

**Headteacher News**

Happy New Year to you all. It was lovely to welcome all the children back with their exciting news about family members they'd either visited or had visited, and all the wonderful presents that Father Christmas had brought them. They have all returned in good spirits and, having had a well-earned rest, seem eager to start learning.

Academy consultation

I am hoping that everyone has received and read the letter that the governors sent out earlier on this week about a consultation regarding potential academy conversion. This represents a change mainly at a strategic school organisation and management level rather than anything that will directly affect the children day to day. If you've not had a chance to read it yet please do take a few minutes to do so - there's a lot of detail within it but it's worth the read. If for any reason it hasn't made its way home, everything is available on our website (www.montpelierprimary.co.uk/website/academy). There's loads of information to look through so you can choose how informed you want to be; just get a general picture or know every detail - it's up to you. What is important to know is that, as stated in the letter, any change we pursue is only ever to further improve the school. If we convert, the school name, our logo and the uniform will not change. Montpelier will remain as a non-selective, local, state-funded primary school for the children in this area. And although we are entering into a collaborative partnership with Stoke Damerel Community College it will not, in any way, curtail our pupils' options regarding their choice of secondary school. In fact we see this as an opportunity to further improve transition arrangements into all the secondary schools we feed into. The strategic benefits will come in the form of shared governance, leadership, management systems, staffing, finances, purchasing, contracts, service provision, procurement, etc. All those things that go on in the background and are crucial to the running of the school but which are rarely evident to you or the children. There will be a chance to ask questions at an open meeting on Monday 1st February at 5:00pm. As always though, feel free to pop in for a chat, call or email to ask any questions.

Foundation News

Happy New Year to you all. The children have loved sharing their Christmas news this week and we also had some fantastic entries for the '50 Festive Things'. The classes are very excited about visiting the theatre next week to see the Three Little Pigs and we will be doing lots of activities based on the story. Our focus this term will be 'animals'. On Monday 18th January could the children come into school dressed as an animal, this could be coloured clothes, a mask, prop, pair of ears etc.

Year 2 News

Happy New Year. The children were surprised to find their teachers and teaching assistants dressed as World Explorers when they returned to school on Tuesday morning. We had a great day 'travelling the World' and managed to visit three continents in one morning! In Africa, we dressed up in some traditional clothing, read African folk tales and created some collaborative artwork. In Brazil, we listened to and played some samba music, recreating a carnival through 2S! We learnt lots of interesting facts about the country and recreated the national flag. Can your child tell you two items that Brazil is famous for producing or the name of the river which flows through the country? In Australia, the children created some amazing aboriginal artwork. As always, you can find a selection of photos on eSchools.

Thanks for attending the SATs information meeting on Wednesday, we hope you found it useful.

Year 4 News

Wow! The children have all made a fantastic start to the Spring Term this week. They have got straight back into their learning and have enthusiastically embraced the challenges we have given them. Our Ancient Egyptian 'WOW' starter was definitely a highlight of the week. The children now, are all buzzing with enthusiasm and looking forward to finding out more about the Ancient Egyptians. Next, in Science, we are going to be leaning about States of Matter - Solids, Liquids and Gases. We will start this topic by going outside into the 'Forest Area' next Thursday. Please ensure that your child has wellies/old pair of shoes, old trousers, warm clothing and waterproofs for this activity.

Happy New Year to you all!

Year 5 News

The year 5 team have been impressed with how the children have returned to school after the Christmas break, and started working so enthusiastically. They have immediately returned to the routine of school and have begun the new term well. Your child should have come home this week with the Year 5 curriculum letter, outlining the learning for this term. If you need a further copy one can be downloaded or viewed on the school website.

Year 6 News

The children came back to start a new term well rested and full of news about their holiday and gifts that had received. This week the children have been learning a non-chronological report by heart using 'talk for writing' to help them. They will be writing their own on an imaginary planet in the coming weeks. 6M had a session led by a Red Cross representative all about refugees. The rest of the year group will be taking part in this over the coming weeks.

Diary Dates

Mon 15th – Fri 19th Feb Inc.

- Half term

Thursday 24th Mar 2016.

- 'Wear a Hat' Mufti Day

Fri 25th Mar – Fri 8th Apr Inc

- Easter holidays

Mon 11th Apr 2016

- Non pupil day

Mon 2nd May 2016

- Bank holiday

Mon 30th May 2016

- Bank holiday

Tues 31st May - Fri 3rd June Inc.

- Half term

Mon 6th June 2016

- Non pupil day

Fri 22nd July 2016

- Last day of term

Wed 7th Sept 2016

- First day of term

"Remember to check the Lost Property Bins"

Christmas Jumper Mufti

The Christmas Jumper / Text Santa Mufti day raised an amazing £445. Thank you for your continued support.

Bowls

Connor Fielder, 4M has been chosen to represent Devon County U21's for long mat bowls. He will be playing his first match on Sunday 10th January against Wiltshire!

Connor will be playing with 3 other children, who attend the Life Centre, one child being his brother Tyler, who is a previous Montpelier pupil. Both boys have been playing / attending coaching sessions for approx. 2 years. They have attended trial sessions against other teams which has now resulted in them representing their County. Hope you agree that this is a brilliant achievement at such a young age. Good luck boys!!

Athletics & Netball Club begin next week.

Jam Band

Jam Band will begin again on Wednesday 13th January from 3.15-4pm and we look forward to seeing you all again then.

Music News

Steel pan clubs run for Year 5 and 6 again next week. Our choirs do not start until Tuesday 19th January for Year 2 and 3 and Thursday 21st January for Year 4, 5 and 6. Instrumental lessons are now up and running again apart from lessons with Chris Spreadbury that restart on Wed 20th January. Emails asking you to go onto school money to pay for lessons will be sent out next week.

Year 3 News

It's great that all the children have had a lovely break and have come back fully re-charged for the Spring Term. The children had a great first day back at launching our new topic and hope that they shared with you all the fantastic things that we have planned. Important reminder that Forest School will start next week, so can all children make sure that they have outdoor clothes and wellies on their specified date. A great, positive start to the term, long may it continue.

Education Health & Wellbeing Survey

We have been asked to share this with parents and carers should you wish to put forward your views.

From September 2016 secondary and special schools will be working with an external agency to support young people with their emotional health and wellbeing. This will include training for school staff, pupils and parents / carers in better understanding issues being experienced by children and young people.

We want to find out from parents / carers what information and advice you would like to help you to support your child / young person if you are worried or may become worried about them.

Current demand for support services include:

Exam anxiety, Friendship and relationship issues, Eating disorders, Self-harm, Self-esteem, Anxiety, School phobia, Transitions (primary to secondary, secondary to sixth form, school to further / higher education Anxiety related to SEND, Other issues

This survey is to find out what information and advice parents / carers would like to help in supporting their child / young person's emotional health and wellbeing and is to enable us as service providers to shape our services in the future.

Please tell us the information you would like by completing the survey Survey <http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/emotional-health>

This survey will be available until Monday 11th January 2016.

Thank you for your help.

Lost Property

Once again there is a vast quantity of lost property. Only 12 of the hundreds of items were labelled and these have been easily returned to their owners.

The rest will be available for your collection for one week from Monday 11th January and is in the first aid / Mrs Gilbert's office. Please do take the time to come in and check. After this time it will, as usual have to be disposed of.

Some items include trainers, MPS sweatshirts and cardigans, M&S jumpers/Cardigans, Tu and next labels, Slazenger tracksuit tops, coats, kagools, a comic relief t shirt and a nurse's apron. Again we would ask that you help your children to be independent in looking after their belongings by LABELLING their clothes. They will then readily be able to recognise what belongs to them.

Social Media Accounts

I know this has been mentioned on numerous occasions, but it is still prevalent amongst the children at our school. The issue of social media and the use of such accounts is having a detrimental impact on a number of individuals, due to the way in which the children who have these accounts are conducting themselves. I would like to again bring to your attention the minimum age to open social media accounts. For Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Pinterest, Tumblr, Kik, and Snapchat the age is 13. YouTube requires account holders to be 18, but a 13-year-old can sign up with a parent's permission. Therefore, no child who is attending Montpelier is of the age to have these accounts. The age restrictions are in place to create an environment that protects children from data tracking and 13 is generally considered to be the age when children start developing a broader understanding of the world around them and, along with that, a better sense of what's appropriate to share online.

Meerkats - Family Separation Support.

Jane Gilbert (Parent Support Advisor) and Julie Spencer (Learning Mentor) will be running a support group for children who have experienced separation within their family.

The aim of the group is to give the children an opportunity to talk about their feelings, understand their emotions and develop coping strategies. The program will run for 6 weeks during this term and each session will have a play based activity, allowing children to have fun in a relaxed safe environment.

If you feel your child may benefit from this group, or you would like further information please complete the form below and return by Friday 15th January

FAO Julie Spencer or Jane Gilbert - Meerkats - Family Separation Support Group

Name of parent/carer: Child's name: Class:

I would like my child to be considered for this group: Yes/No

I would like you to find out more about this group: Yes/No

Contact number: Convenient time to call: