

Caen Community Primary Newsletter

Friday 25th January 2018



Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, can I just say a very big “Thank you!” to all those who have passed on their congratulations to me. I feel wonderfully privileged to now be leading the school officially and not “Playing Head Teacher,” as one of the children on the pupil panel remarked! I look forward to moving Caen forwards with the staff and families for all of our children and future pupils.

As part of the process I needed to explain my vision for the school and how I will lead it to *Outstanding*. I know that many of you and your children will have your own ideas about this and along with the governors I would like to consult and survey over the next half-term so we can draw up a strategic plan that will help set our course to this aspirational but rightful goal.

The governors and I are working closely to move the school forwards and we are going to be looking at local and wider afield schools to take ideas and inspiration from to make Caen the best it can be for our children to give them the best start to their education.

There have been many changes in the school over my short time here and part of the next stage is to establish what our next steps need to be so we can make the best use of the school, staff and site.

I have already had an initial meeting with an architect about the hall, toilets and other areas of the school. We are currently gathering quotes for some more minor but important jobs.

Although the fabric of the school is important the key to moving forward is your child’s learning. You can have a tremendous impact at home through hearing them read daily and doing some maths when out and about like times tables in the car. We had some staff training this week from Ann Atherton (a dyslexia specialist based in Crediton) and she said that up to the age of 7/8 children ‘learn to read’ whereas after this point, +8yrs, they ‘read to learn’. Hearing your child read and supporting them with this is *vital*, especially so, in Reception, Y1 and Y2, but also across school (and rewarding when you see that progress). We have personal logins for *My Maths* for all and as well as the homework tasks for Y2+ it has games and activities for all

Alongside the home comes school and our role. Please speak to your child’s teacher if you have any questions or feel that they need some additional support or challenge. We have our parent meetings twice a year but if you have any learning or pastoral question/ concern please arrange to see your child’s teacher when it arises – this way it can be swiftly addressed for your child so they can make the best progress.

Year 6 have read Philip Pullman’s ‘Clockwork’ as a class and it is a wonderful short story. The story is about Karl an apprentice clock-maker, a mechanical knight and



Stars of the week

Well done to:

Maisy-Bella Demellweek,
Evie Flounders, Clodagh
Carroll, Oliver Jeffery, Sahaj
Gurung, Elliott Davis, Jake
Gallimore, Teddy Walters,
Shalom Bolatiki, Sian
Canning-Matthews, Alex
Gee, Jake Gallimore



Y5 and 6 are studying Macbeth and are putting together some work for a display. This is Lady Macbeth and is entirely the work of the children. Very impressive!

the sinister Dr Kalmenius. It has one section which really resonates with me and I have shared it with the children today in their star assembly:

If you want something, you can have it, but only if you want everything that goes with it, including all the hard work and the despair, and only if you're willing to risk failure. That's the problem with Karl: he was afraid of failing so he never really tried. [Philip Pullman, 'Clockwork', p.36]

This is what I and we will strive for as a school for the children and community. We want the children to take on this attitude and take 'risks' with their learning to really challenge themselves. In assembly we spoke about a Y2 boy who had gone back and really improved his writing and presentation, those in YR who display the traits of the 'Tortoise' and don't give up and those who put themselves forward for the gala trials when they weren't sure.

Speaking of challenging themselves we took nearly seventy children from across KS2 to the **swimming gala trials** on Monday. There was some serious challenge for places and due to the numbers not everyone is able to be part of the gala. However, as with the cross country, every KS2 child who would like to is able to take part in the Ilfracombe Aquathlon which takes place in the summer.

Today two teams of twelve Y6 children have taken part in the **North Devon Sportshall Athletics Finals** in Barnstaple and they finished 3rd and 4th out of 13 teams. A superb result, well done!

Last week and on Monday we held the auditions for our team for the **Rotary 'Youth Speaks'** competition which is held annually. Last year we were able to enter two teams of three but this year we have been restricted to one as Southmead are also entering which means there will be some healthy local competition. A number auditioned having written their own short speeches and the themes ranged from the environment, animals, gender to even 'Friends' (the TV programme!). Congratulations to Esme, Renie and Caitlin who will form our team and their speech is titled 'Is it right to domesticate wild animals?'

On Tuesday morning our **Y1** children went to Braunton Academy for the **Multiskills Festival**. They had a busy and great time up there taking part in lots of different activities.

As said above, on Tuesday Ann Atherton came to do some training for all of our staff after school so we can best meet the needs of all of our children. It was a really useful session and Ann is very keen to run a session for all parents about how to best help your child to read. Once we have a date we shall let you know as it will be a very useful session. Further to this, if anyone wishes or is able to volunteer on a regular basis to hear children read it would be much appreciated.

Y1 and **Y3** have both been to **St. Brannock's** church this week and Rev. Anne has shown them the different outfits she wears for different occasions and they have investigated the church trying to find as many crosses as they can (there are more than 500).

Y3 have continued to have their **trumpet lessons** and are practising most days ahead of their performance to parents (date tbc). We have also just finalised plans for some **specialist dance teaching** for the children to take place during the school day so *all* can take part. Both Mrs Rivensberg and Mrs Cooper are trained dancers and dance teachers and from after half-term they will be teaching dance across the school. Mrs Cooper will teach each Y5 class modern and contemporary on a Monday afternoon and Miss Rivensberg will teach Y2 and Y3 street dance on Thursday afternoons. Every child will receive at least one block of either this year and next year they will have a half-term of each style. At the end of each block parents and family will be invited in to see the final piece.

Both the school staff and I are excited about the future for Caen and driving it forwards with your support for our children and our community.

Kind regards,

Mr Page