245.95 for this invaluable local charity.

