



# Tudhoe Colliery Primary School

## School Newsletter January 2019



### Trail Reminder



A polite reminder.... As the signs on the fence show, the Tagessel Activity Trail is out of bounds to children and parents before and after school. The trail is timetabled through the week so that all children have an opportunity to play on it at playtime or lunchtime when it is supervised by staff.

### Parking Reminder!

A polite reminder to parents to make sure not to block the entrance to the farm (the gate to the right of the school gates) with cars at drop off/collection times, or at school events, as access is required at all times. The police are aware and we have been asked to monitor the situation. Thank you.



### Parent Mail App Update

Hopefully you will all now have updated from the old [Tudhoe Colliery branded App](#) to the [Parent Mail App](#). In order to make sure that there are no gaps in communication, please make sure you update the App regularly. If you feel you are missing messages, please contact school.

Also, please remember to check Parent Mail regularly to make sure you don't miss out on any exciting updates...



## READING PLUS

We are excited to tell you about 'Reading Plus,' a new computer based reading programme that we are using for Year 5 and 6 children in school.

The programme is focused around developing children's reading speed, language understanding and comprehension.

#### What were the results?

In 8 weeks, our Y6 pupils...

- increased their reading speed by an average of 61 words per minute;
- increased their vocabulary age by 0.3 years;
- increased their comprehension age by 0.9 years.

We trialled it for 8 weeks in the autumn term with our Year 6 pupils and were really impressed with the results (see box to the left!)

The programme can be accessed both at school and at home. If children use the programme at home and record this in their homework book, this will count towards their reading rewards.

## Parent Meetings & Workshops

As you will have seen from our date list, we are holding several parent meetings this term:

**Reading Plus meeting - Friday 1st February 9-10am** - this is to ensure Year 5 and 6 parents are familiar with the new programme we are using in school and can support their children with using it at home. Parents will have an opportunity to sit with their child while they demonstrate the programme.

**Y6 SATs meeting Wednesday 6th February 5:30pm** - This will be an information session about Year 6 assessments and what parents can be doing now to help prepare their children.

**Y2 SATs meeting Thursday 28th February 5:30pm** - Like the Year 6 meeting, this will be an information session about the Year 2 assessments held in May and what parents can be doing now to help prepare their children.

**Y1 Phonics meeting Wednesday 20th March 5:30pm** - In June, Year 1 children take a statutory phonics test. This meeting will give parents extra information on the test and ways they can help at home.

**Reception Reading meeting Friday 1st March 9-10am** - The children are now moving into more complex sounds in their phonics work. This meeting will share what children are looking at now in their reading, how to support them with reading at home and also give parents an opportunity to share a 'Love Reading' session with their child.

Are there any other sessions you think would be beneficial in school? If so, jot them on the feedback slip on the back page of the newsletter and send them into school, or bring it up at the parent forum!

**Parent Voice**



# THE FRIENDS

## SPRING BALL

On Tuesday 26th March, 6-7:30pm, we will be holding our Spring Ball.

Tickets cost £2 and must be purchased before the event as there will be no option to pay on the door. Letters will be sent out after half term.

### THANK YOU!!



Thank you for all your donations for the Christmas raffle and for buying tickets at each performance. We made a total of **£399.42** which is amazing and all comes back into school to benefit the children. The next event we will be asking for donations for will be the Easter Raffle. More information will come in the next few weeks, but the same kinds of items will be requested: biscuits, sweets, chocolates, Easter Eggs, wine, pamper items...anything you'd like to win as a prize!

## E-Safety



We are currently experiencing issues with our children involving social media sites such as Instagram and Tik Tok. Our Y6 children have taken part in a PSHCE lesson this week on how to use these apps safely and we are planning on surveying children to help establish which apps they use at home and any problems they've encountered so we can tailor our lessons towards exactly what the children need to keep themselves safe online. We will also be surveying parents to find out what you perceive to be the issues with children's internet use.

More about Tik Tok....

### INTERNET SAFETY

#### What is it?

This social network app is from the creators of Musical.ly. As Musical.ly officially went offline, TikTok has taken its place, offering the user the ability to watch musical clips, create short clips up to 60 seconds and add special effects to them.

#### What should parents be aware of?

Like with Musical.ly, Tik Tok also puts young people at risk of seeing highly inappropriate content, for example lyrics, interpretations of songs, the level of dress or undress of other users.

It is also a social media platform, which like all social media platforms encourages users to connect, to share content, to like and to comment. This also means public and private chats are available and young people can certainly be contacted by those they don't know.

Users can connect their other social media accounts to their Tik Tok account making it easier for them to be found and contacted via these apps as well.

The app store rating is **12+**, however Common Sense Media rates it at 16+.



### Twitter Page @TudhoeColliery

Find us at @TudhoeColliery for regular updates including photos of children's work and general day to day life in school.



# Discussion Time

## Votes for Schools

We are very excited to tell you that starting this term, the children will be taking part in new lessons to help develop their understanding of topical issues, their skills at debating and sharing opinions and their understanding of the democratic process through an opportunity to vote on different issues.

Every two weeks, children will be introduced to a topic. This will be done in an **assembly at the start of the week** and then each class will take part in a **lesson** where they discuss the topic in depth and decide where they stand. The discussions will cover a wide range of topics, e.g. bullying, social media, art or human rights.

We will inform parents of the topic each week too so that you are aware of what your child will be discussing in school and can join in with the discussion at home.

The children will then vote privately (using ballot papers and ballot boxes) and at the end of the week, we will count up and submit our results.

School will then receive a breakdown of our results so that the children can see how each class voted, how the school as a whole voted and how that compares to other schools in Durham and across the country.

We trialled this across the school two weeks ago, with each class discussing whether they will be adding bugs to their diet in 2019! As you can imagine, there were some lively discussions and very strong opinions expressed! Although initially the response from the vast majority of children was a resounding no, by the end of the week, the final vote showed....

**54%** of children said no

**46%** said yes!

**50%** of staff said no

**50%** of staff said yes!

## Tricky Topics...

The vote topics will vary every week, often coming from events in the news that are relevant for children. Sometimes these topics may be quite challenging, but will be led by teachers in a sensitive way.

We won't be shying away from these issues in school as we feel it is vitally important for children to have an awareness of the world around them and to be able to discuss these topics in a safe environment.

With every topic we will inform you at the start of the week what the children will be discussing. For some trickier topics, we will send out additional information (like we did for Year 5 and 6 last week).

## How would you vote?

We would love to set up a Parent Vote to vote on the weekly topics. We will send out a Parent Mail to request volunteers next week!



### How would it work?

1. If you volunteer to take part, we will let you know the topic at the start of the week:
2. You can then talk about this with your child at home through the week:
3. We would email you a form via Parent Mail so you can vote on the topic.
4. The form responses would be anonymous (as is the children's vote in school!) but the results would then allow the children to compare their vote with how the parent group has voted.

## Coming soon... Philosophy for Children

In our next newsletter, we'll be telling you about the philosophy lessons we'll be starting after half term. Although this has a fancy name, it's really just another way to develop our children's ability to explore different issues and understand other points of view!



# SPORTING NEWS



## Autumn Football League

On three exciting Tuesday nights in the Autumn term, a dedicated team participated in the first part of the Sedgefield Sports Partnership Football League. Callum, Owen, George, Neve, Jeffery, Jack and Ellis played brilliantly each week and represented the school very well, earning a respectful fourth place in the league.

## Running – XCountry Style

We took selected children from Key Stage Two to take part in a long distance race at Ferryhill Business and Enterprise College. Lower Key Stage Two children ran 1,000m while Upper Key Stage Two ran 1,600m! All pupils tried their best in such a difficult event and showed brilliant team spirit.

## Tag Rugby-ing!

Year 5 and 6 children took part in a SSP Sedgefield rugby tournament. They played fantastic rugby and used the coaching tips from their Tag Rugby Club sessions extremely well. The team - Callum, George, Scarlett, Neve, Owen, Thomas, Ruby and Isla - worked brilliantly together throughout their matches and came second in the tournament. Not only is this a fantastic result in itself, it also means the team go through to the County finals in March!

## Astonishing Athletics!

Key Stage Two children took part in an indoor athletics competition to show off their track and field skills. The team finished with a total of 226 points and in second place. This was another fantastic result and meant we had qualified for the final of the Sports Hall Athletics Competition. In the final, we finished 5th overall, which was a fantastic result in such a competitive competition.

## Being Active with Multi Skills!

Y2 had a fantastic time at the Key Stage One Multi Skills event put on by the Sedgefield Schools Partnership. They particularly liked the activities 'Hot Spots' and 'Dress the Scarecrow!' They represented the school wonderfully and had a fantastic time doing so.

## Competitions

As you will have seen from the date list, we have a lot of sporting competitions going on this term too! Letters will be sent via Parent Mail if your child is selected to attend. Check out our next newsletter to find out how we've done, or follow us on Twitter @tudhoe colliery.



## Your responses...

On the last newsletter we had a comment to say that it can be really hard to get past Reception parents and children at drop off and pick up times. We have since reviewed our pick up points, as we do regularly, to see if we could make any changes to ease congestion as we are aware of how busy the yard gets, however we were unable to make any changes. We had tried to ease this problem a few years ago by requesting permission from the council to fit a gate from the yard onto the path near the bus stop, but unfortunately this was denied.

**Parent Voice**

We also had a comment that the Shakespeare School Festival is a great opportunity for the children - we completely agree! Every year we are amazed by what they manage to achieve on stage.



## What Do You Think?

In each Newsletter we ask for parents' views about our school. Do you have any suggestions? Is there anything we could do better? What are we doing well? Any general comments? Just pop your comment into the box below, cut across the line and send it into the school. (Only include your name if you would like to!)