



# Fir Tree Newsletter



Dear Parents,

It's been another successful fortnight on our return to school, with our fire drill being a particular highlight as it meant we had the whole school together on the MUGA (socially distanced of course) for a few minutes. Let's hope we can experience that more often in the not too distant future...

– the togetherness not the fire drill!

Can I once again thank parents for observing our new rules for drop offs and collection. The one-way system appears to be working well. Where we have occasional pinch points or moments where children/adults paths may cross please could parents allow other people to pass who have already collected children. As always it's essential we keep spaced apart at all times.

### Remote Learning

At present, if a pupil needs to self-isolate for 14 days the class teacher is sending learning home that is being taught and explored in class, via the school office, for your child/ren to complete and return upon their return. However, if a class bubble is advised to self-isolate we have been working hard on further developing our remote learning provision. We will be using Microsoft Teams to support us in the delivery of the curriculum with greater interaction through a use of tools on Teams, which we are beginning training on. Please find attached a parent guide to help you get logged on and ready. Teams will be used to upload lessons, supporting videos and enabling dialogue between the class teacher and pupils. More information on Remote Learning will be provided as and when the need arises. Thank you in conjunction with this for letting us know about access to internet and computer provision at home, we will be ensuring that we can support those who require it.

Can I say a big thank you for the support you have given in the last few weeks as we have transitioned back to school. I appreciate the efforts everyone has made to arrange childcare, juggling work and coming back and forwards and waiting to collect siblings. Whilst the impact is difficult to quantify, it has been noticeable that attendance has been very high and the children seem very happy and settled being back at school.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend.

Regards,

*Lindsay Wood*

Headteacher

As you know in EYFS they follow the **ECAT Programme (Every Child a Talker)** Developing a child's speech and their language is imperative in order for them to listen, learn and progress and this remains a priority at Fir Tree. Each newsletter we will continue to share with you the tips that we are working on in class this month that you too could employ at home to support your child's development.



### Talking Tips

1. **Observe, wait, listen (OWL):** Your child may be playing an interesting and imaginative game that you can join in with.
2. **Get down to your child's level:** This will give your child the chance to make eye contact with you and to watch your facial expressions.
3. **Let your child take the lead:** Your child will learn more from an activity that they are interested in.



On Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October Fir Tree's PTA have arranged for there to be a **non-uniform day**. This non-uniform day will

be nothing like Fir Tree has ever hosted before... get ready to **break the rules!** Rules to break will include being allowed to wear temporary tattoos or nail varnish, having crazy hair or wearing PJs or other non-uniform clothing. A full list of rules and fines for breaking the rules will be sent out separately.

The PTA will also be selling sweetie cones on the day. These will need to be ordered in advance and will be delivered to the children in their bubbles. Information on the cost and how to order sweetie cones will also be sent separately.

**All money raised from this event will be going towards outdoor improvements at Fir Tree that will benefit the whole school. We want all our pupils to be active learners who have a love of the outdoors. I am delighted to inform you that our application to the Good Exchange to improve our outdoors has been extended until April 2021. So we have from now until next April to raise £1500. Please visit our project at the following link:**

<https://app.thegoodexchange.com/project/17485/fir-tree-school/improving-the-outdoors-for-all>

**A huge thank you to the PTA for their support with this!**

## Diary Dates

**Wednesday 21st & Friday 23rd October**  
Parents Meetings 3:30pm – 7pm/ All day Friday

**Thursday 22nd October**  
PTA Break the Rules Day

**Friday 23rd October**  
INSET Day

**End of Term 1**

**Monday 2nd November**  
Start of Term 2

**Thursday 17th December**  
End of Term 2 – early afternoon finish

\*\*\*\*\*  
**Teacher Training Days**

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2020

Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021

Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021



This term every class has been focusing on E-Safety. As a parent myself I know only too well how much computers and technology have become a normal part of children's everyday lives. On

occasions, we see the games that children play spill over into school or affect friendships. Internetmatters.org is a fantastic website for parents with tips on how to support and monitor the use of apps, social media and gaming when it comes to children.

### What to talk about

#### Discuss what they enjoy playing

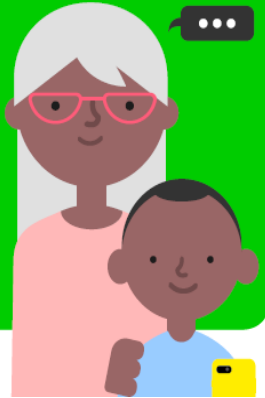
Have regular conversations about the games they play so you can create an environment where they feel they can come to you if something goes wrong.

#### Talk about potential risks

Help them understand the importance of keeping personal details private and tell them that not everyone online is who they say they are.

#### How to cope when things go wrong

If they see something that upsets them or are targeted by another player in a game, it's important to talk about how to handle this situation. Advise them to come and talk to you or a trusted adult for support.



## Things to do

### Set digital boundaries

Use a family agreement to set rules on what they can play, when and how long for to help them strike a healthy balance between gaming other activities they do.

### Use reviews and sites to pick appropriate games

Read parents and expert reviews of games they are interested in to help you choose the right games for them to play.

### Encourage them to play in shared spaces

This is a simple way to stay engaged in what they are doing while gaming and step in if you feel something's not quite right.

### Set privacy settings and learn how to report in-game abuse

Make it a habit to review their privacy settings on their account and teach them where to report in-game abuse so they can take action if they feel concerned.

### Gen-up on the lingo

Get up to speed on how players communicate while gaming to spot the signs of cyberbullying or negative behaviour.

### Make gaming a family affair

Trying out new games with children makes it easier to relate and can give you a better sense of what the game is about and prompt conversation or safety measures to help them stay safe.



Last week we sent home a letter explaining how parents meetings will work this term due to Covid-19. Parents meetings are more imperative than ever with missed time at school and feeding back to you how your child has settled back into school and what

their next steps are and most importantly how you can help. Parents meetings will take place towards the end of term on Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> October in the evening and then all day on our INSET day on Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October. Please do ring the school office on 01635 42129 or send an email to the [office@firtree.newburyacademytrust.org](mailto:office@firtree.newburyacademytrust.org) to book your appointment .

# Look What We Did!

Last week we at Fir Tree we held a STEM Week. Our focus for this year's STEM week was '*Inventions and innovation*'. We wanted to ensure opportunities for 'wow' moments and for cross curricular links too. We encouraged the children to think of questions, ideas, plans and hypothesis, and where possible carry out experiments and create things!

### Overall Aims:

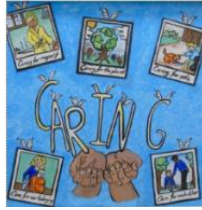
- To research a range of **diverse** and important inventors across the ages and learn how their inventions help us in our everyday lives(Science/History).
- To plan and design an invention to help make life easier in some way for someone. (D&T, measurements, adaptations, materials, habitats, space) or improve an existing invention!
- Pitch their ideas through zoom/video and posters – sell their invention idea to the rest of the school!
- If able, to create the invention (could be one as a whole class).
- To use Maths to help Science and D&T problems e.g. accurate measuring, timing, 2D/3D shapes, problem solving

It was a fantastic week and I fully expect to see at least one pupil on Dragon's Den in the future. Thank you to both Mrs Paine and Miss Martin for organising.



## Value of the Month for October is...

# CARING



### What is caring?

Feeling concern or interest about someone or something.

### Our focus on Caring has three strands:

- **Caring for ourselves, our belongings and our pets.**
- **Caring for the environment (indoors and outdoors) by the things we do and how we think.**
- **Caring about people (in our families, our friends, others who are different or less fortunate) by our actions.**
- 

### Suggestions for parents to work with children at home:

1. Explore what care is and what your child thinks it is.
2. Talk about what makes a caring person.
3. Discuss how we care for members of our family.
4. Ask your child what they can do to show they care about school.
5. Make a family list- "We show we care for.....by ....."
6. Make another list- "I find it difficult to care for..... when....."and then take time to discuss each item.
7. Discuss feelings- How do you feel when you are caring for someone or something? How do you feel when you decide you don't really care?
8. Discuss the importance of personal hygiene e.g. brushing teeth twice a day, bathing etc.

## HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD WITH READING

Reading with your child daily is so important. **Children learn to love the sound of language** before they even notice the existence of printed words on a page. **Reading books aloud to children** stimulates their imagination and expands their understanding of the world. It helps them develop language and listening skills and prepares them to understand the written word. Practising their reading every night develops their sight vocab, fluency and comprehension.

### I spy

Play 'I Spy' games. Can you find words beginning with...? Can you find a picture of a ...? How many ... can you see?

### Ask questions

Ask questions about the story as you read it e.g. What is the story about? Why do you think they made that choice? Was it a good choice? Why did that happen? What do you think will happen next? What was your favourite part of the story? Why?

### Make it fun

Enjoy reading together. Give characters funny voices and engage with the pictures. Make a game out of finding words that rhyme or start with the same sound.

### Be seen

Make sure you are seen reading. Keep books and magazines at easy reach.

### Get out

Go to your public library regularly. Find the books you loved as a kid to read together.

### Go online

Look online & in app stores for appropriate word & spelling games.

### Make space

Have a special place or a certain time when you read together.

### Create

Use reading to inspire drawings or new stories.

## Read everything out loud.

Books, poems, nursery rhymes, newspaper & magazine articles, food labels... anything that is close to hand!