



# Ilsington C of E Primary School

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Friday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2022

Dear Parents & Carers,

This week has been both an enjoyable and challenging experience, as we currently have no internet connectivity at school and have been told to expect this situation to take at least another week to be resolved. We also have four of our staff team off sick this week. However, those still in school have been just amazing and we have had extra help too from Leanne, Haley and Jade, which is greatly appreciated.

I have taught across the entire age range this week from Owlacombe to Woodhouse and have loved it! The team have also been ably assisted by the lovely Owlacombe children who have been involved in buddy reading and playing with the younger children too.

There have been many highlights this week, with a fantastic presentation by the Science group with an explanation of the heliocentric nature of the solar system (as posted on Facebook). Their costumes were quite amazing and the amount of their own time that they took to prepare their presentation was very impressive too.

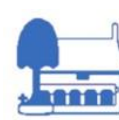
Then there was World Book Day with the children coming in dressed up as their favourite characters, and Mrs Billington was dressed as a witch too. Earlier this week the children decided that they wanted to do something positive for the children living in the Ukraine, and have begun to collect money to send to Save the Children, as they know that they support child refugees. So they donated money on World Book Day and I'm incredibly proud of their growing ability to share their opinions and to work democratically together. Their kindness reflects their ability to see the "bigger picture" and to empathise with children in other parts of the world.

The children began work on the school grounds this week with Mrs Adams and our lovely Tuesday volunteers, Vicky and Anna. They have begun to set the pond to rights and the first newt was spotted too. We will also begin to set out a pathway and planting for the first phase of our spiritual/ sensory garden over the next few weeks. Thank you again to those of you who have kindly offered your time and resources to support this work.

Link Academy Trust - Company Number 10049068

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We took delivery of an exciting box of resources to support the school's new handwriting scheme this week too, thanks to our wonderful Friends of Ilsington. Miss Willis can't wait to start using the goodies we received to begin a new fun approach to teaching children handwriting. We will share information with you in the future so that you can join in with your child's learning.

Yesterday was the first meeting of the school's adult ethos team meeting. We now have three team members to support my work in developing the Christian distinctiveness of the school. The team members are Sarah Journeaux, Chrissie Hawkins and Karen Smith and we still have spaces if you feel inspired to join us. We will share the minutes of our meetings with you once we get up and running.

I'd also like to say how pleased I was to see such brilliant levels of attendance this week and how pleased we all were to have had all the children into school so promptly this week. It has helped to ensure that lessons can begin on time and that all children received the lesson input together.

Finally, I'd like to thank our local board of governors who took the time to write a lovely message to the Ilsington staff team as copied below and who have worked with the PTA to organise a special treat for us too. What can I say- other than THANK YOU from us all.

I will wish you all the best for a great weekend and a safe return to school on Monday.

Please see below for the note from our local governing board:

*As we approach the end of this week, we would like to acknowledge what a challenging few weeks we have had as a school community, just when we had hoped life was slowly returning to normality. Special thanks to the staff for their incredible resilience and adaptability, which has enabled the school to remain open during the surge in covid cases, despite personal circumstances. In a small school like ours, this is no mean feat; so much hard work goes on behind the scenes to keep everything running smoothly, in order to maintain a calm & happy learning environment for our children. Let's hope the run up to Easter becomes easier, with fewer curve balls!*  
*Carmel & Paul (school governors)*

*As a gesture of gratitude for all they have done, Friends of Ilsington are kindly giving staff members vouchers for the Ilsington Country House Hotel, to be enjoyed at their leisure.*

All the best,

Sam

Sam McCarthy-Patmore  
Academy Head

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