



Main Road, Smalley Derbyshire DE7 6EF
01332 880317

Executive Headteacher – Mrs P Atwal

Friday 25th October 2024

Dear parents/carers,

It is difficult to believe how quickly the first half term of the academic year has flown past! It has been a very busy time in school and we are so proud of the children and how hard they have worked. Thank you for your support with the homework projects for the half term's theme 'Identity and Diversity'; it was lovely to see you in school last week to support your children and to celebrate the wonderful work of our children. Thank you!

I have had the opportunity to reflect on the weeks of school we have had with the children and it has been wonderful to share in their learning and memories. Here are just a few of the highlights:

- ***We welcomed our new reception children who have settled into the routines of school life so wonderfully***
- ***Year 6 have reception buddies and it is a joy to see them support our younger children throughout the week. This is a huge benefit for all our children, giving the older ones a chance to show responsibility and care towards the younger children***
- ***We have held the School Council election and the council have already started to make plans for the year ahead***
- ***We have attended class trips to Cromford and Chatsworth in Year 6 and Year 3. As I have already informed, all class teachers will organise trips that enhance the children's learning and understanding this year. We are looking forward to the Derby Open Centre trip next half term for Year 4 and Year 5.***
- ***Class 2 produced a super Harvest assembly – it was great to see this well-attended by families, and of course to see the huge number of donations for the Salvation Army. Thank you!***
- ***Athletics competitions & sports clubs***
- ***We have introduced more lunchtime clubs including a library club on the train, which is always well-attended***
- ***We have had in-school talks to classes and in assemblies from: our local PCSO Alfie Smith, the Fire and Rescue Service, Valley Kids and the Air Ambulance Service. These have focused on safety and understanding our communities and have been an invaluable source of information for the children.***

We thoroughly enjoyed the Embark Awards Evening this week and the chance to celebrate with the nominated children and their families. Mr Crawford was in school last week to speak to all the children in a special assembly about the Embark Awards. This is one of the great things that all Embark Federation schools share. Our Embark values of Family, Integrity, Success and Teamwork are fundamental to our core beliefs as a school. One of the ways we instil these values into our children is to encourage children to complete 100 activities (25 for each value). There are some easy ones to complete such as cook a family meal with your family or build a den and most are easy to access readily. We would really encourage you to re-visit these as it would be great to see some of our children work their way through these quickly.

All reception children should have received their folders and older children will already have their folders. The half term holidays are always a good opportunity to complete some of these activities and we look forward to seeing what you and your wonderful children get up to! After half term, please send the folders with any evidence back into school so we can mark the completed activities for your child.

As the children were informed, Mr Crawford will return to award bronze medal winners who achieve 40 completed activities.

We are already looking forward to next half term and the lead up to Christmas which will be upon us sooner than we think. *We are looking forward to commemorating Remembrance Day with the school community on Monday 11th November. Please see the details below.*

Our school Service of Remembrance will take place in the school hall on **Monday 11th November 2024 at 10.30am** then our respect will be shown by the war memorial, led by our Year 6 children, supported by Year 5 pupils. We would therefore like to invite **parents/carers of Year 6 children** to attend this service.

Wreaths will be placed on the memorial and all children in school will visit the memorial during the day.

Regrettably, this week, we have had to cancel a sports event at short notice. I am very sorry for the upset and inconvenience this has caused and, as a team, moving forward we will ensure that notice of events is in good time and if cancellations need to happen, phone calls are made to notify you in a timely manner.

Today, we have had a brilliant day marking the Hindu and Sikh festival of Diwali with all children participating in a bhangra dance session with their class. They are having a great time – and the staff are too! This was a super way to end a busy half term and we have arranged this as a welcome treat for our children.

We are so pleased with the number and quality of decorated pumpkins this year and thank the PTFA for their hard work in organising the event.

The Royal British Legion Poppy Sale

We will be selling poppies from Monday 4th November 2024 to support the Poppy Appeal. Please help by bringing in a donation of your choice. There will also be a range of accessories sold, for a minimum donation of £1 – the accessories include rubber wristbands and reflector poppies. The sale will take place at break time under the outside shelter to raise money for The Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. Please ensure your child has the correct money.

Attendance

Our whole school attendance is 96%. Our target is 95% as a school and we will contact you if your child's attendance falls below this. A large number of absences this half term have been for unauthorised holidays in term time. Each day a child misses of school has an impact on their progress and whilst I appreciate the costs of holidays sometimes drives this situation, I would urge you to ensure that your child attends school each day. We will continue to follow our attendance policy and issue notices for penalties in accordance with this. **Please see our attendance policy here.**

Key dates for next half term:

Remembrance Service (Year 5 and Year 6)	Monday 11 th November
Children in Need	Friday 15 th November
Coffee & Chat	Monday 18 th November 9.00am - 10.00am
INSET Day	Friday 29 th November
Christmas Fayre (PTFA)	Friday 6 th December
SMALLEY CHURCH – Christmas Tree Festival	Saturday 7 th December: 10.30am → 3.00pm
Nativity Performances (Reception and Year 1)	Tuesday 10 th December & Wednesday 11 th December (2.30pm)
Christmas Jumper Day	Thursday 12 th December
Christmas/Winter Disco (PTFA)	Thursday 12 th December Key Stage 1: 3.30pm → 4.15pm Key Stage 2: 4.30pm → 5.30pm
Christmas Dinner and Party Day	Wednesday 18 th December
Last Day of Term	Friday 20 th December
Christmas Holidays	Monday 23rd December to Friday 3rd January
First Day of Spring Term	Monday 6 th January 2025