

# Totley Primary October 2018 Newsletter

The first few weeks of term have whizzed by and the school year is now truly up and running! Our new Foundation Stage children have been delightful and have made such a positive start to their time at Totley, making lots of new friends and getting used to school routines. At the other end of school, the Y6 children have stepped up and are already making great buddies for our little ones. They were certainly missed last week during their Thornbridge residential, from which they returned utterly exhausted but having had a splendid time in the Autumn sunshine!!

## Wellbeing Project

This year we are part of an exciting project and will be aiming to gain an accreditation through Leeds Beckett University in Mental Health and Well-being. Mr Barnes, our Inclusion Manager and SENDCo is keen to involve parents, carers and the community as much as possible. Currently he is in the process of writing a 'Positive Mental Health Policy' and would value parental voice before he finalises the content. If you are interested please contact him at [mbarnes@totley.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:mbarnes@totley.sheffield.sch.uk).

Here are some top tips from the Anna Freud organisation about talking to children who may be finding the start to a new academic year a difficult time and who may be displaying a shift in mood:

**Give your full attention, be curious and take it seriously.** *We all know it's not nice to be half listened to. Being actively interested in your child can be a powerful way to help them feel listened to and understood. Try to resist the urge to downplay or dismiss what your child is telling you.*

**Emphasise that you are always available to talk.** *It may be that your child doesn't want to talk, can't find the words at the moment or is trying to assert their independence. But don't be misled by your child's need for separation. They need you just as much as ever.*

**Take time to reflect.** *Research shows that thinking about what is going on in your child's mind and being aware of your own thoughts and feelings promotes secure attachment, good social skills and the ability to 'read' others.*

**Provide empathy.** *When children feel truly understood they start to be able to manage their emotions and this has a big impact on their wellbeing. Using empathy is also a great way to defuse tension.*

**Be aware of your own stress and negative feelings.** *They can really get in the way of feeling close to your child. Reflecting on the causes of stress can prevent it from spilling into your relationships at home.*

**Think about timing.** *Ask yourself 'Is this the right time to talk?' Choose a time when you can focus on your child and ignore distractions.*

**What should I do if I am worried?** *You can ask school for support, we are not the experts but can signpost you in the right direction. You can look online, in particular, MindEd for Families provides comprehensive information on a range of mental health issues. But, if problems persist, become overwhelming or you feel your child is displaying particular symptoms, we strongly recommend that you visit your GP.*

## Building Work Update

You may have noticed that the number of builders and construction workers around the school site has dropped significantly since the start of term. This is because the work is almost completed!

I must thank you for being patient during this time—the school is really looking stunning now, with only minor bits of snagging to be completed in the double storey block and around the junior playground. The food technology room is well on its way now and should also be completed over the next couple of weeks.

The new Baslow Crossing has been incredibly well used—all the more so given the road and pavement resurfacing work which has been ongoing around the bottom of the school drive since the start of term. We are still expecting that the crossing on Baslow Road will be made permanent during the half term break.

## Grand Opening

We are planning a celebration! On Friday 19th October, parents will be invited into school during the morning to see children at work in our fabulous new spaces. This will be a series of drop-in slots which you will be able to sign up to. The children's reactions to seeing the new parts of school for the first time were amazing - we hope you can come and join us on the day to see things for yourselves! Further details / letter to follow shortly.

On the afternoon of the 19th, official stakeholders in the expansion of the school, including representatives from the local authority, Engie, school / Trust governors and special guests will have their turn!

## Special Events coming up

**Wednesday 3rd—Y4 trip to Manor Lodge**

**Thursday 4th—Y6 open evening at King Ecgbert School**

**Thursday 11th—Nasal Flu Immunisation for FS2—Y5**

**Monday 15th—PTA meeting 7.30pm Cross Scythes**

**Wednesday 17th FS2 Harvest Service—school hall 9.30—9.50am**

**Thursday 18th Harvest Services—All Saints Church**

**KS2—9.30-10.15am**

**KS1—10.30-11am**

**Friday 19th—Official opening of expanded school**

**Tuesday 23rd—Planetarium in school for Y5**

**Tuesday 23rd—Parents' Evening**

**Wednesday 24th—Y6 island survival trip**

**Wednesday 24th—Parents' Evening**

**Thursday 25th—PTA Halloween Disco. 5—6.30pm**

**Friday 26th—Break up for half term**

## House Matters

We really value the house system we have at school and whether children are members of Burbage, Curbar, Froggatt or Stanage, everyone benefits from being part of a mixed-age team of children (and staff!) who take part in lots of activities and competitions throughout the year.

After a busy campaign, all the children in school elected their new house captains. A huge well done to everyone who took part in the campaign: the speeches children made were powerful and persuasive.

Our house captains for this year are:

**Burbage-** Alice Biggin and Henry Barlow

**Curbar-** Hattie Wragg and Sonny Ford

**Stanage-** Elisha Messiah and Ellie Batham

**Froggatt -** Will Grayson and Daisy Wood

The next house charity event will be organised by Burbage. We will be raising money to send books to schools and communities throughout Africa! More information to follow shortly!

## Reading at Totley

We are very excited to be having a whole school focus on reading this year. The main aim of this is to promote the love of reading from all of our children through a reading-rich environment. Our first step is to open our brand new library which has been designed by the school council, led by Alison Taylor and Karen Holmes. On October 19<sup>th</sup>, we will be joined by a special visitor and the library doors will be open for the first time for use by the children. We have been very fortunate to have been able to purchase a wide range of texts to fill the shelves! A big thank you must go to the PTA for donating money to fund this vast amount of new books and for making a substantial contribution to the building work.

To help drive reading at Totley, we have also recruited some Y6 Reader Leaders — Alice Biggin, Daisy Wood, Jack Hughes, Thomas Scholey, Leila Hinchcliffe and Caragh McGovern. They will have many responsibilities, including encouraging reading inside and outside of school and helping to run the library. They have already got stuck in to their roles by writing a letter to an author and creating some shared guidelines for the library. Well done!

## Volunteering

A huge thank you to all of the parents and carers who have voiced an interest in volunteering at school. Now that the children have settled into their classes, if you are still interested, or would now like to volunteer, please email [mbarnes@totley.sheffield.sch.uk](mailto:mbarnes@totley.sheffield.sch.uk) with your availability (including preferred days of the week and times).

## Extra-curricular activities

Our after-school clubs have now begun and have been more popular than ever, which is brilliant but also to be expected given our increasing numbers! We have done our best to meet the increased demand this term and avoid disappointment. Feedback is always very much appreciated as we seek to make our extra-curricular offer as enriching and varied as possible.

## Stewart Cup

This intra-school football competition is a great Totley tradition and takes its name from former, footie-mad headteacher Chris Stewart (who also kindly provided the cup itself—on display in the trophy cabinet!) Boys and girls from Y3-Y6 are eligible to take part, regardless of experience or ability. Around 60 children have signed up for this year's competition, which means there will be 6 teams, led by Y6 captains. Games will take place at lunchtime on a weekly basis throughout the season, depending on the weather, with the best two teams going head to head in a grand final in May. Football kits may be worn but a PE kit is also fine, as long as a change of footwear is provided. We will do our best to keep you informed of when games are planned via text but it would be a good idea to make sure that your child has a PE kit in school every day as there are occasions during the winter when we have to jump at the chance to play when the weather allows! The competition is always exciting, although last year's final, which had 6 goals followed by a penalty shoot-out, will be tough to beat!

## PTA update

Firstly we'd like to say a big thank you to all those new parents who joined us at the first PTA meeting of the year. It was wonderful to meet so many of you and we loved the new, fresh ideas you all had. There were some great suggestions which we will revisit and start planning for in the coming months.

Our first event of this term is the infamous 'Spooks & Sparks' Disco on 25<sup>th</sup> October. This is a whole school event where children can explore their Hallowe'en creativity and come in fancy dress if they wish! Look out for posters soon.

We would also like to remind you that you can join our National Schools Lottery at any time by clicking on

[www.yourschoollottery.co.uk](http://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk)

We have had a number of winners over the summer so why not give it a go – prize money is currently approx £20 and will increase as more people join!

Well done to Paul Fouad, Sam Batham, Elinor Johnson (twice), Anneliese Clayton, Coralie Corrin, Rachel Nunn (twice), Robyn Storey, Kate Wall, Adam Bond, Elaine Clark, Helen Dobson (who kindly donated her winnings to school).

The next PTA meeting will take place on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> October at the Cross Scythes at 7.30pm—it would be great to see you there! Meanwhile, a date for your diaries is the PTA AGM which will be held on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> November. This will take place at school and will start at 6pm.