

Thorndown Primary School

Newsletter

Hello and welcome to 2024 and our brand new newsletter!

We hope by bringing you the school's news through our Principles this will help to showcase how we are working to engrain them into our day to day life at Thorndown Primary School.

We hope you all had a fantastic break over the holidays. We have a very exciting term ahead of us going into 2024 with lots of great learning opportunities for our children.

Happy New Year,

Mr Snape

Diary Dates

15th-18th January - Year 6

Bikeability

29th January - Y5 visited by Cambridge Astronomy Institute

30th January - Young Voices

31st January - Year 6 English Challenge

5th-9th February - Children's Mental Health Week

6th February - Safer Internet Day

Term Dates

19th-23rd February - Half Term holidays

28th March - Last day of Spring Term

29th March - 14th April - Easter Holidays

15th April - First day of Summer Term

24th May - Training Day

27th May - 31st May - Half Term

19th July - Last Day of Term

22nd July - Training Day

Arbor

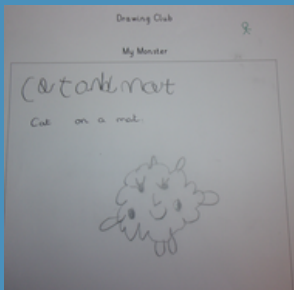
As many of you will know we moved to a new system, Arbor, recently. As we all get used to the new system and data, balances and clubs etc. are transferred across **we will be holding 'Arbor Helpdesk' sessions in school each Monday until half term from 2.45pm-3.15pm in the meeting room in the main entrance.** Here you will be able to talk through any issues you are having with the app and we will be able to support you with these. We thank you for your patience as we all get used to the new system.

Achievement



Reception Writing

This week, Reception have started a new exciting activity called Drawing Club. This is a new approach to writing which inspires children with exciting stories and immerses them in new vocabulary. All of the children are loving coming for 'Adventure Time,' where they get to use their imagination to draw something from the story and then write a code to make something magical happen! We are all excited to see the journey that the children go on with Drawing Club.



Attendance

This month, the DfE launched a new initiative called 'Moments Matter, Attendance Counts' aimed at increasing school attendance across the country and supporting schools and parents /carers in ensuring children attend school regularly. Each week, in our Celebration Assembly we celebrate attendance with an Attendance Trophy. Our whole school attendance for last term was 96.1% which was above the national average of 94.4%. Attendance at school is key to children achieving and so we will continue to use this newsletter to celebrate our attendance successes and to introduce new ways to support parents and carers to improve and maintain good attendance. Look out for our new attendance text messages!



EAL at Thorndown



Would you like to start learning a new language in 2024?

An accessible way for you or other people in your family to start learning is to download and have a go on the free app 'Duolingo' which has many different languages to choose from. The daily 'lessons' are interactive and the way the app is set up means you can continue to revisit previously-taught content.

Why don't you check it out today?

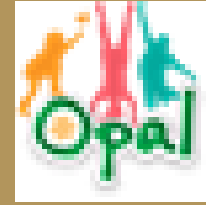
Well-Being



Year 6 Mental Health Workshops

This week, Year 6 have begun some Mental Health Workshops provided by the charity 'Kick'. Below, Elijah and Scarlett from Lions explain what they did in these sessions:

In the mental health workshop, we did some activities to help us learn more about mental health and how to look after it. We played 'Ultimate rock, paper, scissors' and started on our own, then people we beat joined us and became our motivators and cheer leaders until the grand final against the other team's leader. We were also put into teams and made elephants out of toilet paper and communicated and worked together, then we voted for our favourites to give positive comments to others. We also completed a questionnaire which we will do again at the end to see how things have changed for us.



Exciting times on the horizon for our OPaL journey here at Thorndown! One of our INSET days was spent with all staff learning about what OPaL will mean for us as a school and the many, many benefits of play. Next week, we are taking our first step and introducing a variety of small world play opportunities using your very generous donations of lego, train tracks and other wonderful games and toys. Please keep any donations coming - if you're unsure about whether or not it's something we could use, please ask. Ready, Set...

Play!

Miss Sibanda

#WakeUpWednesday

Each week, National Online Safety, part of the The National College, produce a a #wakeUpWednesday poster to support parents in keeping their children safe online and whilst they use screens and devices. The latest data shows that children between 8-17 years spend up to 4 hours a day on digital devices.

This week's #wakeUpWednesday focusses on how to manage children's screen time and give advice on how parents can do this with their children and the whole family. It can be downloaded for free [here](#).

Opportunity



As part of our Opportunity principle we are aiming to bring to enhance our curriculum as much as possible. One way to do this is to highlight to the children, where possible, how the skills they are learning can translate into career and the world of work.

As such, we would like to build a database of parents who would be willing to come in and share with the children their career and how the skills they are learning relate to opportunities they may have going forward. If you would be interested in doing so please fill in [this form](#). We are looking for a wide range of careers so whether it is carpentry, rocket science, warehouse manager or chef we would love to hear from you.

Year 6 Bikeability

Next week, Year 6 will have the chance to complete their Bikeability training. This will involve sessions in the playground and on local roads, teaching the children how to travel safely around their local area and explaining the rules of the road to them.

If your child is taking part in these sessions they will require a helmet and working bicycle in order to take part. As we all know, the weather recently has also been quite cold so please ensure they are dressed appropriately for whatever weather is due to bring us. This should include a coat but also any gloves or scarves your children may wish to wear.

Computing

Through BBC Bitesize, we recently took delivery of a set of Micro-Bits. These are programmable devices that can help enrich and support our curriculum. We will soon be using these both in lesson time and for extra-curricular activities, but if you would like to find out more you can do that [here](#).

