

What a glorious week it has been!

This week we have had a real focus on sports and outdoor activities! It has been refreshing for us to have sports days take place on the actual planned dates – we haven't had to postpone or use a reserve date thanks to the (unusual!) gorgeous weather we are currently experiencing! We kicked the week off with the Reception sports day on Monday – what a well organised, super event that was! The children all looked like they were enjoying the events that they took part in as did the parents too. Tuesday saw some of our youngest children taking part – Foxes and older Squirrels you did yourselves proud! I also spotted some of our younger Squirrels taking on the challenge of an outdoor 'assault' course; there was climbing, sliding and balancing activities – great ways to build up confidence at sport!

As the week progressed, the events ramped up and on Wednesday it was the turn of Y5/6 and what a fantastic morning it was! It was lovely to welcome so many parents and family members to share in the fun and support the children. Y6 kicked things off on the track with a series of exciting races including the 50m sprint, egg and spoon, three-legged, and relay. Meanwhile, Y5 tackled the field events, taking on javelin, discus, long jump, speed-bounce and an obstacle course, before swapping over so everyone had a go at each activity. The children gave it their all, showing brilliant sportsmanship and cheering on their peers with enthusiasm and pride. A highlight of the day (for children and adults alike!) was the surprise teacher race, complete with some very amusing inflatable costumes. A huge thanks to Mrs Edwards, Mrs O'Hara, Miss Edwards, Mr Bowles and Miss Weeks for making us all smile, and congratulations to Mr Bowles for taking home the gold!

Thursday saw the turn of Y3/4! It was lovely to see so many parents and grandparents joining in as spectators, enjoying the events and, more importantly, to see all of the Y3/4 children engaging in a variety of track and field events! Our P.E lead, Miss Shepherd and the rest of the Y3/4 team and children should be proud of how they all performed – well done Y3/4.

Today saw the last of the sports days with Y1/2 donning their sports gear for events on the junior site! The children in Y1/2 really look forward to 'crossing the road to the big school' (AKA the Juniors!) to take part in their sports day and it is a great way to start transition activities for our Y2 children to prepare them for KS2. Well done to Y1/2 – superb on track performances by all!

Continuing the sports theme, Mrs Coaker, Miss Keegan and Mrs Cotton took 16 children from Y3-6 to an athletics competition held at the EP Sports Village. Staff reported back that the children were well behaved and they took part in events including the relay, a 50m and a 150m sprint, long jump, standing long jump and a 'howler' throw activity (I have been reassured that this a 'nerf' type activity) and the javelin. You will agree, I am sure, a wide variety of events were on offer for our children to take part in and I am pleased to say that some of our children won medals – well done!!

You may be aware that this week we received information from Down Syndrome Cheshire informing us that following the Gingerbread Sock Biscuit Sale earlier in the year you helped to raise an incredible £423.17 – thank you so much - you are all helping to change perceptions, create opportunities, and educate the wider community to ensure that everyone has the chance to thrive – a huge thank you!

This year the local libraries are holding their annual 'summer read' challenge for 4- to 12-year-olds and the 'Mini Challenge' for Under 4s and they are entirely free. Children will be given a sticker booklet for starting and stickers every time they read two books or whatever target they have set themselves. After reading their target of books (normally six), the children are given a certificate and a medal. Any books qualify, from the library or not, and can be in print, digital, or audio form.

In addition and most excitingly, the local libraries are partnering with Daresbury Laboratories to bring hands-on sessions with real samples of the lunar surface and meteorites to the libraries in our town – there will also be special hands-on science sessions from the University of Cambridge, Nick Sharratt (author) doing a special “You Choose:Space” session and Kate Pankhurst on “We are all astronauts”. For the first time ever, the local libraries will also be providing a trophy to the school in Ellesmere Port which has the most children joining the Summer Reading Challenge, so get your child/ren signed up as there will also be a £20 Amazon voucher awarded to a chosen child in our school for participating in the challenge. I am pleased to share that those children who start the Reading Challenge will also get free entry to Hayrack Church Farm (a couple of miles out of Ellesmere Port) and 50% off children’s climbing at Climbing Hut in the town – what is not to love about this reading challenge!

You will know that at the heart of everything we do at Woodlands, safety of each child in our care is paramount. Each term we are required to practice a fire drill and I must say that the children are fantastic and super quick at exiting the buildings/classrooms – usually everyone is out of the building and accounted for in well under 3 minutes – no easy feat, I am sure you will agree with so many children & staff onsite! As part of new expectations that are due to come into effect next academic year, schools need to have a lockdown policy in place in the event of a critical incident taking place. As part of our ‘emergency’ planning, we are planning to introduce a practice lockdown at least each term with different scenarios taking place. The first ‘lockdown’ drill is due to take place sometime next week. Please be reassured that staff will prepare the children in advance and, during class assembly time/circle time on Monday, the teachers will talk about, in age-appropriate ways, the potential different scenarios that may lead to the need for a lockdown of our school. These lockdown drills will be important to help keep everyone safe in the unlikely event of a threat inside or near the school. During the lockdown practice next week, the drill will be conducted in a calm way to ensure children understand what to do without feeling scared. I am sure you will agree that, whilst daunting, practising this regularly will help to reassure you and your child that we do everything we can to keep everyone safe.

On a slightly more positive and upbeat note, I am pleased to share that the PTA has announced they are holding the annual summer fair on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> July 11AM-2PM! Check out their new Instagram page @WoodlandsPTA to keep up to date with what is happening/planned for the summer fair. I am sure that the PTA will put on their usual, amazing stalls and activities, all in a good cause to raise funds for school and it will be an event not to miss; who knows, I may even be on my usual ‘hook-a-duck stall!

A big thank you to those parents that are adhering to our new car park requests – you are helping to keep our children safe at the busiest times of day – before and after school. A gentle reminder that the car parks on both sites are for staff use only and taxis that are transporting/escorting children to and from our resourced provision. The parking attendants were outside school today and some tickets were given out to parents who parked on the yellow zig zag lines and on the ‘keep clear’ signs so we do politely request that you all adhere to the highway code. Can I also remind you that turning around in the gateways of the school car parks is also not safe as these are crossing points for our children.

Congratulations must go to Sofia (Y5) who has won a recent drawing competition ran by Halliwell Jones. As part of the Careers Carnival event that Sofia attended with Passion for Learning, Sofia designed a ‘car of the future’ – her design was deemed to be ‘nice, colourful and creative with the car being powered by energy from the wind’. Well done Sofia – who knows, this may be the future of car design!

Have a wonderful weekend everyone and see you all next week!

Mrs Liversey