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Dear Parents,

Thursday 23rd February 2017

Monthly Federation Newsletter – February Edition

A very warm welcome to the February edition of the monthly federation newsletter! As I am sure you are aware, much has been happening since we last went to press and I am very much looking forward to bringing you all up-to-date. Before I do this, however, I would like to thank you all for your many warm wishes as I embark upon my next headship in Leicester. I hope you all know how sad I am to be leaving but I also know that both schools are strong enough to accept the challenge of change and I am sure that they will continue their pathway towards outstanding provision with the support of you all and our amazing staff. Exciting times ahead, I feel!

Staffing

With the appointment of Mrs. Parnell to the position of Senior Administrative Assistant, a vacancy had arisen for a Midday Supervisory Assistant, initially based at the Gedney Church End site. I am delighted to be able to inform you that Mrs. Sarah Bailey has now been appointed to this position. Sarah, who is one of our grandparents, will be starting next week and I am sure that you will all wish to join with me in welcoming her to the federation team. I am also able to inform you that the daily cleaning arrangements at Gedney Church End have changed. Previously, we used to contract the services of 5 Star, a cleaning company. For quite some time, we have wanted to bring this aspect of our work in-house so on this basis, I am very happy to inform you that Mrs. Cropley and Mr. Rate will be splitting these hours between them and I know that this will lead to yet more improvements in the quality of the site at Gedney. Finally, it is really good to be fully staff once again!

Class 3 Engage Day: Sherwood Forest Education Centre

On Tuesday of this week, the children from Class 3 at both schools had a thoroughly 'engaging day' at the Sherwood Forest Education Centre in Nottinghamshire. This trip worked in support of their studies in the classroom, most notably in relation to their understanding of and empathy with the Legend of Robin Hood (Literacy), animal habitats (science) and distance, direction, orientation/use of maps (geography). This was a new trip for us and it was good to see how well the children engaged with the excellent progression of activities organised by staff at the centre. Given the range of workshops available, I feel sure that this will be a good base for other classes, as well, and I am sure you all know how much I like to see children enjoying their learning in the outdoor environment. Finally, my thanks to all the parents who helped out on the day; without your support, such amazing learning experiences are much harder to provide for our children.

School Council Visit to the Palace of Westminster

In conjunction with other schools in the South Holland area, it was my pleasure to take the oldest members of our School Councils (year 5 and 6) to the Palace of Westminster just before the half-term holidays. Despite the weather, we had a truly enjoyable time learning about the palace, its history and the really important function it performs at the heart of our democratic system of government. It was also quite a heady time for us to be there as the House of Commons was actually in session and MP's were actively debating the Brexit Bill. The House of Lords was also in session where the Government's White Paper on the Armed Forces was out for consultation. Finally, all of the children were thoroughly engaged by a workshop led by the Education Team at the Palace that helped them to understand how we as citizens, have the individual and collective capability to effect change at a local, national and international level. For our children to see democracy in action will hopefully inspire them to achieve even more in their current roles as School Councillors!

Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers

Just a quick reminder that both of our schools are collecting the Active Kids vouchers from Sainsbury's. Please feel free to let us have your vouchers and feel proud that they will be used to provide our children with even wider opportunities for them to engage in physical activities within and beyond the school. Many thanks, once again.

Diary Dates

It's that time of year again where I like to let you all have the key diary dates for the remainder of the spring term, as follows*:

Gedney Church End		Lutton St. Nicholas	
Date	Activity	Date	Activity
20.02.17	Children return to school	20.02.17	Children return to school
21.02.17	Class 3 Engage Day	21.02.17	Class 3 Engage Day
02.03.17	World Book Day	02.03.17	World Book Day
02.03.17	Class 4 Engage Day in London	02.03.17	Class 4 Engage Day in London
02.03.17	Hilltop meeting for Y4 parents	02.03.17	Hilltop meeting for Y4 parents
06.03.17	Parents' evening (1)	07.03.17	Parents' evening (1)
08.03.17	Parents' evening (2)	09.03.17	Parents' evening (2)
15.03.17	Y4 depart for Hilltop	15.03.17	Y4 depart for Hilltop
17.03.17	Y4 return from hilltop	17.03.17	Y4 return from hilltop
31.03.17	School closes for Easter	31.03.17	School closes for Easter

*Other diary dates will be notified by letter at least 2 weeks in advance

And Finally....

At the March parents' evening, I will again be discussing good rates of school attendance with you and your child's attendance report will be published prior to this. Try to remember that we are aiming for 95%+ for all pupils across any given school year.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. L. Whitney – Executive Head Teacher

Gedney Church End and Lutton St. Nicholas Federated Primary Schools