

Headteacher News

Exercise. Active children who eat a balanced and healthy diet. These have come to the forefront of my mind this week as we've had people from the National Child Measurement Programme in. They measure the height and weight of around one million school children in England every year, providing a detailed picture of the prevalence of childhood obesity. This year's national figures aren't out yet (as they're only just gathering the data) but last year's figures showed that almost 20% of children in Year 6 were obese and a further 14% were overweight. Of children in Reception, 9% were obese and another 13% were overweight. This means a third of 10-11 year olds and over a fifth of 4-5 year olds were overweight or obese. The World Health Organization regards childhood obesity as one of the most serious global public health challenges for the 21st century. Obese children and adolescents are at an increased risk of developing various health problems, and are also more likely to become obese adults.

Reducing obesity levels will save lives as obesity doubles the risk of dying prematurely. Obese adults are seven times more likely to become a type 2 diabetic than adults of a healthy weight. And not only are obese people more likely to get physical health conditions like heart disease, they are also more likely to be living with conditions like depression. Obesity is a complex problem with many drivers, including our behaviour, environment, genetics and culture. However, at its root, obesity is caused by an energy imbalance: taking in more energy through food than we use through activity. Physical activity is associated with numerous health benefits for children, such as muscle and bone strength, health and fitness, improved quality of sleep and maintenance of a healthy weight. There is also evidence that physical activity and participating in organised sports and after school clubs is linked to improved academic performance.

The government is making attempts to tackle this. I imagine you've heard of the soft drinks industry levy. Teenagers in England are the biggest consumers of sugar-sweetened drinks in Europe. To put it in perspective, a single 330ml can of a soft drink with added sugar (which can contain as much as 35g of the stuff), may instantly take a child over their maximum recommended daily intake of sugar. They have given producers and importers two years to lower the sugar in drinks so that they won't face the levy if they take action. This places the onus on producers rather than consumers – it doesn't rely on individual behaviour change. They are also launching a broad, structured sugar reduction programme to remove sugar from the products children eat most. All sectors of the food and drinks industry are being challenged to reduce overall sugar across a range of products that contribute to children's sugar intakes by at least 20% by 2020. There are also numerous other initiatives being introduced such as updating the nutrient profile model, encouraging participation in daily physical activity, creating a healthy rating scheme for primary schools, making school food even healthier, clearer food labelling, etc.

Genetics can sometimes be a contributory factor but much of the issue comes down to lifestyle choices. It's very much about what we eat and how active we are. Children should be very active. It is recommended that young people should spend at least 60 minutes per day, or 7 hours a week, where they are being active to a level that they are out of breath. Research has shown that children spend, on average, 52 hours in front of a screen each week. TV, internet, computer games, etc. are all taking time away from them being active.

So, why am I using my slot in the Beacon to raise this? Simple. I care about the children here. Not just about their academic achievement but about every part of them that makes them who they are, especially their health and wellbeing. We find as much time as possible within our over-packed curriculum to teach the children about healthy living, healthy lifestyles, and making the right choices. Our catering contractor is constantly reviewing and improving the schools meals they provide. We also ensure that PE lessons are not squeezed out of the weekly timetable so that pupils remain active and are encouraged to participate in sports (we always ensure excellent involvement in sporting events across the city). But we all need to do our bit towards tackling this serious issue. We need to make sensible, informed choices about what our children eat. The school meals are carefully designed to provide a balanced intake but, I would argue, that many packed lunches I see could be healthier. Children's food choices are influenced by family meals. I certainly don't wish to moan or attribute blame. What I would ask though is that *everyone* who impacts upon children's lives considers this and thinks about what food the children are eating and how active they are each day.

Diary Dates

Mon 13th - Fri 17th Feb 2017 Inc.

- Half term

Fri 3rd March 2017

- Vista group photos - Year 6 and Foundation only.

Fri 31st Mar 2017

- 'Wear a Hat' mufti day - for Brain Tumour Research

Mon 3rd - Tues 18th Apr 2017 Inc.

- Easter holidays

Mon 1st May 2017

- Bank holiday

Wed 3rd May 2017

- Tempest Photos – Class groups and Year 6 combi photos.

Sun 21st – Fri 26th May 2016

- Bude Residential (Yr 6)

Mon 29th May - Fri 2nd June '17

- Half term

Tues 25th July 2017

- Leavers' assembly
- Last day of term 2:30pm finish (Yr6 finish at 1.30pm)

Wed 26th July 2017

- Start of the summer holidays



Monty's Den

Monty's Den is our onsite after school care. Call on 07522 429599 for more information or to book a session. Sessions start from £6.50. Flexible booking available www.thedens.co.uk

School Games

Congratulations to the netball team that participated in the last 'warm up' event held at Heles on Wednesday. The squad of 7 put in a fantastic performance winning all 10 of their matches and only conceded 2 goals compared to scoring over 20. Winning the event with maximum points. Well done team.

Foundation News

Foundation had a great time at the theatre this week and have been designing super outfits for the Emperor since they came back. Next week we will be looking at more Julia Donaldson stories including 'Monkey Puzzle'. Thank you for making a great start with home reading this term- the children are now working on their 'Magical Reader' challenge. Finally.....please could we ask that all children have a PE kit in school and all clothing is NAMED. Thank you.

Year 1 News

It has been another busy week in Year 1. On Wednesday we received a letter and a series of clues from Herbie the hedgehog which led us out into the wild... After following the trail with our own hedgehogs we discovered Herbie's top tips on how to become a fantastic writer. The children thoroughly enjoyed trying out Herbie's top tips and their writing is getting better and better! We look forward to continuing on our adventure 'Into the Wild' next week. Please ensure your child has their wellies and PE kit in school ready for another busy week! Have a great weekend.

Year 2 News

Breaking News... dinosaur bone found in our outside area (or at least a pretend one). We have had a fantastic week becoming dinosaur discoverers and learning some fantastic information. We even made our favourite dinosaur out of clay! Understandably, there are an awful lot of things to do at home but please can we remind you to make time to read with your child. Have a fantastic weekend

Year 3 News

Year 3 have been busy working hard this week, using prepositions in English, the bar model in Maths and developing their world knowledge in topic. They should now be able to tell you the continents and oceans of the world! 3X were the first to brave the cold and go on their Mount Edgcumbe adventure, thank you for your support in ensuring they were well prepared for this. Next week 3M and 3P look forward to going on their adventures. If any parent helpers are available please see class teachers.

Year 4 News

The children have been working very hard this week. In English we have been retelling the story 'Escape from Pompeii' using the talk for writing actions. Ask anyone in year 4 to retell the story using these actions. In maths we have been solving multiplication calculations using the grid method. During Computing we have been discussing the history of technology. The children were curious to find out about tape players, CD players and typewriters. Have a great weekend.

Year 5 News

It has been another busy week in year 5 with the children practicing their division method in Maths and looking at non-chronological reports in English. We also experienced a 'time-travelling' history lesson for our Viking topic. Remember to practice your spellings and continue with your Viking project homework.

Year 6 News

This week, children have been looking at the features of newspaper reports. We have learnt how to use some of these features, including the passive voice and embedded clauses. The children have been thinking of headlines that use puns or alliteration. Ask your child what headline they thought of! In maths, we have started our unit on fractions. The children have learnt how to find equivalent fractions, order and simplify. Next week we are holding our Year 6 SATs preparation meeting. All parents/carers are expected to attend. This will take place on Tuesday 17th January at 5:30pm in the KS2 hall.

Change of menu Chinese New Year Special Lunch

Friday 27th January 2017

Choice of Sweet & Sour Chicken OR

Vegetable Stir Fry with

Vegetable Spring Rolls

and Egg Fried Rice

Jacket Potatoes are also available.

Poppy's Hair Cut for Charity – Little Princess Trust

My name is Poppy Wilson, I am 9 years old and live in Plymouth. I have been growing my hair for the past year to donate it to the little princess trust. I think it is important because I wouldn't want to think anyone was feeling upset or getting bullied for not having any hair. This charity helps make wigs for these children who need them and they also raise money for child cancer research. If you would like to donate please do so by visiting.
<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/PoppyWilson>

Let's see an end to lost property - use Label Planet.

Look out for the leaflet your child will be bringing home.

To help you and your children keep their belongings safe why not invest in some stick in labels from label planet.

To order visit the Montpelier website, click on parents and the Parent support advisor. Next click the label planet link, choose from the range of options and your order will be delivered to you at home within a few days.

With almost 700 pupils in school all wearing similar items of sweatshirts, coats trousers PE clothes it is inevitable that some things will escape them. Clothes that are not labelled cannot easily be returned and in fact every term we dispose of vast quantities of clothes that are never claimed. Clear labelling could in fact save you money and allow children to independently look after their belongings.

Ordering through our link and using our fundraising number 13668 (don't worry it will automatically appear) will also earn the PTFA a higher level of commission so your children will benefit in more ways than one.

Music News

Year 2 & 3 choir re-starts on Tuesday 17th January. Year 5

Steel Pans re-starts Wednesday 18th January 2017.