

Forest Way School Newsletter

Autumn Term 2020



Welcome to our Autumn Term Newsletter

We recognise that this has been a difficult term for our young people and their families. I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to you all, on behalf of the staff, for the positive way in which you have engaged with us. Having to close down bubbles and ask your children to self-isolate is not something we take lightly. We fully appreciate the implications of this for you all. We have aimed to refine our home learning offer and we are taking a more individualised approach. This has included teaching 'live' lessons. We are always keen to hear your feedback so please continue to let us know how this is working for you.

This term we have welcomed a new teacher for Post 16, Esther Brown. Esther will be completing her NQT year with us and working in Oaks 9 & 10. Camille Lam has returned from maternity leave and has also joined Post 16. Sadly we are saying goodbye at Christmas to Katie McLeod who is leaving us to take a new opportunity working in a different type of setting. Katie has been with us since 2005 and many of your children will have benefitted from her teaching. She has taught across Acorns and we wish her well for the future.

I am pleased to let you know that our newest pupils have settled in brilliantly to school life. The Den, our Communication and Interaction Unit, has had 4 pupils attending and this will rise to 8 in January.

Thank you for your comments about Parents' Evening. They were overwhelmingly positive and I'm glad you found the calls useful. The two themes that came through as improvements were that some of you would have liked to do this via TEAMS with the video on and you would also like to see your son/daughter's work. We will take this into account if circumstances prevent us doing our meetings in school in the future.

We have continued to think creatively about how we can continue to hold whole school celebrations and comply with the COVID rules. Our Christmas Concert will be held remotely with classes making videos to share.

Finally, remember you can use our email parentsupport@forestway.leics.sch.uk if you need to contact us out of school office hours.

I wish everyone a safe December.

Gail Seaton—Headteacher

Tracksuits

We have Forest Way tracksuits and t-shirts that are free to good homes.

Please let your class teacher know the size you need and we will send them home.

The range of sizes are 22" to 42".





Dancing together!

EYFS

A very BIG well done to all the children and staff in Acorns 1. The children are settling down to being in full-time school and are enjoying themselves and having fun.

Its been a time of 'getting to know' each other and finding out about who we are - our likes, dislikes and interests.

Our theme this term is 'This is Me' - with the help of our parents and carers we are finding out more and more about the children every day. We have had so much fun playing together and getting to know each other and the different areas of the school.

Key Stage 1

The children in Acorns 2 and 3 have settled well into their new classes and they are becoming familiar with their new school routines. The topic for this term is learning about 'houses and homes' and we have already enjoyed designing and creating different houses using boxes, with different materials and using lots of paint! We have been listening to the stories of 'The 3 little pigs' and 'Goldilocks and the 3 bears' and taking part in various fun activities linked to the stories.

In Acorns 2 we have been having a wonderful time visiting the beautiful woodland for Forest Schools with Nicole. We have been hunting, tying knots, making ladders and tents, using clay and making our own delicious snacks each week. We have been swinging in the hammock and feeling the leaves and sticks, taking turns, sharing and working together. Acorns 3 will have a wonderful Forest Schools experience to look forward to when it is their turn after the half term holiday!





*“A Gruffalo...
what’s a Gruffalo?”*

Key Stage 2

The Otters group have been working hard in Forest Schools. We found some dragons who live in our woodlands! We’ve made them some food, built them houses and even trained them not to breathe any fire on our trees. We’ve had a fantastic time and the children have thoroughly enjoyed themselves!

The Rabbits group have been learning how to be a good friend. They have been sharing lots of games and activities together. They have also enjoyed going to the woodlands to explore their environment. They have explored activities related to the harvest and really enjoyed digging in the garden to help harvest the vegetables. We also had the story of The Gruffalo and enjoyed finding all the creatures that mouse met on his walk through the woods!

The Den

Our new Communication and Interaction Unit - ‘The Den’ opened on 22nd September! We currently have 4 pupils enrolled. The Den has two classrooms, one class for pupils in Reception and KS1 and a KS2 class. We have been busy getting to know each other and exploring our new building. The pupils have all enjoyed using the sensory room and equipment and Forest Schools in the woodlands.



In the EYFS we have been reading the ‘Colour Monster’ and talking about our emotions. We have learnt new dances and enjoyed exploring musical instruments. In art in KS2 we have been looking at autumn and practising our drawing skills.

Post 16

Our curriculum is still going ahead as normal but with a few tweaks to make it 'Covid-19 safe'. One of our most exciting developments is that one of our classes, Oaks 11, have now started using a classroom and other facilities at the Maplewell College site in Loughborough. This is an important stepping stone for our students to get them used to being in a new environment before they leave Forest Way. Oaks 11 students are spending 4 out of 5 days at the newly refurbished site and have really risen to the challenge of taking a step away from the Forest Way site.



"The staff at Maplewell are friendly and kind." Pupil

Post 16 Forest Way Student Careers Studies

The Post 16 students have started to have their careers guidance sessions. We have invited Hannah Gill from LEBC to come and discuss the student's career/college options. Hannah is a qualified level 6 careers adviser. She is spending time with each of next year's leavers, talking to them and explaining what their options are when they leave Forest Way. With the support of a staff member, students have looked at colleges in the local area and Hannah has been able to offer advice to them. These will continue throughout the year. Oaks 11 students have also been studying the Local Labour Market information. They have been investigating what large companies exist with in the local area. This information can also be viewed on Forest Way School's website. Students have also been looking at CV writing skills and have been updating their CV information.

Diwali

Diwali workshops have taken place over the past few weeks, all classes had the opportunity to engage in activities related to the festival of light celebrated by Hindus and Sikhs. Some pupils made Diya lamps whilst others had Mendhi patterns drawn on their hands or made their own rangoli patterns using coloured rice.



Charnwood College

Oaks 11 have started the term going to Charnwood College. The students and staff are based in Maplewell's Post 16 building. This is purpose-built. It has wheelchair access and a lift to the upstairs. Oaks 11 have their own classroom. This is a new spacious room. The students have access to learning pods, the technology room, the common room and the ICT room. The students have lessons which include maths, English, STEM, Skills Builder and community skills lessons. Charnwood College employs a chef. He is very experienced and has worked with David Attenborough and his film crew in the Antarctic. One pupil commented that the dinners "Were well made," and also said, "They gave me an experience with new foods." After dinner there are clubs which include ICT, arts & crafts, Netflix and use of the common room. A sports club will be offered in good weather. Maplewell has a COVID-19 one-way system and has hand sanitising stations around the building.

Living Eggs

We have had the living eggs in school this term. The pupils all had a chance to see them and if brave enough hold them! We hatched eight eggs and all the chicks were well. Lots of pupils learnt about the lifecycle of the chick during science lessons. They have now chirpily gone off to their forever home at a rescue centre! We have just received an update that they have settled well and have started to get their feathers.



"I've never held a chick before, they are so cute!"



The Middle Ages!

In Acorns 8 we have been learning about the middle ages! We dressed up, pretending to be lords and ladies in a castle and had a medieval feast. Some of our friends dressed up to entertain us, pretending to be jesters and we practiced some medieval line dancing! We had a great time!



Mindfulness

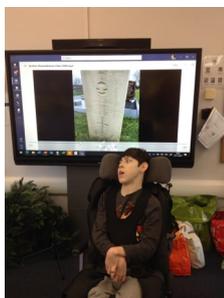
In Key Stage 3, Steph's art and music group have been focusing on finding time in the day for some quiet reflection. On a Friday afternoon the pupils choose some classical music to listen to together whilst focusing on some mindful colouring. The pupils have been absolutely brilliant at staying quiet, not just for their own reflection but to support their peers to enjoy some quiet time too. It's a lovely way to end the week together.

Remembrance Day

On Remembrance Day the corridors were filled with the beautiful sound of Sam playing 'The Last Post'. The doors to all the classrooms were left open so the pupils could listen whilst we all spent two minutes reflecting on those that fought for us during wartime. Many of the pupils spent the afternoon learning about the meaning behind remembrance day, and a pupil's prayer was read during collective worship at the end of the day.



At the Lodge in Key Stage 4, we looked into the meaning behind Armistice day. We made some beautiful poppy wreaths and discussed the impact of war past and present. On 11th November, we held a class ceremony, with traditional speeches and prayers, laying the wreaths and observing the two minute silence. The pupils did a fantastic job and enjoyed respecting the traditions that we practise on this date.



Post 16 held a competition on Teams to do something for Remembrance Day. The winner of the competition, with a very moving video taken at Ashby Cemetery, was Archie Love. Well done Archie! **Lest we forget.**



Acorns 1

In Acorns 1 we have been celebrating cultural diversity by focusing on Spain. We are learning about a different country each half term. We have been learning about Spain - Jason's family are Spanish and Russian. The children enjoyed our Spanish version of Pete the Cat and his white shoes. They drew pictures of Pete, learnt about Pete's friends, listened to Jason's mum and dad count to 10 and 20 in Spanish and Russian, made Spanish flags and Flamenco fans. The children loved dressing up as Flamenco dancers and enjoyed moving to the music. They explored castanets and guitars too. They had lots of fun! 'Ola!'



Community Spirit

The Oaks 8 Community Skills group has been thinking about how to help people in our community. We thought about the school community and made a Halloween hunt for everyone, then we thought about people in our wider community and how we could help. After finding out in the news that a lot of elderly people are feeling very lonely as they can't have visitors, we decided to make some window decorations for them. We posted them to a local care home to let them know that we care and hope they won't feel so lonely.

Christmas

As school prepares for its Christmas celebrations, we appreciate that this will look very different for the pupils this year, due to the current pandemic. But let us reassure you that there will still be a grotto for the pupils, where Father Christmas will greet them via Teams! Classes will still be having class parties and of course Christmas dinner is still on the menu!



Thrive at Forest Way



Where **young people** are at the heart of **everything!**