



Newsletter—July 2016

Dear Parents / Carers,

Here we are again at the end of another highly successful and exceptionally busy year in the TEACH Trust! We have seen sports days, musical performances, exhibitions, trips, visitors, and concerts this term, and that's all on top of the day to day teaching and learning of our exciting (and much more challenging) new curriculum! We have really enjoyed working more closely together across our four schools and the children have certainly benefitted from the more collaborative approach.

You might have heard that, again this year, we have done extremely well in our Early Years Assessments, Year One phonics tests, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two results. This year has seen unprecedented changes to the curriculum and testing arrangements and across the whole country schools have been waiting to see what this looks like at the end of the year. We are extremely proud of our pupils, staff and families for their hard work and our excellent outcomes. The results will be formally published in the Autumn term. I would like to personally thank all the pupils, parents and staff across all four schools for their continued hard work, which ensures we get the best out of all our children.

It's also the time of year when we say goodbye to our Year 2 and Year 6 pupils, who will be moving onto their junior and secondary schools in September. They have brought much life and dedication to the schools over the past few years and will be very much missed. On behalf of the four schools, I would like to wish them all the very best of luck for their continued success at their new school, and beyond. We look forward to hearing from them soon and also to welcoming our Year 2 pupils to our junior schools in September.

Sadly, we will also be saying 'goodbye' to various members of staff, who are also mentioned in this newsletter. We have been blessed to have had such commitment, experience and dedication from all of these colleagues and they will be very much missed. We look forward to welcoming a number of new and talented staff to our schools in September and we are positive that they will settle in quickly and be a real asset to our skilled and experienced team.

Once again, it has been a real pleasure to support the schools again through this important academic year as these four wonderful schools have worked so much more closely together. I have (mostly!) enjoyed being the Executive Head across our Trust this year, and whilst there have been some huge challenges to overcome, I have seen each school go from strength to strength.

I am confident that under Kay Spratt and Rosaleen Beaver, as the Heads of School from September, the schools will continue to flourish and grow. I thank you whole heartedly for all your support and commitment to your child's school and to their important education and I look forward to another record breaking year in 2016-2017.

With best wishes for an enjoyable summer holidays.

Kate Carter - Executive Head Teacher

It has been another very busy year at Ad Astra! There have been many changes and challenges to overcome: we finally saw the new National Curriculum rolled out into Year Two, the new Key Stage One SATs, as well as the new teacher assessment arrangements. Earlier in the year we said a sad farewell to Mrs Beel, Miss Coat and Mrs Applin. We were also very lucky to see Miss Reffell return.

Today we say goodbye to many other treasured staff - in September it will be sad to not have Mrs Argent, Mr Best, Mrs Lewis and Mrs Zachorska in TEACH Trust.

Mr Best is loved by all the children and has formed so many close relationships with the families that have been involved with Ad Astra. He has been an asset to the school and it won't quite be the same not seeing him in the mornings with one of his many hats on! An amazing sensory garden is one final memory he has left us with.



Mrs Argent has been a huge support to both myself and Mrs Arbon in her time as Headteacher, and has taken the school forward in many ways. Her warm welcome, lovely smile and infectious laugh always brighten people's days and will be hugely missed at the front of school.



In her short time here, Mrs Zachorska has been an excellent support to the children in both Year One and Reception and we will miss her. Good luck at your next school.



Mrs Lewis has been at Ad Astra for many years and will be sorely missed. She is always laughing, smiling and brightening up people's days, and she always gives her absolute best for the children of Ad Astra. Good luck in your next venture; if it is at another school, they are lucky to have you caring for their children.



We also say goodbye to Mrs Eaton who has also been with us for a very long time. The children will definitely miss her enthusiasm, warm-heart and love for making every child succeed. She always made learning fun!



I wish them good luck in their next job and thank them for all of their hard work. We also say goodbye to Mrs Griffin and Mrs Brown who are moving to other schools within TEACH Trust. They will be sadly missed and the other schools are lucky to have them. Mrs Hankins, Mrs Read and Mrs Tonkin will also not be based at Ad Astra and will instead be working across all of the schools. I would like to extend Mrs Carter's kind words by saying that all of these members of staff have been a huge part of Ad Astra Infant School and they will all be greatly missed. We were very lucky to have them and they have helped shape so many children's lives. All of them hold the same belief: 'Children first'.

I would like to say a huge thank you to the 'Friends of Ad Astra' who have worked extremely hard this year to put on many events that have raised huge amounts of money for the school. The Sponsored Bounce raised £870.16, whilst the Summer BBQ raised a whopping £1647.30 and will help fund some exciting events for the children next year. Look out for more discos, fayres, movie nights and fundraisers next year.

The latest of their events was 'funky hair day' which raised £226.50 for Little Princess Trust and Julia's House. The children made a special effort with their hair, none more so than Sophie who donated her hair to Little Princess Trust. Here at Ad Astra, we are extremely proud of Sophie, as are her family.

Here is a photo of the special moment.



Finally, I would like to say thank you to the amazing children of Ad Astra. You have worked extremely hard and your teachers are very proud of you. I would like to give a special 'good luck' to our Year Two children who move on to junior school.

The Year Two Leavers' assembly was simply amazing - fantastic speaking, singing and dancing from the children. It truly was one final memory to cherish.

You will all be missed.

Mr Tucker

Head of School

YEAR R

What a brilliant summer term we have had in Reception. We have all been so proud of how much progress the children have made and are thrilled with how grown up they all seem!

We had a fantastic school trip to Upton Country Park just before half term. We went on a hunt for Cinderella, looked in the meadows and told some stories in the woods! We even had an ice cream. We were so pleased with the children's exemplary behaviour, a very enjoyable day for everyone!

We have started Phase 5 in our Whizzy Words session, learning a couple of new sounds before the children go into Year One. We are really pleased with how the children are reading now, both in reading workshop and at home. Thank you so much for all the reading you do with your child at home, it really does make a huge difference.



We have had an exciting couple of weeks with lots of visitors to celebrate our 'Real Life Superhero' topic. We have had a visit from some real life nurses, police and people who work for the RNLI. They have taught us lots about what it take to be a real life superhero!

All the staff in Reception would like to say a big thank you for all of your support this year. We have been really pleased with how much progress the children have made and know they will continue to be brilliant in Year One. We hope you all have wonderful summer holidays.

Mrs Vincent



YEAR 1

Wow, what a fantastic summer term it's been in Year One full of some amazing learning opportunities. The children (and staff!) have absolutely loved this final topic, 'What a Wonderful World', as we've ventured far and wide getting to know lots of different countries. Thank you for your amazing home learning, there have been some incredibly creative contributions!

The Queen's birthday celebrations started us off in fabulous Royal fashion culminating with the whole school picnic! We've then really drawn on the knowledge and experiences of our team to learn about Italy, Poland, Australia, Algeria and lots of others too!



We've managed for each class to visit Tesco on the 'Farm to Fork' project (poor Meteors eventually made it after a tricky time trying to reschedule!). We all learnt so much and of course the food sampling went down a treat; it was lovely to see so many of the children seizing the opportunity to try things for the first time.



To commemorate this year's Rio Olympics, the Brazilian dance workshop was amazing and we were so proud to see the children really enjoying themselves and taking part. Huge thanks to you all for your support in coming to watch us perform!

As part of our focus on Australia we had a Digeridoo workshop which the children thoroughly enjoyed. They listened beautifully to his stories and performances but also had the chance to have a go themselves. We were amazed at the talents of some of the children to be able to play this tricky instrument so well!



The entire Year One team would like to thank you for your continued support this year, especially with all the changes that have happened. We have tried our hardest to pull together as a team to ensure that these have had as little impact as possible and your children have been so resilient too taking everything in their stride! On a personal note, you've certainly made me feel extremely welcome. We all

hope you have a wonderful summer holiday!

Mrs Flay and the Year One team

YEAR 2

Our trips to Brownsea Island and Poole Museum were certainly highlights of this term. We climbed trees, played team games, created art with nature and learned about Baden-Powell on Brownsea. Dressed as pirates at the museum, we learned more about the life of Harry Paye, explored a treasure chest of pirate items, raised a sail, pulled an adult along on an anchor and even climbed the rigging!



What an exciting term it's been! It is no wonder these children are feeling a little tired. They have been working extremely hard and produced some incredible pieces of work.



All the children should be especially proud of their achievements in their performance of our leavers' assembly. Several hours of practising certainly paid off, as they put on a superb show to share their favourite memories of Year Two. The singing in particular was of a very high standard, and we must give a special 'thank you' to Mrs Preston who has helped inspire a love of music in this year group.

All the staff in Year 2 would like to express their gratitude for all of your support this year. With staff changing mid-way through the year, we are so proud of how the children have taken everything in their stride and carried on trying their best throughout. We have really enjoyed seeing the children make amazing progress and become more and more ready for junior school. We will certainly miss them!

We hope you enjoy the summer holidays and are looking forward to your new schools.

Miss Reffell



A **HUGE** Thanks to Barclays.

Over the Easter holidays four volunteers from Barclays gave up a day to carry out various projects around the school grounds. They spent the day shifting 7MT of top soil and 2MT of bark chippings. Filling up two raised beds, placing bark chippings around the new play equipment, building a patio on an area of scrub land on the field to start to turn it into a story area.



In addition, Barclays supplied us with a grant for £500, to pay for the materials to build a pergola on the field, so that we can provide some shade, if the children wish to rest a while whilst they are playing out there.



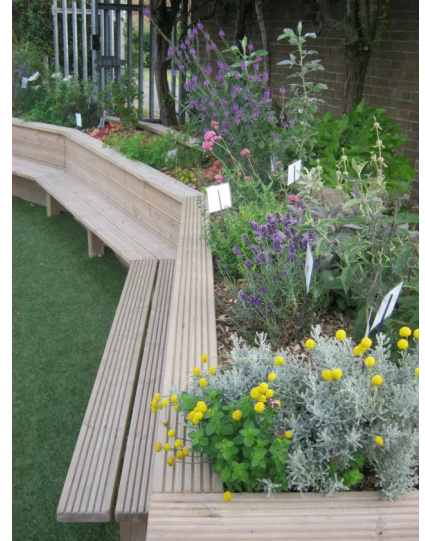
A massive thanks to them all. Between the four of them, they put in a total of nearly 40 hours of labour, or a week's work in one day.



On Friday 8th July, Mrs Arbon visited Ad Astra to open our new sensory garden and play trail.

We have a number of lovely spaces in and around Ad Astra, and we don't usually have a special opening ceremony, but these two spaces are particularly special because they have been paid for and kindly donated to the school by Mr Durdle.

This was a very generous gift, and Mr Durdle has done this because he wanted to find a way of giving recognition to the life of his dear wife, Mandy, who died suddenly in May 2014.



Mrs Arbon presented a plaque which is inscribed with the phrase

"Every Child Matters"

A phrase which Mandy held close to her heart.



Mandy was a very special lady, and so the garden is very special to those members of staff who remember her. We are sure that the children will find it a lovely area in which to take some time off and play quietly and reflectively. As it develops the smells, sounds and colours coming from the garden will further enhance the environment of the school.

This garden and play trail is a lovely tribute to Mandy and we thank Mr Durdle for his generosity.



Thank you to Tesco who kindly donated plants, pots, compost and lots of staff to help replace our flower tubs around the school.



They have done an excellent job and have brightened up our playgrounds.

Car Parking Arrangements

The one way system at the front of the school is working well now. A few people are still going against the direction though, so please be mindful of this. This tends to be people who only come into the car park occasionally, and not those with a valid parking permit.

Also, vigilance is still required when manoeuvring in the car park, particularly when reversing.

Site Speed Limit is 5mph.

Also, as we wish to be good neighbours, we request that those people parking in roads around the school at drop off and pick up time do so in a considerate manner. We have had some recent issues with people having their drives blocked by our parents.

We recommend that parents dropping off and collecting children from our school park at Asda, and use the subway and back entrance.

Thank you.

This year's 'Summer Reading Challenge!'



Earlier this half-term, a visitor from the school's library service visited us to tell us all about this year's Summer Reading Challenge. The Summer Reading Challenge takes place every year during the summer holidays. You can sign up at your local library, then read six library books of your choice to complete the Challenge. There are exclusive rewards to collect along the way, and it's FREE to take part! More information is available on their website <http://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk>

This year's challenge – The Big Friendly Read – is inspired by the famous works of Roald Dahl. Get involved and see what you can win!

