

Dear Parents and Carers,

The week just gone has been an extremely busy one for the school with Open Evenings, the Spring Term Governors meeting, Sports fixtures and the Music Festival alongside our day to day activities. Thanks to all of the teaching staff for working long and late throughout the week in order to spend productive time with parents and carers. Thanks too to all parents and carers with attendance at meetings very close to 100%. It is so important to keep up to date with pupil progress and to share the children's learning and well-being.

Our Y2 pupils did the school proud at the Music Festival on Thursday night and I know that the audience fully appreciated their efforts and applauded their lovely singing. We already have some pictures on the web site that are well worth a look.

We were delighted to hear just how well behaved our Y5 pupils were at Thurston. The feedback from both our staff and leaders at the centre was excellent. The children had a fantastic time and came back bursting with enthusiasm. I'm sure all the Mam's and Dads were a little anxious on departure and more than pleased to have them all back again - I'm sure some had grown a few inches across the week as they all looked a bit bigger. Maybe because in just a few months' time they will be the new Y6!

It was good to see the footballers make a good fist of their final three league games as a combination of youth and experience saw the team win two out of three and run very close in the third fixture. Well done lads and thanks to Mrs McTavy who helped out last Wednesday in particular.

This week promises to be equally busy, certainly from the Catholic perspective, Holy Week is very special and we will be reflecting on the Easter message as the week progresses. On Tuesday at 09.30 we will have a special Mass in school and all across the community are welcome to attend. We will have refreshments and hot cross buns available afterwards thanks to SAPA. We look forward to seeing you if you can make it.

Our annual Easter egg competition this year is a little behind schedule but will go ahead nonetheless with all entries in and ready for judging on Thursday March the 29th. I know that this means a busy schedule for some families over the next few evenings but we can all take advantage of the extra hour we have gained as we welcome British Summer Time and the light nights. There will be a slight change to the format with entries judged in Pastoral Care groups with the children voting for their favourites - we will be seeing demeggracy at work! Please bring entries to the main entrance if need be on Thursday morning and all works will be displayed throughout the final day of term. Easter egg prizes for the winners.

On Thursday afternoon, our final day of the term, we will be having a "Pupil Choice Day". This is part of our creativity programme and sees staff working with children from across the juniors or infants on a special activity afternoon that the children sign up to earlier in the week. As a finale to our Lenten fund raising activities we will also have a non-uniform day. A donation of 50p or whatever you can afford will add to the total we send to Traidcraft Exchange to enable them to support fledgling businesses and enterprise in the poorest parts of the world. Every pound we raise will be matched by the government so it is a good chance to double our donation. It should be a fun day and with it being the final day of the term then everyone will surely be in good spirits. **We will reopen for the start of the Summer Term on Monday April 16th at the usual time.**

I must inform parents and carers that our long standing, in fact legendary Chair of Governors, Mrs Winnie Horwood is to stand down as Chair from April 1st. Thankfully we will retain her wisdom and energy as a governor but she feels that it is time for succession planning and no

doubt she will be giving her full support and guidance to our new Chair of Governors, Mr Michael Puech. Mr Puech is a long standing Foundation Governor and currently Vice Chair. Mr Ian Farrar is our new Vice Chair and both appointments were unanimous. Also joining the Foundation Governors in April is Mrs Emma Little, bringing this section up to full strength. We wish them all every success in their new roles.

In a similar vein, Mrs Claire Grabham, who has been an excellent Parent Governor for several years has had to step down from her position as her family circumstances allied to her recent return to work means that she has reluctantly decided that she cannot devote the time that she feels is necessary to the role. The governors and school community are very grateful for her commitment and support over the past few years.

A vacancy for a new Parent Governor will be advertised early in the new term. Should you be interested please look out for the application papers that will be distributed to all families later in April. If we have two or more applicants then an election will be held. We hope to have the Board of Governors back to full strength in time for the Summer Term Meeting on July 4th.

I must inform you too that two of our longest serving and absolutely first class Teaching Assistants are to leave us in April. Miss Lindsay Price who has been with us for fifteen years since arriving as a student and brings so much to the school, is to take up a new appointment with the NHS from April 29th. We wish her well in her new post though what a miss she will be in so many ways, not least for Y5 and the Thurston trips! Also the ever reliable, very experienced and ever helpful, Mrs Catherine Woodmass, is to retire from her duties in mid-April, after many years of excellent service across the school. Though we will absolutely miss her, especially in Y1 where she is part of a committed team, we respect her decision and wish her well for the future.

For those still paying milk money termly, the summer term charge of £9.10 will be due on the first day of term.

May I wish you all a peaceful and blessed Easter - it is a very special occasion and I hope that you get some opportunity to enjoy some family time together. Best Wishes to you all.

Yours sincerely,

K J Smithson.

Head Teacher.