**Update from Susannah**

OFSTED, after much research and consultation, implemented their new inspection framework in September. Much emphasis has been placed on Reading and Phonics; it is recognised by leaders of education that “the key to pupil’s success is their ability to read.” The four MAT schools continue to focus on this key area and have introduced new strategies for teaching reading and Phonics.

I have noticed already this year how much the teamwork between the four schools is making a difference. Subject leads meet regularly to discuss and reflect upon practice in each setting and reading is one area in particular that has already benefited from this collaboration. Our English Leads are making improvements and progress in the way this area is taught and you will see how the schools are each approaching reading in this newsletter. I am delighted that reading is being highlighted as a priority and that we are encouraging parents and children to rekindle their love of books, fuelling their imagination. I am anxiously awaiting World Book Day and the varied and creative costumes that arrive in school on that day - Thursday 5th March, make a note in your diaries!

**Update from CTSA**

Indications from Head teachers showed that reading is a key focus for the majority of our Primary and Secondary schools this year; in response to this, the CTSA has commissioned and heavily subsidised two experts to deliver a Reading Comprehension Programme to our members. This 4 day training programme gives teachers an opportunity to examine the practice in their own setting in a collaborative and flexible learning environment. We are using HIVE which is an online collaborative learning platform where users can access shared learning resources and this is already proving to be an invaluable tool for the teachers.

The emphasis of the programme will be fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and other key skills like predicting and scanning. Our overall intention is to equip the teachers to motivate and encourage the children to love reading for information but also for pleasure. Early indications from one of our Headteachers is that the impact of the course is already huge and has made a significant difference to the way in which reading is taught and enjoyed in their setting.

**Update from SCITT**

Our trainees focus on Reading throughout their training year, beginning with a recommended reading list in the summer prior to starting their training, course days focusing on Reading and Phonics as well as having tasks based on this area of English. On the course day they will:

- Learn how children become readers
- Explore early reading development
- Understand how phonics work
- Know how to plan and teach a phonics session

For the task the trainees make a story box or story sack that will help to build some of the reading comprehension objectives covered for the age group they are teaching. They then make use of their story sack with a group or class and go on to evaluate the children’s comprehension skills and the effectiveness of their approach.

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**Dates for your diary – Autumn Term**

**Head Teacher Meetings:**
- 16th January 1.30 pm @ NSPS
- 25th February 1.30 pm @ Gosfield

**Deputy Head Meetings:**
- 28th January 9.15 am @ Gosfield
- 26th March 9.15 am @ NSPS

**CEO School Visits:**
- 14th January / 6th February / 3rd March / 24th March @ NSPS
- 17th January / 7th February / 27th February / 2nd April @ Rayne
- 20th January / 13th February / 16th March / 30th March @ Elm Hall
- 21st January / 10th February / 2nd March / 26th March @ Gosfield

**CTSA Meetings:**
- TBC February 2020 TRANSITION Working Party 1.30 pm @ CVHS
- 22nd January SEND Working Party 1.30 pm @ Columbus
- 22nd January Achievement Team Review 9.30 am @ Lyons Hall
- 30th January Head Teacher Meeting 8.30 am @ Little Channels
- 28th February Head Teachers Well Being Event 1.30 pm @ Hylands Hse
- 11th March Steering Group Meeting 8.30 @ Columbus College

**Leads Meetings:**
- Maths & English 17th January 8.00 am @ NSPS
- Early Years 18th March 4.00 pm @ NSPS
- Science 26th February 4.00 pm @ NSPS
- SEND Co 5th February 1.30 pm @ Rayne
- Computing 25th March 1.30 pm @ Gosfield
- SAL 5th March 8.00 am @ NSPS
- Site Managers TBC

**Local Governing Body (LGB) Meetings**
- NSPS 29th January & 11th March @ 6.00 pm
- Elm Hall 22nd January & 18th March @ 5.45 pm
- Gosfield 30th January & 26th March @ 5.30 pm
- Rayne 20th January @ 6.00 pm
- 9th March @ 1.15 pm

**Governance Meetings:**
- 15th January Finance & Audit Committee 6.00 pm @ NSPS
- 29th January HR Committee 4.30 pm @ NSPS
- 29th January Trustee Working Party 1.00 @ NSPS
- 5th February Trust Board Meeting 6.00 pm @ NSPS
- 26th February Chairs of LGB 6.00 pm @ NSPS
- 4th March Finance & Audit Committee 6.00 pm @ NSPS
- 20th March Standards Committee 2.00 pm @ NSPS
- 1st April Trust Board Meeting 6.00 pm @ NSPS

**Pupil Forum Meetings:**
- 14th February @ Elm Hall
- 24th April @ Elm Hall

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**Update from Pupil Forum**

What is it like to be a reader in this school? This is the key question the pupil forum will be asking their peers as part of their forthcoming Reading Peer Review. They will be visiting each other’s setting to assess the reading environment; whether there are reading corners or nice spaces to go to enjoy reading. They will be checking the availability, choice and accessibility of resources. Interviewing the Literacy Lead and Head Teacher is also on the agenda as well as chatting to the children. They will be discussing special events, potential visits from authors and once they have amassed the facts and completed their ‘mission’ they will report back to the staff and children. Good luck children!
**News from Gosfield**

Phonics continues to be an essential part of our day in Key Stage 1 and Early Years. Every morning the children work hard to build up their repertoire of sounds through repetition and application. Phonics helps children to be able to hear the individual sounds in words and then read by segmenting and blending. Through Key Stage 1, children can then use this understanding to spell words correctly.

During our daily phonics sessions, children are reminded of all the sounds we have learned so far in the form of flash cards. This daily repetition has been proven to help graphemes (written letters) and phonemes (sounds) be memorised and applied in mark making and independent writing. A new sound is then taught and the children read words including this sound, listening for individual sounds and counting them. Each session includes an element of application in the form of a game or activity to check that the children have understood. Based on the National Phonics Screening tests, children are regularly exposed to ‘alien words’ to help with the segmenting and blending of unfamiliar words.

At Gosfield, we have made big changes to our library area! We have created two new library areas in our two corridors, so that children can access a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts and more space to sit back and read at their pleasure. Each classroom now has a beautiful reading corner that children have had the opportunity to enjoy throughout the school day. We have also introduced a reading challenge for each class, with the winning class having the highest percentage of children reading at home 5 times a week. We are due to introduce reading ambassadors very soon and are looking forward to continue enjoying our new reading scheme. Our focus is to support children to embed a true love of life and learning.

**News from Newlands Spring**

At Newlands Spring, we systematically teach vital reading skills through rigorous phonics instruction, and also work hard to drive a love of books through promoting reading as a pleasurable activity. Specifically chosen class novels are read to both challenge our children and ensure they become knowledgeable of the great children’s British authors, both modern and classic. We have also recently received the first part of our ‘Reading Spine’, which we will share books with adults and children alike.

**News from Elm Hall**

At Elm Hall, we are celebrating the amount of words that have been read since we started back in September: the staff and pupils have read a staggering 32,955,794 words! We are also incredibly proud of the 9 individuals (very soon to be 10) who have read over a million words already this academic year. We pride ourselves on the level of dedication demonstrated by our pupils and are about to embark on a new ‘Buddy’ system which will see the classes across the school combine to engage in reading for fun. The older children will be sharing stories with the younger ones and encouraging them to appreciate reading as the true gift that it is.

We are sure you will join us in congratulating Mrs Deighton, for an amazing 25 years of excellent service at Elm Hall. Mrs Deighton has seen many of the children grow and return to the school with children of their own. When familiar faces return they are always so pleased to see her to share their progress and introduce her to their children. Mrs Deighton is such a committed member of staff making her a valued asset at the school. She is held in high esteem by everyone who’s part of the Elm Hall and Attain team. Her support, knowledge and progression shown throughout the changes of her employment have been phenomenal and an exemplary example to others. A BIG Thank You for all you do Mrs Deighton.

**News from NSPS**

At Rayne we are in the midst of our ‘Year of Reading’ to promote not just academic progress but also a real love of reading. This of course is a central part to unlocking so many other aspects of the curriculum and sits at the centre of all we do. We do well to ensure that reading is a key priority in our Early Years and children sit in comfy reading areas to share books with adults and children alike. Parents and Carers are welcomed into school very early on to our ‘Reading workshop’ where the approach to teaching phonics is explained and the parent’s expectations for support are shared. The Key Stage 1 children have reading buddies who regularly visit their partners to hear them read and choose books. Alongside this we have an army of adult volunteers who are assigned to classes for that extra practise. In Key Stage 2 this year we have launched the ‘Accelerated Reader’ Scheme which has been financially supported by the PSA. Not only is every shared reading area across the school being improved but every single book has been checked, banded and reorganised. A big thank you goes especially to Miss Hutchings and Mrs Turner for this huge task! Accelerated reader has already engaged so many more children with books and their reading scores are climbing already. In the Spring term we are having a ‘Reading for Pleasure Week’. This includes dressing up for world book day, visiting authors and a parent and child reading breakfast! We can’t wait.