Dear All,

Happy Easter,

I cannot believe all the activities that we have packed into this short term. From learning about the Hindu celebration of Holi to searching for pirate gold, the children have enjoyed an amazing range of experiences. Many of the activities this term have included family members and I hope you have enjoyed the events you have attended.

I would like to say a big thank you to all the pupils for their fundraising efforts this term. To allow us to enjoy some of the more highly pitched experiences available, pupils have been inventive in raising money to contribute towards costs. In particular, the Year 4 pupils and staff have raised a tremendous amount of money to help with the costs of their Zulu workshops which goes down in Penshurst history as one of the best events we have hosted.

We are also incredibly lucky to have your support with our reading initiatives.

Many of you have answered the call to read 3 times at home and class targets for reading are steadily improving. In addition, it is lovely to see the team of parents who are now coming in to school to read with the children highlighting the positive community spirit at Penshurst. If you have half an hour to spare a week and wish to be involved, please contact the office or Mrs White and we will slot you in.

Exciting news about the bus - we now have power and electric and await the fitting out of the bus with shelves for all of the books we have stored. I’m sure this will become a popular venue at school and we hope to invite you to a grand opening very soon.

Have a lovely break and we look forward to enjoying a gloriously hot summer term with you all!

Mrs Spencer

World Book Day
Coffee Morning

A great, big thank you to everyone that supported our World Book Day Coffee Morning! We had an unbelievable amount of mums, dads, grandparents, uncles, auntsies come for a cuppa more than we could ever have thought! Hessle Book Shop came with a great selection of World Book Day books and almost 250 pupils were able to ‘buy’ their free book and then sit with their family to read and enjoy.

Penshurst Pupils
Celebrate World Book Day

After the sheer excitement which filled the hall on the morning of World Book Day, you would have been forgiven in thinking that in the afternoon we put our feet up and chilled out. This was certainly not the case! The whole school buzzed with book-based excitement.

In year 1, the children studied the story of ‘Guess How much I Love You’ and made Nutbrown Hare ear headbands, described the characters and acted out the story outside using apparatus to set the scene. So many bunnies and so much love!

Year 2 delved into the world of ‘Charlie Cook’s Favourite Book’ which tied in very nicely with their work on its author Julia Donaldson. They even revamped their reading corners with handmade covers of their own favourite books.

A very suspicious Year 4 became book detectives for the day. After saying their oath to the Reading Sergeants and being told about the recent book crimes in the local area, the children were on a mission to use all of their skills to find the thief. They took part in a treasure hunt, code breaking, suspect line up and a crime scene that they had to investigate. No stone was left unturned until the book thief was caught!

Finally, in Year 6 they had a fantastic afternoon expressing their own unique visions out the story outside using apparatus to set the scene. So many bunnies and so much love!

Year 1 Challenge Day

Last term, the children in Year 1 were very excited to share what they had been learning at school and we had read the Lighthouse Keepers lunch ‘Plop’ (all about water) and we had also spent an afternoon thinking about how we could celebrate World Book Day in our own way.

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Year 3 are Vicious Vikings

Year 3 got stuck into their new theme on the 23rd February when they became vicious Vikings for the day at Murton Park.

The children enjoyed a day of dressing up like Vikings and spending it completing activities with their new ‘Viking families’. Activities included filling the land, cleaning their Viking home, collecting firewood, making oil lamps and most importantly guarding their settlement!

The day ended in success when Year 3 proved themselves as vicious Vikings and protected their settlement from invaders! The Year 3 team and staff at Murton Park would finally like to thank Year 3 for being so enthusiastic and well mannered throughout the day.

For the latest news and school information please visit our website www.thehesslefederation.co.uk

Young Voices 2015

Twenty children, three teachers, two minibuses and a 10 hour day! On Friday 22 January, Miss Bailes made their way to Sheffield Arena to take part in ‘Young Voices 2015’.

Alongside 4880 other children, the choir sang their way through a mixture of musicals, classics and pop songs - they also danced a bit! The band was awesome, the backing singers incredible and the dancing unbelievable.

As the lights dimmed in the arena, thousands of flashing lights appeared to accompany the opening number and the strabes and spotlights swept both the choir and the capacity audience.

There really was something for everyone in this epic performance and it was an honour to be part of the biggest choir in the world. We can’t wait to be part of the Young Voices experience again roll on 2016!

Spring Term 2015
Penshurst Primary School Pupils Dance to the Beat of the Mighty Zulu Nation

Following weeks of fundraising by Year 4 staff and pupils, and as part of their learning about different faiths and cultures, the Mighty Zulu Nation were invited to visit the pupils at Penshurst Primary School on Wednesday 25th February. Spending the full day with the pupils, the touring theatre company put on two special performances: of African dancing, acrobatics, singing and drumming in front of the school. The day’s events included a spectacular evening performance from the Zulu Warriors which was enjoyed by pupils, parents and members of the local community.

The Mighty Zulu Nation is a cast of professional Zulu’s from the Kingdom of KwaZulu Natal (South Africa) who have travelled all over the World showcasing the traditional culture of Zululand. The day started with a special performance in front of the whole school on Year 2 – Year 6. A buzz of excitement filled the air as the pupils welcomed the Zulu performers with African chants that they had learnt in school. It was then the turn of The Mighty Zulu Nation and with five of the cast members dressed in traditional Zulu dress they enthralled the school with an African themed showcase including Zulu chanting and powerful dance sequences.

The pupils and teachers were all encouraged to clap along to the beat of the drums. Mr Gibb, a trainee teacher on placement with the school, found himself participating in a war dance. A demonstration which everyone enjoyed!

After a quick break to catch their breath, it was time for the pupils to take part in the interactive workshops. During this fun session the pupils learnt about traditional Zulu dress, the significance of dance and song in the community and they were also taught some basic Zulu language.

After lunch and wearing their Wellington Boots it was the turn of Year 4 pupils to learn the steps to the lively traditional Gum Boot Dance. This was followed by a dance workshop which explored the Zulu rhythm and a traditional dance routine. The pupils were then given the opportunity to learn and sing Zulu songs in a music workshop.

The day’s events concluded with a magical performance given by The Mighty Zulu Nation in front of invited parents and members from the local community. The pupils sang the songs they had learnt in the afternoon and once again the hall was filled with clapping, chanting and the beat of the drums. After a long, fun filled day and as a special treat the Pupils were given pizza, kindly donated by Frankie and Benny’s.

Sally Bennett, Teacher, commented, “Today has been a fantastic day for everyone involved. In response to our latest Ofsted report we are working hard to improve the knowledge of different faiths and cultures for our pupils to equip them for life in a pluralistic society. The buzz around the school and the smiles on the pupils demonstrates how much everyone is truly enjoying this learning experience.”

Adam Thompson, Year 6, commented, “It was absolutely amazing, the best thing I’ve seen all year. I enjoyed the drumming and dancing and I might even perform it myself for P-Factor (Penshurst Primary’s version of the X-Factor competition) at the end of term.”

Ben Wearmouth, Year 4, thought the performance was fantastic but “the Zulu’s jumping up and landing on their bottoms looked painful and I wouldn’t like to try it.”

Year 4’s Charlotte Hammond’s favourite bit was when the Zulu’s pretended to gang up and walk towards the pupils in a war dance, which was ‘quite scary’.

Joseph Pegg, Year 3, said his favourite bit of the performance was the acrobatics where the Zulu lost his hat so it was ‘has got to The Mighty Zulu Nation’.

These children have the opportunity to develop one-to-one relationships with staff and other children in a consistent and predictable environment, building self-esteem, confidence and independence. The main aim of the nurture group is to give children the skills needed to be able to effectively return to their mainstream class.

The nurture staff work and plan activities in close partnership with the children’s class teacher ensuring that the same skills and objectives are taught as the peers, meaning that whilst there is a focus on social skills within The Den, children still have full access to all areas of the curriculum.

In order to teach various social skills such as turn taking and sharing, the children eat breakfast together each morning.

Do you know about our Den?

The Den is a purpose built facility that opened in 2014 to support a small group of KS1 children who may be children who feel insecure in school or who are in need of more adult support than can be provided for in their class.

During this time, staff model positive relationships and there is also an emphasis on the development of language and communication skills. All parents and carers are invited to come and visit to see what we offer on a regular basis. We believe that in order for a child to succeed there should be a strong partnership between parents and carers, nurture staff, their class teacher and the children themselves.

There is a Den open session which takes place every Wednesday 3.10 – 4.00 where families are invited in for a cup of tea and an informal chat.

Also each half term there is an opportunity to come for breakfast or an activity morning.