

5th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you and well done again for another successful week. Once again, it has been lovely to walk around the school and see the children in Frontline School but also be shown the great work that is being done at home on See Saw and Google Classroom - I have even seen the most delicious looking buns being made by Year 5 this week as part of their DT project - in school and at home!

The theme for this week's update is looking forward....

Despite all the wonderful work that is going on at home and in school, there is a definite sense of weariness this week. It's always a difficult time of year - the weather isn't great, the days are short and dark - and being in lockdown is an extra challenge. I've felt this sense of weariness myself this week, but am making a conscious effort to be positive and trying each day to think of something that has gone well and trying to visualise the lighter, sunnier days ahead. I even saw some snowdrops on a walk last weekend - a sign that Spring is just around the corner - and it's nearly half term! Two things to definitely look forward to!



Poetry Competition

The Ebor Academy Trust are organising a Poetry Competition that everyone belonging to the Trust's 24 schools can enter - staff, Governors, children and families. The theme for the competition is "Looking Forward" - thinking ahead to the days when we are free of restrictions and what we will be most looking forward to.

Poetry is a great way to express yourself and this competition is coming hot on the heels of this week being Children's Mental Health Week where the theme has been "Express Yourself". Please do encourage your child/ren to enter - maybe even enter as a family! There are prizes to be won and maybe see your entry in print as a commemorative book will be published later in the year.

The closing date for entries is 28th February and entries should be submitted to poetry@ebor.academy. Please see the attached poster for full details.



Remote Teaching and Learning

Remote teaching and learning has been our biggest challenge this half term - for staff in school and children and parents at home. Although we are very proud of our remote teaching and learning offer, we are always looking to review and improve it where we can and in school, myself and a couple of the staff are currently working on such a review. We are using a Department for Education document as a template to review what we offer, how we offer it and what it looks like when presented to the children.

We really appreciate the efforts of all our parents and families in supporting those children who have been learning at home. We understand that it is not easy juggling home learning with other commitments and sometimes battling with reluctant learners!

The Ebor Trust have put together some “Top Tips” for home learning - please see the second poster attached to this letter. Some simple tips for hopefully making home learning a little easier!

“Live” Interactions

We have received lots of enquiries from parents and children about the possibility of “live” lessons. We have explored this option carefully by talking to other schools in the Trust, taking advice from the Trust IT Lead and looking at research that is now being published around live teaching and learning as well as considering issues around safeguarding both children and staff.

We have come to the conclusion that live lessons are not appropriate for primary aged children for a number of reasons. Research shows that there is no extra benefit to be gained from live lessons over pre-recorded lessons for either the child or the staff. Pre-recorded lessons - such as we currently offer - are proving to have a much higher impact on children’s learning so we will continue to make these central to our remote offer. There are also a huge number of safeguarding issues around live learning for primary aged children.

However, we are very aware - because you, as parents and carers are telling us - that the children are missing being part of a whole class community and the children at home are especially missing being part of a group within school and seeing their friends.

In response to this, and again in consultation with other schools and looking at research and evidence, we are exploring the use of Google Meet to enable children at home to virtually join their friends in school for assemblies, wellbeing activities and check ins and stories. This will be trialled in Upper Key Stage 2 and, if successful, will be rolled out across the whole school.

For this to happen, we will be seeking parents' consent. I would urge a quick response when the consent forms are sent out so that we can then use the technology to bring the children together as soon as possible. If, for any reason you would prefer your child not to be part of this, there will be an option to opt out on the consent form.

Hopefully this will enable the children at home and the children in school to come together again as a class community and see and interact with their friends - albeit virtually - but begin to look forward to being back together in school soon.

I will share more information about this as the process begins.

Nursery is Open!

We are delighted to be able to open our Nursery again on Monday 8th with children able to attend their normal weekly sessions. We are very much looking forward to seeing our Nursery children and families again next week.

Half Term

It's nearly half term! A reminder that we break up on Friday 12th and that school will be closed until Monday February 22nd - a much needed and well deserved rest for staff, children and parents to look forward to!

As always, if you have any queries, please do contact me via the school office - admin.osb@ebor.academy.

Have a good weekend everyone - remember to begin "looking forward"!

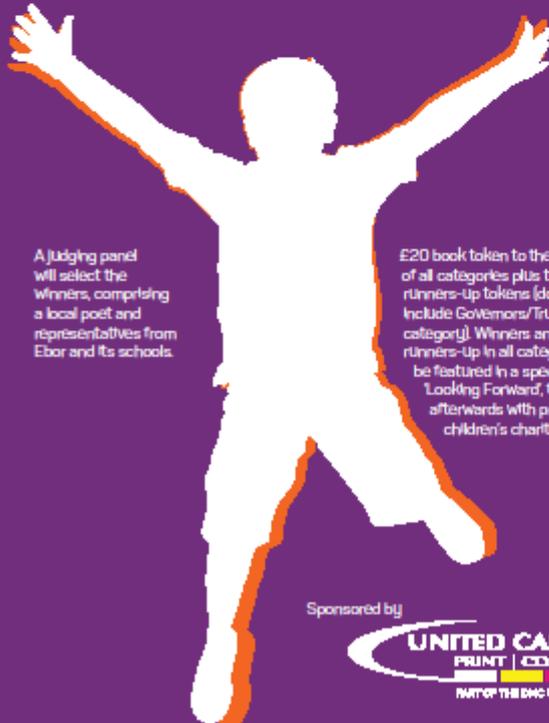
Best wishes

Mrs Mould
Acting Headteacher



Find your VOICE!

Take part in our **POETRY COMPETITION!**
Lots of different categories! Top prizes!



A judging panel will select the winners, comprising a local poet and representatives from Ebor and its schools.

£20 book taken to the winners of all categories plus two £10 runners-up tokens (does not include Governors/Trustees category). Winners and runners-up in all categories will be featured in a special booklet, 'Looking Forward', for sale afterwards with proceeds to children's charities.

Sponsored by



Here's your chance to express yourself on the theme of **Looking Forward** in our great, Ebor Academy Trust-wide poetry competition!

All of us are looking forward to a life without restrictions, free from the Coronavirus cloud that has cast such a long shadow for such a long time.

We want children and young people across all our schools – and their families, and our staff – to find their voice. **Explore the impact of saying a lot in a few words.** Write a poem that explains how you feel about looking ahead to happier times. It can be long or short, it doesn't have to rhyme – it just needs to be optimistic and forward looking!

Categories

- Age 5-7
- Age 8-11
- Age 12-14
- Age 15-16
- Family – a joint effort by any family of any size
- Staff
- Governors/Trustees



Send your entries by email to poetry@ebor.academy.
Closing date: 28 February 2021 at 5pm.

Only single entries permitted. Don't forget to include your details, including which category you are entering.

Remote learning tips for parents and carers



1. Take an active interest in your child's learning

Your school will have explained how remote education works, but children still need your help. Please take an active interest in their learning and help support them whenever they need a helping hand.



2. Behave as if you are at school

Please remind your child that despite being at home, the same level of behaviour and conduct exist as if they were at school. Encourage them to remain polite, remember their manners and not to post or send any negative comments just because they are behind a computer.

3. Establish a daily routine

Working from home and trying to learn in a more casual setting is taking some getting used to.



Try to stick to a routine and use the timetable or schedule schools have sent home to help children keep on top of their daily learning.

4. Have screen breaks and keep active

Even though there's a lot of work on the computer, and teachers will encourage screen breaks, make sure your child is taking time away from the screen to get some fresh air and exercise.



5. Choose the right background for video calls

Place your computer somewhere with a neutral background, with no personal information visible to the device's camera.



6. Implement safety controls

Filters have been applied to all devices loaned by our schools, but internet safety remains parents' or carers' responsibility. Despite our best efforts, some inappropriate images may sometimes appear in Google searches.



7. Only use official school communication channels

It's important that all communication with teachers and school staff is through approved channels – not through personal email addresses.



8. Familiarise yourself with relevant school policies

Remote education policies can be viewed on school websites. Please familiarise yourself with expectations of teachers and your child.



9. Maintain feedback with teachers

Where possible, try to feed back progress being made and observations you think might be helpful.



10. Monitor your child's wellbeing and mental health

This is a difficult time for everyone. Keep a check on your child's wellbeing and let us know if you have any concerns.

