

Broke Hall Primary School



Friday 19th January 2024

Newsletter 7

Message from Mrs. Fairs:

We may have been back at school for a couple of weeks but with this being the first newsletter of the year, I wish you all a very happy 2024. Although I am still finding bits of Christmas tree to vacuum up, the festive period seems like a distant memory now. This term is a very short one and we have plenty to pack in and there is already lots to tell you about in this bulletin. We are proud and excited to be able to offer a wide variety of enrichment opportunities through inspiring lessons, innovative teaching techniques, trips, visitors and special events. Just a few of these are documented below.

In staffing news, we have two trainee teachers working in school in 2T and 4LR and we also welcome Mrs Wheatley, who will be teaching a day in 3F, Miss Ullah who has joined our learning support assistant team in the nursery and Mrs Korse who has joined our kitchen team.

Mrs. Fairs

Enrichment

Enriching the curriculum is very important to us at Broke Hall. Not only does it enhance the planned curriculum, enrichment provides new and varied opportunities for our learners to develop character, resilience, motivation and to pursue wider goals. Already this term we have given our pupils a variety of enrichment experiences...

Virtual reality "Space Goggles"

With the possibility of a school trip to space some years away yet, we did the next best thing for our Year Five children. A company brought in sets of VR goggles, which allowed the children to see the planets in our solar system "up close" in vivid and immersive detail.



Yoga

The children in Year Five and Six learned of the benefits of yoga for the mind and body last week with some great taster sessions with a qualified yoga teacher. They were taught about breathwork, meditation and some accessible poses to stretch, strengthen and relax both physically and mentally.

Philosophy Day

What would a world without words be like? What do we mean by bravery? Should we let this monster come to our school? These were just some of the big questions under discussion in our Philosophy Day on Friday. The children explored some very challenging concepts and the issues surrounding them by creating communities of enquiry. The day was an extension of our "Sticky Questions" and generated some great discussion. This week's Sticky Questions are below:

Reception: If you could have a secret door to anywhere, where would it go?

Year One: What would be a better name for your street?

Year Two: Think of someone you know who is a really good person. What makes them good?

Year Three: If everything froze, could time still pass?

Year Four: Does our planet belong to us?

Year Five: Is a more emotional person more or less likely to be a good person?

Year Six: If a piece of famous art turns out to be fake, is it less beautiful?

Safer Internet Day

With more and more stories hitting the headlines concerning online bullying, exploitation and inappropriate content, we as adults can feel up against it when trying to protect our children whilst trying to allow them to access that part of their social lives which happens digitally. At Broke Hall, we are here to support you with the ever-changing world of cyber space. National Online Safety publish a helpful bite-sized guide to all things digital as part of their #WakeUpWednesday initiative. The most recent guide, on managing screen time, is at the end of this newsletter and copies of previous publications can be found on the [school website here](#).

To mark "Safer Internet Day" we will shortly be inviting you into school to take part in some activities with your child, to highlight internet safety and the responsible use of devices.

Premises news

You may have seen our smart new entrance foyer which has been freshly painted and has our school values on the wall for all to see. We hope it makes the right impression for visitors to our school.



The remedial plumbing works following the school closure at the start of term have been completed with the final job being the installation of new sinks in the Year Two/Three toilets in the Christmas break.



New, more energy efficient windows and doors for the Year Two and 3SH classrooms are due to be installed very soon and this will keep us all toasty warm whilst pushing our bills and carbon footprint down.

Residential Visits

At Broke Hall we pride ourselves on being able to offer a rich and varied programme of learning that extends far beyond the National Curriculum. Part of this programme has always included residential trips; namely Aylmerton in Year Five and a further Outdoor and Adventurous trip in Year Six. For the past few years, it has become apparent that running both visits has become problematic. Therefore, we have taken the very difficult decision not to run the residential in Year Five.

Feedback from parents from our recent visits has been more negative than positive. It can be difficult to decide, when your child is still in Year Four, whether they will be emotionally ready to spend an extended period away from home in Year Five. We are finding increasingly that the anxiety some children (and parents) face while away from home detracts from the benefits they gain from the trip.

All residential trips require considerable planning and for staff to be available for 24 hours of the day, for the entire duration. Staff do this voluntarily and we have also found it increasingly difficult to get sufficient staff to volunteer as they have their own commitments. Staff are not compelled to attend residential trips and we do not pressure them to do so.

Finally, in the current climate we are concerned about the cost to families – we appreciate that paying for just one residential trip places financial strain on some families – never more so than now. Making a monetary commitment of this nature for two years in a row, sometimes with overlap in the payments for each trip, places additional pressure on family budgets. Economies of scale often mean that trips with fewer children on them, end up costing parents more money.



We hope you can understand our decision. We would much rather organise and staff one fully subscribed residential in Year Six, offering opportunities not readily available to our families with children who are a little older, than expend our resources in running two less successful residentials. Thank you for your support and understanding.

Traffic Safety

We continue to have reports from parents with their concerns about driver behaviour and want to ensure that our children have a safe journey to school. We have contacted the Enforcement Team at Parking Services East Suffolk Council who have said they will look to arrange a patrol of the location. Suspected parking contraventions can be reported officially via the council's website by using the 'Report a suspected parking contravention form'; <http://www.eastsuffolk.gov.uk/visitors/parking-services/parking-management-and-civil-parking-enforcement/> We would urge all drivers to drive and park safely and legally.

Dates for your diary

| Term dates for your diary | |
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| Thursday 25 th and Friday 26 th January | Gecko Physical Theatre company in for half day workshops for each Year 5 class |
| Tuesday 6 th February | Safer Internet Day |
| 19th – 23rd February | Half Term Break – school closed to pupils |
| Monday 4 th , Tuesday 5 th , Wednesday 6 th March | Year 2 Reading Cafes – further details to follow |
| Monday 11 th – Friday 15 th March | British Science Week |
| Monday 25 th – Thursday 28 th March | Broke Hall's first Poetry and Drama Festival |
| Tuesday 26 th and Wednesday 27 th March | Parent Consultation evenings |
| Thursday 28 th March | Last day of the Spring Term |
| Friday 29th March – Friday 12th April | Easter Holiday |
| Monday 15 th April | First day of the Summer Term |

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it is needed. This guide focuses on one of many devices which we believe trusted adults should be aware of. Please visit nationalonlinecollege.com for further guides, links and tips for adults.

SMARTPHONE SAFETY TIPS

for young people

7 You may have been lucky enough to have unwrapped a smartphone at Christmas, or you might be eagerly anticipating getting a new one at some point during this year. Whether it'll be your first ever phone or an upgrade on your old model, it's always useful to have a refresher about how to set it up and adjust the settings to keep yourself – and your valuable personal info – safe and secure. We've collected some expert tips to help you enjoy your smartphone in the healthiest way possible.

NEVER SHARE YOUR PASSCODE

Alongside face or fingerprint recognition, your passcode is crucial to unlocking your phone and accessing your apps and personal information. You shouldn't give it out, even to close friends – after all, you wouldn't hand them a key to your house and let them go in for a nosy around! If a friend wants to use your phone, ask them why and make sure you can see what they're doing with it.

ONLY USE AGE-APPROPRIATE APPS

Before downloading a new app or game, check what age rating it has. Don't feel pressured into getting a particular game or app just because your friends are using it. If it's intended for older people, there's a definite risk that it could include content (which is violent or frightening, for instance) or language which isn't suitable and may leave you feeling upset or disturbed.

RESPECT PARENTAL CONTROLS

If you're allowed to have a smartphone, it's because your parents or carers feel that you're mature and responsible enough to use it safely. They might set controls and boundaries on your device – not to spoil your fun but to help you avoid hazards like too much screen time or costly in-app purchases. Following these rules means you can enjoy using your phone while respecting their wishes.

REMOVE TEMPTATION

A good night's sleep is so important for concentration, mood and overall health. Unwinding properly before going to bed – which means not staring at screen late at night – can often improve sleep quality. Put your phone on charge overnight, but not in your room. This means you'll have a lot less temptation to check any notifications, reply to messages or get caught up scrolling on social media.

TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT

Whether it's to listen to music, play games, create content or chat with friends, using a smartphone should be fun. If you're ever feeling anxious, worried or scared about going on your phone, then something isn't right. It's important not to ignore these feelings. Instead, talk to a trusted adult about what's happening and how it's making you feel.

THINK ABOUT OTHERS

Watching videos, listening to music or calling someone can all help to pass the time while we're on the bus waiting in a queue or walking down the street. It's important to remain mindful of other people, though: they might not want to hear your tunes or your conversation. Likewise, if you're calling from a public place then don't forget that anyone could overhear something personal about you.

STAY ALERT

Two words: look up. It might sound obvious, but it's so easy to get immersed in what we're looking at or listening to on our phones that we can become unaware of our surroundings – or who might be around us. People often walk with their head down, focusing on their phone, and forget to check for obstacles in their path, cars or other pedestrians coming towards them, which is clearly dangerous.

DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS

Phones offer a vast amount of content and the chance to chat with friends wherever we feel like it, which can make it difficult to take time away from the screen. If that's something you struggle with, you could try setting time limits on certain apps. Putting our phones down for a while gives us more time to interact with others or do something physical that helps keep us fit and healthy.

IGNORE UNKNOWN NUMBERS

There are some scammers who might call or text asking you to share personal data or to click on a link and provide your details. Some may claim to be from a genuine company, but trustworthy businesses don't spontaneously call or message to ask for your information. It's safest to ignore calls or texts from unknown numbers, and never give your personal details out over the phone.

SWITCH OFF GEOLOCATION

In your phone's settings, you'll be able to disable geolocation for most apps and photos; this means that people online (including strangers) can't see information about where you are when you share or post a pic. On the subject of images, it's also important to ask permission before taking or sharing a photo of someone – and don't share embarrassing images of your friends with others.

Meet Our Expert

Dr Claire Sutherland is an online safety consultant, educator and researcher who has developed and implemented anti-bullying and cyber safety policies for schools, and has written various academic papers and delivered research for the Australian government comparing internet use and mental health of young people in the UK and Australia.



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