



Ox Close Federation Newsletter Friday 15th March 2024 – Volume 22

Polling Station – Federation Closed – Thursday 2nd May

I emailed via Arbor yesterday to inform you that the Federation will be closed on Thursday 2nd May 2024. The Local Electoral Service have decided to use Ox Close Federation as a Polling Station. This is a decision that has been challenged strongly by myself and Pam Sneath, Chair of Governors. We have also had support with this challenge from local Councillors. However, despite this, we have been overruled and therefore, the Federation will be closed on this day - both Nursery and Primary. This is due to safeguarding and health and safety reasons. We apologise for the inconvenience that this will cause and also the disruption to your child's education.

Nursery Farm Trip – Monday 18th March

The Nursery are very excited about visiting Hall Hill Farm on Monday. If you have booked a place on the bus, please meet at Nursery at 9am. The bus is due to depart at 9:15am from school. We are sure this will be a wonderful experience for our children and have everything crossed for some nice dry weather but please do bring warm, waterproof clothing with you! For those who are meeting us there, please arrive at the farm at 10am and meet the nursery staff so that we can then let you know which group you will be in for the day.

Year 1/2 Visit to the Spanish Gallery

On Tuesday, our Year 1 and 2 children visited the Spanish Gallery which is part of The Auckland Project in Bishop Auckland. We enjoyed exploring the range of artwork within the gallery and participated in a range of practical art activities including: sketching still life compositions, colour mixing to create secondary colours from primary colours and then painting with them and mark making tasks. The staff and volunteers at the gallery commented on how impressed they were with our children's art knowledge which was lovely to hear.

Marie Curie Day - Thursday 21st March

As you know, Marie Curie is one of our House namesakes at Ox Close, helping us to develop our understanding of the value of Empathy. We would like to invite you all to take part in Go Yellow Day on Thursday 21st March to raise money for the Marie Curie charity which provides expert hospice care for those in need. We would like the children to come to school in non-school uniform wearing something yellow - this could be simply a yellow stripe on a t-shirt or yellow from head to toe! (If yellow is not your colour, another bright colour would be great too!)

On the day, we will have daffodil badges for sale, with all proceeds going to Marie Curie. There will be donation buckets on each school entrance and children can bring a small donation with them to school.

If you would like to donate to the Marie Curie charity for this event, please follow the link below:

<https://donate.mariecurie.org.uk/>

Reception Egg Decorating – Monday 25th March

On Monday 25th March, parents are invited to join reception children from 2pm in the school hall to decorate a boiled egg for our Easter egg competition. We will provide paints and glue but we would encourage you to talk to your child about how they might like to decorate their egg and bring with you any specific resources that they require. We look forward to welcoming you in for this lovely event.

There is no charge for this event but if you will be attending, please could you book a place through the Shop on Arbor so that we know which children to bring over to the school hall. Thank you.



Nursery Easter Bonnet Parade – Thursday 28th March

Details about the Easter Bonnet Parade have been sent out through Arbor today. Please be aware that we have now allocated two time slots for this event, 11am and 2pm. Please remember to book the time slot that you would like to attend so that we can ensure we are able to accommodate all parents. Thank you.

Weekly Class Charts Top Scorers

Reception	Emmie C	Year 4	Thomas P
Year 1	Ashton S	Year 5	Eli W
Year 2	Oliver R	Year 6	Lily-May H
Year 3	Joseph R		

Attendance

Overall attendance for the week is 94.7% and the Year Group with the highest attendance is Year 1 with 95.9%. The overall school attendance for the academic year is 95.1%.

Punctuality

The Primary starts at 8:45am, with the gates opening from the new time of **8:35am**. Please ensure that your child is at school on time so that they do not miss out on any learning.



Dates for the Diary

Monday 18 th , Tuesday 19 th , Wednesday 20 th and Thursday 21 st March	Primary – Parent/Carer Consultations
Tuesday 19 th March	Year 4 Visit to Whitworth Park Academy
W/C 25 th March	Easter Activities
Monday 25 th March	2pm - Reception - Egg Decorating
Thursday 28 th March	Primary – Non-Uniform Day
Thursday 28 th March	11am and 2pm - Nursery Easter Bonnet Parade
Thursday 28 th March	3:15pm – Close for Easter Break
Monday 15 th April	8:35am – Children return to Nursery and School
Thursday 2 nd May	Federation Closed – Polling Station

At The National College, our WakeUpWednesday guides empower and equip parents, carers and educators with the confidence and practical skills to be able to have informed and age-appropriate conversations with children about online safety, mental health and wellbeing, and climate change. Formerly delivered by National Online Safety, these guides now address wider topics and themes. For further guides, hints and tips, please visit nationalcollege.com.

10 Top Tips for Parents and Educators DEVELOPING HEALTHY SLEEP PATTERNS

Quality sleep is paramount for wellbeing as it impacts our cognitive function, emotional balance and overall health. A World Health Organisation study highlighted that 44% of young people reported difficulty sleeping – potentially affecting their mood, concentration and immune system. Our guide offers expert tips for helping children to sleep more healthily.

1 MINDFUL TECH USE

Encourage a balanced approach to screen time. While phones, laptops, tablets and so on can serve as a helpful means of stress relief, it's advisable to minimise their use right before bed. These devices can keep the mind racing long after they're switched off, impacting how easily and how well a person can sleep.

2 EFFECTIVE SLEEP PRACTICES

Offer practical advice on reinforcing certain habits that have a positive influence on sleeping patterns. Children could start keeping a diary which they add to each evening, for example – or they could use up excess energy by exercising during the day.

3 HYDRATION HABITS

Underline the importance of drinking plenty of water throughout the day, while limiting drinks close to bedtime to prevent disruptions during the night: it's a lot harder to switch off if you keep needing to get out of bed for the toilet. Avoiding caffeinated drinks later in the day also allows the body and brain to slow down naturally, without any chemicals firing them back up.

4 CONSISTENT BEDTIME SCHEDULE

Assist children in developing consistent bedtime routines that tell the body it's time to wind down, promoting a more relaxed state. Establish specific activities for young ones right before going to bed – such as brushing their teeth – to set up an association between that action and falling asleep.

5 OPTIMAL SLEEP ENVIRONMENT

Ensure that the bedroom is comfortable, dark and free from distractions, fostering an ideal space for quality rest. The room's temperature should also be suitable for sleeping – that is, not too hot and not too cold – while rooms should be kept as tidy and free of clutter as possible.

6 RELAXING EVENING ACTIVITIES

Recommend activities that have a calming effect on the mind – such as reading or gentle stretching – in the lead up to bedtime, to prepare the mind for a peaceful night's sleep. Doing something quiet, relaxing and low intensity signals to the brain that it's time to rest and makes falling asleep much easier.

7 PRIORITISING ADEQUATE SLEEP

Emphasise the crucial role of sleep in maintaining physical and emotional wellbeing. It's especially important to sustain a healthy sleep pattern during challenging and intensive periods in our lives: during the exam season for children and young people, for instance.

8 NUTRITIONAL BALANCE

Highlight the significance of a healthy, balanced diet – and its role in establishing a more consistent sleep pattern. Try to lean towards preparing meals with plenty of fruit and vegetables, served in reasonable portion sizes: not only is this a lot healthier, but it also reduces the chances of feeling too full to be comfortable in bed.

9 PARENTAL SUPPORT

Parents and carers, of course, are uniquely situated to support their children in establishing and maintaining healthy sleeping habits. Parents can review their own sleep habits (incorporating anything from this list that they don't do already) to model a balanced bedtime routine and reinforce the importance of self-care.

10 MILITARY SLEEP METHOD

Look up 'the military sleep method': it's a technique for falling asleep quickly, which incorporates deep breathing exercises. You could encourage children to try it or even use it yourself. While it can take a good deal of practice to perfect, eventually it will start to feel natural – and the results are often extremely impressive!

Meet Our Expert

Minds Ahead design and deliver the UK's only specialist postgraduate mental health qualifications. Winner of the Social Enterprise UK: 'One to Watch' award, the charity provides training and support to education organisations and local authorities. This guide has been written by Adam Gillett – a learning and development specialist who is also Associate Vice-Principal for Personal Development at a large secondary school.



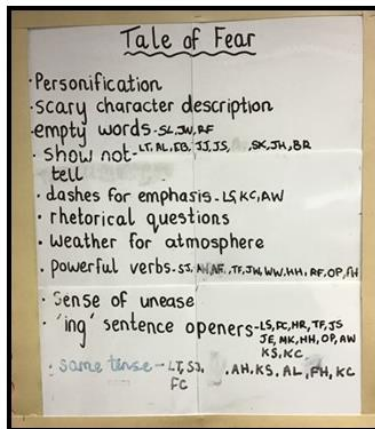
Spring Term 2 in 5/6R



In Year 6 English, we have been working extremely hard on our 'Portal Story' in which we have focused on creating empathy for the main character—this can be very tricky but we have done a great job. Well done!

In Year 5 English, children have been focusing on creating suspense by using short sentences or ellipses. This will help the children to write their own 'tale of fear' story next week!

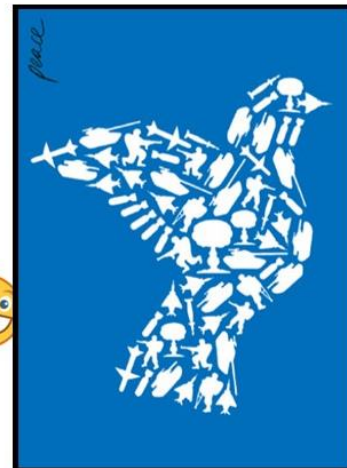
Recently, Year 5 have been working extremely hard on decimals and percentages in maths lessons. These units can be quite challenging, but children have shown great perseverance and problem solving skills to complete daily tasks! Year 6 have been working hard on finding angles within 2-D shapes and interpreting data from different graphs. Some children have even been able to find the averages from the data that they have interpreted.



In Geography, our focus this term has been around rivers. We have researched some of the main rivers in the world and in the UK and located them. We have also labelled the different parts of a river and began discussing erosion and deposition!

In PE, our focus this term has been tag rugby and fitness. On a Monday we have had a coach come in and work with our class. So far we have focussed on passing, finding space, attacking opposition areas and tagging. He has been really impressed!

Well done to all of 5/6R who have continued to show amazing behaviours towards learning. Can you keep this up?!



In Art this week, children have had the opportunity to compare artwork from Luba Lukova and Shepard Fairey, stating what they believe the message behind the artwork is, the things they like, dislike and what they would have done differently. This is inline with our 'Print & Activism' unit. Over the next couple of weeks, we will be creating our very own artwork expressing our own thoughts!



PE—With summer just around the corner, we are now hoping to complete PE lessons outside, when possible. Please keep an eye on the weather forecast to ensure children are fully prepared i.e. suncream and sunhats. PE kits should remain in school for the full week and jewellery should be removed.

