



F.T. News

News from First Tower School

February 2024



A Word from the Head

Dear Parents/Carers,

Apparently today is the first day of spring! Hopefully the sun and blue sky will make more appearances, I think we have all had enough of the relentless rain and wind.

During the past two weeks, I and other members of the school's leadership team have had the pleasure of observing teaching and learning across the school, we have seen amazing writing including from children who aren't normally keen to write. Everyone has been eager to share their learning and have been able to articulate what they have learnt and what their next steps are.

Although this half term is very short, it is very busy. Next week we will celebrate World Book Day by wearing our PJs all day, Yay! I wonder which staff member will have the best fluffy slippers? The following week we will join many others in raising funds for "Comic Relief" by wearing red and writing funny poems and stories. More information about both events are detailed in this newsletter.

Mrs Morgan is busily planning this year's Science Week which begins on Monday 11th March, we will include as many photos, examples of learning and comments from the children as we can in our end of term newsletter.

Wishing you all a very lovely weekend,

Mrs Lyn Linton

Headteacher

DIARY DATES

Parent/Teacher Consultations Wednesday 6 March and Wednesday 13 March

World Book Day Thursday 7 March

Red Nose Day Friday 15 March

Term ends Wednesday 27 March

Term starts Monday 15 April

Half term Tuesday 28 May to Friday 31 May

Attendance

Please can all parents be reminded to contact the school office (ideally by telephone) should your child be off sick or attending a medical appointment. We have a legal duty of care to locate any pupils not at school and it takes a lot of time to call parents who have not informed us.

Please remember to complete a 'Leave of Absence Request' if your child will be absent from school. We cannot 'authorise' an absence if we have not received this *before* the period of absence.

Medical appointments should be made out of school hours where possible, however if your child needs to attend an appointment during school time, please inform the school office as well as your class teacher.

Every lesson counts!	100%	Excellent
Equates to 4 school days off each year.	98%	Impressive
Equates to 7 school days off each year.	96%	Good
Equates to 9 school days off each year.	95%	Nearly there
Equates to 11 school days off each year.	94%	Needs to improve
Equates to 1 month off school each year.	90%	DANGER ZONE!
Equates to 1.5 months off school each year.	85%	
Equates to 2 months off school each year.	80%	

Our school average overall attendance is currently 94.2%, which is below the Jersey schools' average and less than we would like. Hopefully the warmer weather will appear and we will have less illness going forward to increase our overall average percentage. Should your child's attendance rate be lower than expected, the class teacher will discuss this with you during your parent consultation.

Nursery



Shrove Tuesday

In Nursery, we've had a food-themed week, we have been learning about Shrove Tuesday and we even helped to make pancakes! We chose our own fillings.



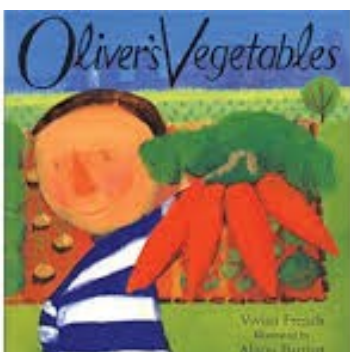
We prepared the fillings ourselves!



Banana and honey was our favourite filling. They were delicious!



Oliver's Vegetables



It hasn't just been sweet treats, we've also been reading Oliver's Vegetables, and learning all about the wonderful vegetables we can try!

Reception



The children learnt about the different traditions that occur on 'Shrove' Tuesday— Pancake day. In both classes we made pancakes and then of course we ate them. They were delicious!

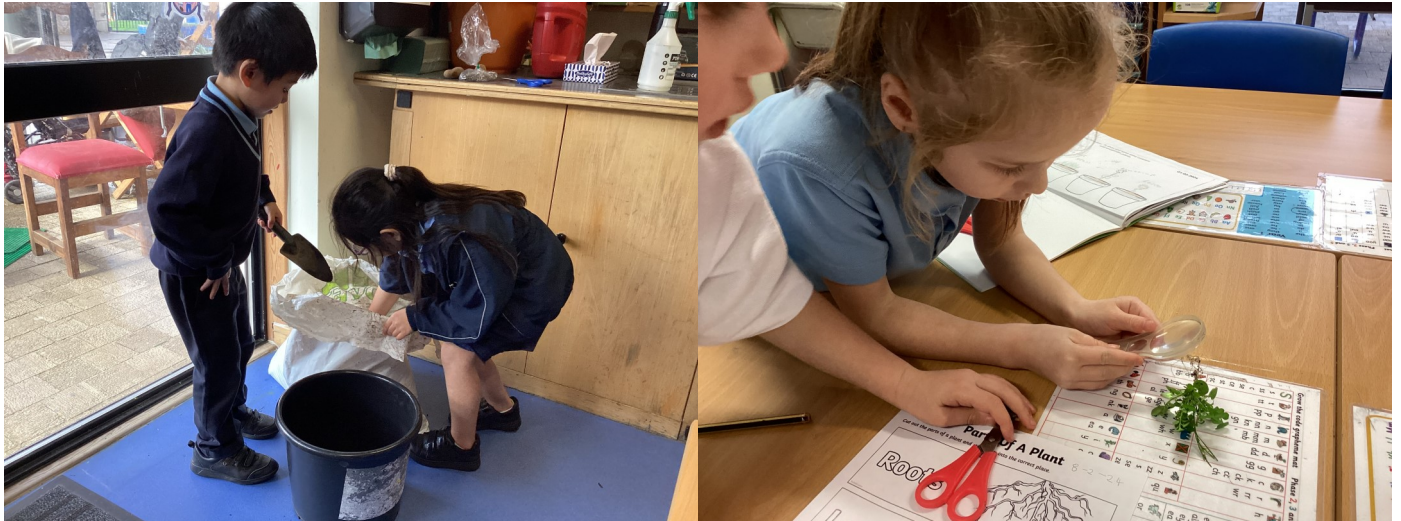


We have been planting potatoes and hope that we win the school competition for the class to grow the most! We have to make sure we water them and give them plenty of light!



Year 1

This month in year 1 we have been busy planting potatoes and looking at the different parts of a plant and tree!



We have also been looking at the history of board games and what makes them so fun, we enjoyed it so much we've started making our own!



Year 2

In Science we have enjoyed planting seeds, beans and bulbs and watching them germinate and grow.



We had a fabulous time on Number Day, dressing up as rockstars and studying Maths all day! We sang number songs, played games, solved problems and studied the artist Fibonacci.



Year 3



Year 3 enjoyed a trip to the beach to make our own natural sculptures in the style of artist Andy Goldsworthy.



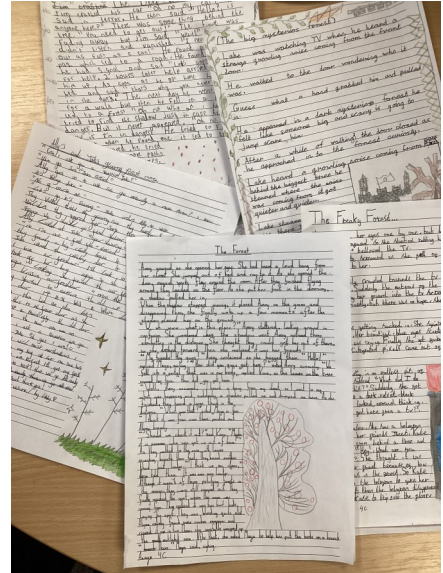
Year 3 have enjoyed lots of music this month. They have used our new and improved music room to learn songs on the boomwhackers and explored different instruments. They also had a visit from the Jersey Music Service for a bucket and spade workshop.



Year 4

English

The children have been working incredibly hard in English these past few weeks to write the opening to a story. There has been a focus on description as well as handwriting and the children are looking forward to sharing their finished writing with you when they bring it home.



Fire safety visit

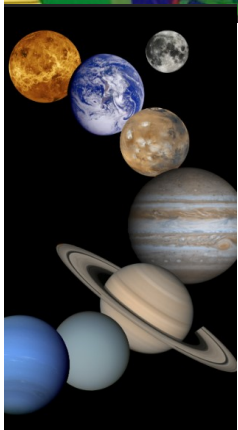
The children were visited by the Fire service who shared lots of important information on how to stay safe in the home. They looked at possible fire risks and how to prevent them, how to call for help in an emergency and where the best place to put a smoke detector is. Please can you show the children where your smoke detectors are at home as some children were not sure if they had one or where it was located.



Year 5

Year 5 have had a great start to this half term. In English, we have been learning how to use subordinate conjunctions and prepositions in writing. In maths, we have had to really think about problems including fractions. In art, we have completed some amazing tessellation pictures as a project during maths day. In Pe we have been learning football and have just started kick boxing. Finally in science we are learning about The Earth and Space. We have been making Solar System mobiles.





Making
Solar Sys-
tem Mo-
biles.



Year 6

This month, Year 6 have been working hard in English on two different texts. The first text we covered was 'Macbeth' where the children explored the language of Shakespeare and how it is similar/different today. They all created a newspaper article about an event within the story.

Since half term, we have been reading a text called 'Survivors'. The children have been writing survival guides of how to stay safe in the jungle using a variety of Year 6 grammar techniques.



Du Putron

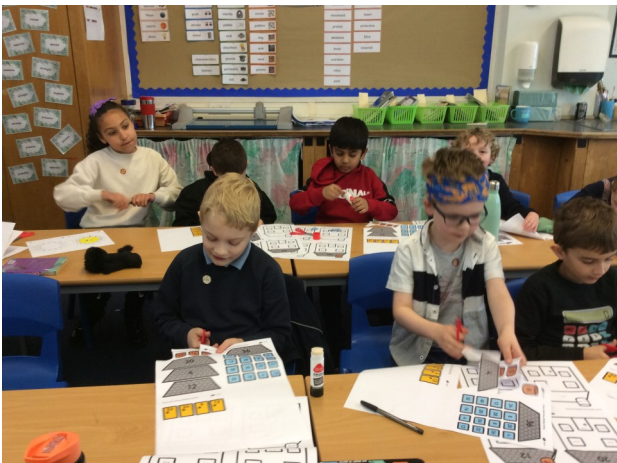
Some Year 6 pupils also took part in the Du Putron Challenge where they represented the First Tower against other schools in a quiz and STEM challenge. Although they didn't get through to the next round, they represented us fantastically.



Maths

Number Day

Wow! What can I say about Number Day for NSPCC? It was a fantastic day with some excellent 'rockstar' costumes on show around the school. Everyone entered into the spirit of the day by celebrating number and taking on many different number challenges.



This week, we continued the whole-school 'Times Tables Rockstars' house tournament.



The winning house this week is ...

Earth House

1	Earth House	26,308
2	Fire House	1,530
3	Air House	721
4	Water House	102





World Book Day takes place on Thursday **7th March 2024**. This year our theme is **A World of Stories**. During the day children will have the opportunity to hear stories in languages other than English. Classes will hear stories in one or more of these languages: Welsh, Polish, Romanian, Portuguese, French, Jerriais, or Spanish. The Jersey Library will visit school to launch Lote4Kids which is a platform which allows children and families to access thousands of ebooks in 65 different languages, all for free, using their Jersey Library card.

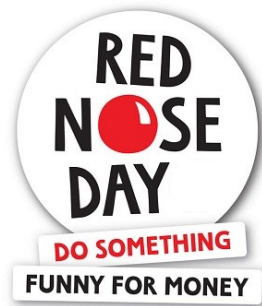
Your child may wear non-uniform on that day and, to link with our World of Bedtime Stories theme, children may wear pyjamas, onesies or dressing gowns. Children may bring their slippers, if they have them, to school but need to wear trainers for outside play and bring a coat, as usual.

We will have lots of fun activities taking place throughout the day, including: a visit to our wonderful stocked school library for a story, story time with a guest reader, learning songs or rhymes in a variety of languages.

We will give out the £1 World Book Day book token which they can use in book shops to get a free £1 book. Simply take the £1 book token to your nearest bookseller and swap it for a World Book Day £1 book OR get £1 off any book or audiobook costing £2.99 or more, or you can use it towards the cost of a book from the school book club. We will give out the school book club brochure on World Book Day. Orders to be placed online by Monday 18th March for delivery to school after Easter.

Check out the World Book Day Family Hub for more things to do at home related to books.

We're very much looking forward to celebrating World Book Day with your child.



Red Nose Day 2024 - Do Something Funny for Money!

Friday 15th March 2024

This Red Nose Day the children are invited to wear something red to school and bring a suggested charitable donation of £1.

In assembly and during school, the children will be marking the day. For KS1 & KS2, the students will write a funny poem or story (up to 100 words). In EYFS, the children will create a funny picture. You may like to discuss ideas with your child beforehand. There will be a prize for the best entry from EYFS, Y1/2, Y3/4 and Y5/6.

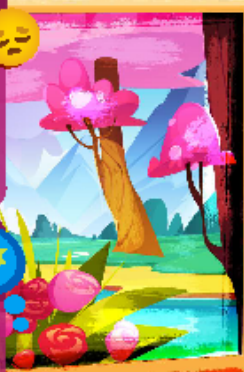
We look forward to marking the day as a school community and raising money for this worthy cause.

Top Tips for Supporting Children Who Are EXPERIENCING BULLYING

In a DfE survey, 38% of parents said that their child had been bullied in the past year, while 28% of secondary school headteachers reported bullying among students. Public Health England states that young people who maintain positive communication with their family were less likely to experience bullying – so it's important that parents, carers and educators know how to talk to children about bullying.

1. WATCH FOR BEHAVIOURAL CHANGES

Children who are experiencing bullying may become quiet, withdrawn, or a nervous, however, they may also act on the pain and anger that they're feeling. A shift in attitude towards their existing friends (or not mentioning them any more at all) or alluding to new friendships which seem notably different could also be warning signs. It's important to be alert to such changes and talk to your child about them if they occur.



2. THINK THINGS THROUGH

Before acting, ask yourself if this is the right time and place to address concerns about bullying. Might your worries trigger strong feelings – perhaps from your own experiences – that could discourage your child from opening up to you? You could try discussing what you've noticed with a mother trusted adult who knows your child well.



3. BE OPEN AND UNDERSTANDING

Try to explain to your child the changes that you've noticed in their body language, appearance, behaviour, or tone of voice – and do so without sounding judgemental. Help them to describe what they're feeling – be it anger, sadness, fear or something else – as accurately as possible. If they say they're "angry", do they mean "frustrated" or "exasperated"? This will help them to understand how they're feeling and why.



4. LET THEM SPEAK FREELY

Use open questions and a welcoming time to encourage your child to talk. Listen clearly and summarise what they've said at appropriate points (ideally without interrupting) to demonstrate that you're understanding clearly. Bullying may have undermined your child's sense of control, and they may fear that you'll judge them, overreact or impose consequences – so this conversation can reassure them being honest with you was the right decision.



5. CALL A TIME OUT

A conversation about bullying could leave both you and your child feeling distressed. It's important to recognise this and pause at suitable moments to calm down. Take deep breaths, enjoy a hot drink or even have a cathartic cry. This can reinforce trust, while also helping you both feel that you have control over the situation and the emotions that you're feeling.



6. STAY INFORMED

Make sure you know your child's school's definition of, responses to and relevant contacts for bullying. This information should be in their anti-bullying policy, which ought to be available on the school's website. Class teachers or form tutors are usually the first point of contact, though there may be dedicated support teams or key workers to help your child, depending on the specific situation.



7. PREP YOUR CHILD FOR THE RESPONSE

School responses to bullying vary depending on whether they're resolving disagreements and arguments, or addressing unintended verbal or physical harm and so on. It's important to work out with your child whether any harm was intentional, how much control they had over the situation and how often such incidents have occurred. Reporting concerns accurately will get the best outcome for your child more quickly.



8. SUMMARISE YOUR CHILD'S EXPERIENCE

When you contact the school, make sure you've precisely described what your child experienced: what happened; where; when; and who was involved. This will help the school to investigate further, identifying any witnesses, as well as those who were directly involved. It can also help the school to know how your child is feeling and how they'd like the matter to be resolved.



9. LIAISE WITH THE SCHOOL

Any school has a duty to ensure that the members of its community feel safe and included. It's important for children to learn their role in this. The school must determine how best to restore those feelings of safety and respect. It's often best for schools to keep parents and carers informed of any action taken – and for families to avoid taking matters into their own hands.



10. CHECK IN FREQUENTLY

Once the issue has been resolved and the bullying behaviour has stopped, your child may still feel a nervous and might find it difficult to rebuild relationships or develop new ones. Parents, carers and the school should all keep an eye on how the child is feeling and acting over the following months. Any relevant information should be shared, so that further support can be planned if necessary.



Meet Our Expert

Kate Bailey is the Director of Anti-Bullying Quality Mark-UK, which challenges and supports schools to develop anti-bullying school approaches to prevent bullying, including working with parents and carers. More than 88 schools in England and Wales currently hold the quality mark.



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