

SEPTEMBER



2018-9

Langdon Primary School



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During the Summer holidays we reflect on how well the children have learned and how well we have taught them. Last year was another successful year at Langdon, in all three Key Stages. The picture over the last few years is very positive and it is clear that our children work very hard and that they achieve well as a result. The headline message is that once again, at the end of primary school, Langdon children perform well above the national average in Reading, Writing and Mathematics and in Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. The combined figure for children achieving the expected standard in all three core subjects at Langdon is 81% against a national figure of 64%. For children working at the higher standard - greater depth standard - the Langdon figure is 25% against a national figure of 10%.

This is entirely due to the commitment and dedication of the staff at Langdon and to the hard work of the children, supported by you the parents. It is very usual for me to walk into classes and see every single child totally absorbed in the work they have been asked to do. The books look amazing - and we check these regularly with other schools to ensure that the work in our books compares favourably to others. The performances in assemblies, productions and concerts are testament to the wider curriculum that enhances the National Curriculum that we all have to follow. We have many talented sports people, musicians and artists in our school and we strive to ensure that they reach high standards in these areas too, because although the 'three Rs' are important it would be a failure on our part to neglect the other talents that our pupils have. Who knows, we may have a budding Picasso, Ronaldo or Sheeran in our school!

Last year was a challenge - teaching for half the week and being Head Teacher full time was no easy task. I loved teaching the children, planning and preparing learning activities for them has been great fun and a real reminder of why I came into teaching in the first place, but I could not have done this without the help and support of my colleagues. They were wonderful at doing jobs that need doing before I have had a chance to do them. I have to say an enormous THANK YOU to them.

This year will be different. We welcome new members of staff to the team. For those of you who haven't heard, we are delighted to welcome Emily Harris to our Year 3/4 class and Andrea Trenchard to our Year R/1/2 classes. For some children the challenge will be ensuring that they remember to call these new staff members by their 'teacher' names since they have known them in other roles! We also welcome Jessie Langley, our new Year 3/4 teacher. Jessie knows the school well since she completed two of her three teaching practices here, whilst studying for her degree. I am delighted that she has agreed to work at Langdon and know that we have a very good teacher joining our team.

Our classes this year are all named after local castles. The following is a summary of the class organisation:

Year R - Walmer Castle Class - Mrs Seccatore, Mrs Trenchard
Year 1/2 - Deal Castle Class - Mrs Keem, Mrs Trenchard, Mrs Harris (am)
Year 3/4 - Dover Castle Class - Miss Langley, Mrs Capell, Mrs Harris (pm)
Year 5/6 - Leeds Castle Class - Mrs Jones and Mrs Britton

UNIFORM AND PE KIT

It's lovely to see the children looking so smart in their new school uniforms at the beginning of the year. I thank parents who take note of the uniform policy and ensure that their child is dressed appropriately according to this. As usual, children are allowed to wear their summer uniform of shorts and gingham dresses until the end of September. From Monday 1 October 2018 however, all children are expected to be in the autumn uniform which I have detailed below so that it's really clear what your child should (and should not) be wearing.

Grey school skirt, pinafore or trousers (shorts until Monday 1 October only)

White **polo** shirt (Please note: we **do not** have cotton shirts or blouses as part of our uniform policy, plain style polo shirts only)

Green **Langdon-logo** sweatshirt and/or green school fleece (these can only be purchased through the school office, cardigans are not part of our autumn school uniform)

Sensible **black** school shoes (Please note: sandals and boots are not part of our uniform policy)

Socks and tights should be black, grey, green or white - no patterns or other colours please.

If you require any school uniform please speak to Mrs Capell in the school office. She has a small supply of good quality, clean second hand clothes too which we are happy to sell for a small donation, please ask if you are interested in this.

New children will be issued with a Langdon School high visibility jacket in the next few days. This remains the property of Langdon School and is on loan to the child for the duration of their time with us. If your child needs a replacement because they have grown then we will gladly arrange this for you on receipt of the old jacket. If you need a replacement because of loss or damage then there is a £5.00 charge. Children who walk to school should wear their jacket in order that they are visible to drivers when walking to school. Now and again, I give rewards to children for wearing their jacket on a Wednesday, which is our 'Walk to School' day. These rewards can come at any time but I never tell the children when so do remember to make sure your child is wearing their jacket in order to avoid disappointment.

PE uniform consists of a green **Langdon-logo** PE tee-shirt (available from the school office) and black shorts. Your child will need plimsolls or trainers - they don't need both. For the colder months we ask them to bring in a pair of jogging bottoms and a sweatshirt - any colour is fine, they just need to keep warm as many of our PE lessons take place outdoors. For dance and gymnastics lessons, which happen throughout the year, regardless of the season children must have shorts to wear. They can wear their joggers to and from the venue over the top of their shorts and tee-shirts to keep warm.

As usual, please remember to clearly label all of your child's school clothing. I am always amazed at the amount of lost property we have with no names! At the end of each term the lost property box is emptied, any unclaimed clothing is binned or recycled and it always seems a shame not to be able to reunite articles with their owners. If you require information about where to purchase stick-in labels, please ask at the school office.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to Phoebe's family and to Freddie's family on the birth of their new babies. It has been lovely to welcome baby Ivy and baby Francesca into school this week. Well done to both mums for their hard work!



OPEN EVENING

We will be holding a 'Meet the Teacher' Parents Evening this year, on Monday 24 September from 3.00pm until 5.00pm for parents of children in Years 1 - 6. This is an informal parent consultation meeting to talk about how your child has settled into class and what they need to do in order to improve their learning. At this meeting we will not necessarily be sharing progress and assessment data - this will be discussed later in the term after our Assessment Week - although it may be relevant for some.

ACHIEVEMENT ASSEMBLIES

Achievement Assembly will be held on Monday mornings. Our coffee morning will start at 8.30am for any parents, carers or friends who wish to stay for the assembly. This is an opportunity to see children rewarded for their hard work, great attitude or manners and good behaviour. We love to share achievements from outside school, things like Martial Arts awards, Brownie or Cubs badges, achievement in competitions, etc. Each out of school achievement must relate to some learning that your child has undertaken whether in practical or academic skills. Please try to bring these awards into school the week BEFORE our assembly, rather than on the day, so that I can talk to your child about them. It makes it so much easier to talk about the award if I have a bit of preparation time. Do please join us at Achievement Assembly if you can.

WATER BOTTLES

Please ensure that your child comes to school with a water bottle filled with **water**, sounds obvious but we do occasionally get children with squash, sweetened flavoured water or even fizzy drinks. Water is important for hydrating the brain cells during the day which helps good learning. Schools are bound by the Schools Food Trust guidelines which clearly stipulate that during school hours or at Breakfast and After School Clubs sugary squash or fizzy drinks are not allowed (squash, not fizzy, is allowed in packed lunches however). For this reason we ask for water only. Please check that the water bottle is clearly labelled, particularly for our younger children who are easily confused about which bottle is actually theirs!



SCHOOL DINNERS

School dinners cost £2.20 this year and are payable **IN ADVANCE** either through the school office with cash or online at www.principals-catering.com

CLUBS

Clubs this term will start the week beginning 17th September 2018. A separate letter will be sent with full details of the clubs and how you can book them.

Clubs will change three times each year, so what is offered this term may not be offered after Christmas. This way we can keep the opportunities we make available to the children fresh and exciting.

Can I take this opportunity to remind you that staff give their time to run clubs voluntarily. They are not contracted to run clubs as part of their work in school and they are not under obligation to do so. When staff choose to run a club, it is because they know that they can help children have new learning experiences and fun social time and that this benefits the child and their learning overall. For this reason, please try not to complain or moan about clubs too much. We do understand that it can be frustrating if the club is full and your child doesn't get a place but we always try to ensure that they will get a place later in the term or during the next term. In recent terms, grumbles about clubs have made the staff wonder if they want to give up their own time to run them; it would be a very sad day if our wide range of clubs stopped because of this.

If you have a hidden talent and want to run a club at the school, then please come and talk to us about this. We welcome new ideas and opportunities for our learners.



BREAKFAST CLUB

If your mornings are busy and you're rushing off to work feeling a little stressed about managing the school run, why not book a sessions for your child at Breakfast Club? For just £3.00 they can have a filling breakfast and play opportunities from 8am onwards. You can book at any time, just for a one-off session or for whole weeks or regular sessions if you prefer; contact the school office for more information.

HOLIDAY DIARIES AND JOURNALS



Thank you to the parents and friends who have supported the children with their holiday diaries and journals this summer. I know from experience that this can sometimes be a 'challenging' task in the school holidays but the benefits are definitely worth it. Those that have come into school already look fabulous, full of lots of exciting and interesting experiences. The final date for diaries and journals to come into school is Friday 14th September. Each child who has completed six or more entries will receive a small prize and the best diary (based on each individual child's personal effort) will be rewarded with a voucher in the Achievement Assembly on Monday 24th September 2018.



SCHOOL START AND FINISH TIMES

Key Stage One - 8.45am - 3.00pm

Key Stage Two - 8.45am - 3.05pm

Please ensure that your child is in school and ready to start lessons BEFORE 8.45am. Children who are late arriving in school miss vital beginning of the day discussion about the timetable and information for the day, as well as losing learning time. The research shows that children who regularly miss the beginning of the day are often poorly organised and make less learning progress, our experience supports this finding.

Please note that lessons continue right up to the end of the school day. **After this** your child will be dismissed from class, collect up their belongings and be given any things to take home by the staff. This will take a little time, please don't expect your child to be with you dead on 3.00pm/3.05pm as this is the time that the teacher stops their teaching.



BUSTER'S BOOK CLUB

Every Wednesday evening children at Langdon are challenged to read at home and then asked to get a parent to record this in their reading record book to show their teacher the next day. Children who read are rewarded in their class and they can earn the title of 'Star Reader'. Last year we had a visit from Phil Gallagher, aka CBeebie's Mister Maker, as a result of our fantastic effort at increasing the number of children who read on Wednesdays. Buster's Book Club challenge will start again on Wednesday 12 September 2018.

WALK ON WEDNESDAY

Langdon pupils are part of a Kent wide scheme, run by the Kent Messenger, called Active WoW! We join with other children in the county in walking to school on a Wednesday (as well as other days if we can manage it). For each Wednesday that we walk to school we gain points which add up towards certificates and prizes. Anyone who drives from outside the village can join in too by parking at the village green or the recreation ground and then walking from there.

HOLIDAY REQUESTS

For new parents, and those that have forgotten, a reminder that requests for leave of absence for holidays in school term times will not be granted. Since September 2013 Head Teachers have had the freedom to approve requests for holiday absence removed. The reasons behind this are that firstly, if children are not in school they miss vital learning opportunities and there is never enough time to 'catch up' when they return. Secondly, a holiday on top of usual sickness or cough and cold days off quickly adds up to quite a lot of time off school and more learning lost. Thirdly, school only opens for 40 out of 52 weeks a year, giving parents ample opportunity to take holiday during the other 12 weeks when the school is closed.

Some parents try to 'fool' the system by taking holiday but saying their child is sick. In a situation where the school knows the family have taken holiday, even if they have given another reason for absence, the Head Teacher of a school is able to record that as an unauthorised absence on the child's records. Believe me, we almost always find out if a holiday is going to be or has been taken, usually because the child, a friend or a member of the family tells us at some point!

Holiday absence is one of our biggest problems with attendance at Langdon and one that I am constantly having to explain with the governors, the local authority and with Ofsted. **Last year at Langdon 41 out of 82 children - half of the school - had attendance below 96% for the year. 23 of these children had less than 96% attendance because of term time holidays and this was a 100% increase from the previous year.** Holiday absence causes myself and the governors lots of headaches as we try to meet local authority and Ofsted targets. In order to be judged 'good' attendance rates overall over the course of the year have to be above 96%. This is not impossible and allows a little leeway for sickness, but holiday requests significantly eat into this. Please help us to meet this target this year. Book your holidays during school holiday time and not in term time and make your child's learning in our school a priority.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Date	Event	Time
10.9.18	Year R (Walmer Castle Class) attend 9am - 12pm this week	
12.9.18	Dance lessons begin for Deal Castle and Leeds Castle Classes (WEDS)	
13.9.18	Brass lessons begin (THURS)	
17.9.18	Clubs begin this week	3.00-4.00pm
18.9.18	BFG Storytelling for Deal Castle Class	1.00pm
19.9.18	Full Governing Body Meeting	3.30-5.00pm
20.9.18	Year 3/4 Collaboration Dodgeball Tournament at Green Park School	1.30-3.00pm
21.9.18	Kent Messenger Photographer for Walmer Castle Class	
24.9.18	'Meet the Teacher' parents open evening	3.00-5.00pm
27/28.9.18	Year 5/6 Bikeability Group 1 - information to follow	
28.9.18	Collaboration Council meeting at Dover District Council offices	1.00-3.00pm
1/2.10.18	Year 5/6 Bikeability Group 2 - information to follow	
11.10.18	Kent Test results sent to parents	
19.10.18	End of Term 1	
29.10.18	Beginning of Term 2	
31.10.18	Closing date for secondary school applications	
8.11.18	Deal Castle Class Assembly	2.40pm
9.11.18	Choir performance at Dover Marine Station	6.30pm
15.11.18	Leeds Castle Class Assembly	2.30pm
22.11.18	Walmer Castle Class Assembly	2.40pm
29.11.18	Dover Castle Class Assembly	2.30pm
30.11.18	Key Stage 2 trip to Marlowe Theatre Pantomime - Cinderella	10.00am
14.12.18	Key Stage One performance - The Nativity	1.30pm TBC