

Christmas Celebration Newsletter Terms 1 & 2 2009

Dear Parents / Carers,



Each term is special in school and none more so than Terms 1 and 2 when we have our Harvest Festivals and Christmas celebrations. After a strong and determined start in September with the launch of our Vision for the whole school, we soon got down to collecting Harvest produce and rehearsing our plays. Certain year groups took part in workshops which engaged them in first-hand learning experiences and which resulted in some excellent class work. Our two themed weeks, namely Anti-Bullying Week and Creativity Week inspired some great thinking and writing and it was great to see many pupils entering the homework competitions. Our fundraising event: 'Dotty Dressing-up Day' was enjoyed by everyone and helped to raise a phenomenal amount of money for Children In Need. Finally our Christmas plays, Carol Concerts, Santa's Grotto, Parties and Pantomimes were a great end to this year. Enjoy reading the articles about our fantastic achievements.

Our New Vision

Why do we need a Vision and how does it help the school?

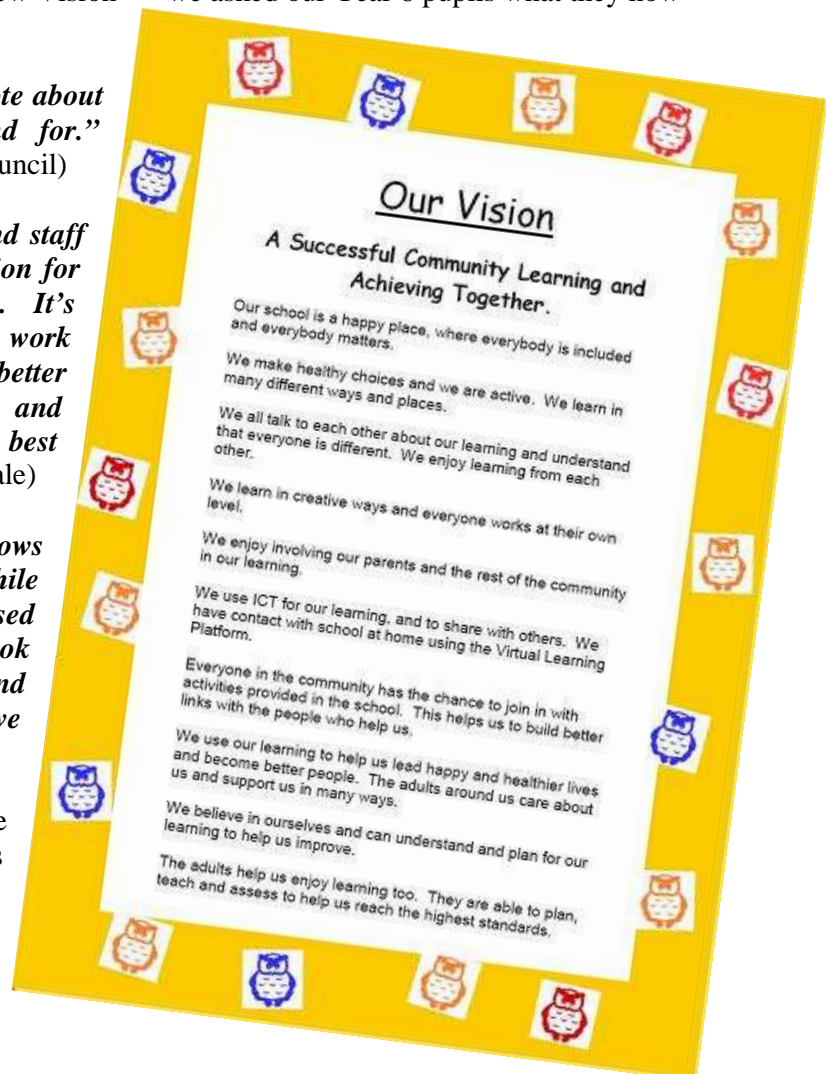
A few weeks after launching our new Vision we asked our Year 6 pupils what they now thought about it.

"It shows what we want to promote about our school and what we stand for."
(Katie James – Chair of School Council)

"It's an aim for all the pupils and staff and gives a reason and explanation for our behaviour and achievements. It's shown how we all need to work together to make our school a better place and help everyone learn and reach their full potential to be the best that they can." (Cameron Bassindale)

"Our competition and display shows how we like to have fun while learning. The posters emphasised the Vision. Loads of children took part. They didn't see it as work and we had lots of interesting, creative pictures." (Danish Tayyab)

We would like to thank everyone for their contribution towards creating our new Vision and we will continue to use it to guide everything we do to improve our school.





Harvest Festivals

We were pleased to see so many parents and grandparents who came to watch our Harvest plays. Foundation Stage pupils delighted us with: 'On the Farm' and several action songs which left us in a very happy mood. Lower School's performance of 'The Little Black Cloud' was delightful and the pupils really enjoyed acting out the play and the singing was lovely. Upper School performed 'Harvest Hope' extremely well and gave us a sharp reminder of the main message of Harvest. The soloists sang absolutely beautifully. Well done to all our pupils and thank you for your Harvest donations. All the Harvest produce went to *Caring Hands in the Community* who distributed the food to the homeless in Medway.

Anti-Bullying Week 2009

The theme for this year was Cyber-bullying. In assemblies and PSHE lessons we talked about what types of bullying occurred using technology and what actions to take if you are being bullied on-line or through text messages. Pupils created posters and we launched our Anti-bullying Charter. This can be viewed on our school website. Well-done to all the winners of the homework competition.

Creativity Week November 2009

Once again we had a very successful Creativity Week which was based around the theme of 'A fantasy under the sea'. Thank you to all of the children who worked hard to produce some fantastic models of vehicles we might have in the future. Judging the entries was difficult, as they were all very creative. For those of you who want to know who the winners were, please pay a visit to our school website.

We asked the children a range of questions about Creativity Week. Overall the children were very positive and all of them enjoyed the week. Here are their views:-

What they enjoyed the most:-

- The performance & workshops carried out by Blunderbus Theatre
- Watching the DVD related to text being studied that week
- The activities that were carried out in class

What they learnt:-

- To develop their writing skills through Story writing; playscripts & non-chronological reports
- How to share & be kind
- How to carry out research
- Lots of facts about underwater animals

What could be improved:-

- Be given a choice in the theme
- More activities outside

- Incorporate music
- More competitions
- Incorporate a school trip
- More art work

Children In Need 2009

Congratulations!!!

- You have all done so well in raising almost **£800** for this very worthy cause. The children really enjoyed their 'Spotty Day' and sticking the spots on their Pudsey bears.
- Thank you for making this a fun and meaningful event!!!



First Hand Learning Experiences

At Napier, we work hard to engage the pupils in their learning. As part of our topic-based approach to learning, Year Groups plan 'first hand' learning experiences that provide an opportunity for pupils to participate in a 'hands-on' experience. This has been proven to improve pupils' engagement with their learning and allow them to access experiences they may not have had before.

Since September, pupils across the school have already experienced the following events:-

- The Great Fire of London Experience
- Zoolab – creatures from the Rainforests
- The Travelling Museum (real artifacts to handle and learn from)
- A visiting Anglo Saxon
- A Victorian Day
- Astrodome – a journey into deep space
- A Greek Day

Pupils have really enjoyed and valued these events:

“It was great because we actually got to ‘see’ what happened, and take part!”

“We were allowed to hold very ancient objects. It was interesting to find out what they were.”

“It showed us how they lived – he brought in a dead fox to show us how they used the fur.”

“It was like being in a rocket going out into space.”

“I learned that shooting stars are not actually stars, they are asteroids.”

Can we also take this opportunity to remind parents and carers that whilst we can only ask for voluntary contributions for these events, it is expected that all parents and carers will pay the required amount, otherwise we simply cannot afford to run these exciting events which make such a difference to your child's learning.



Chess Club

The number of pupils enjoying Chess Club each morning is growing. More and more pupils are working hard towards achieving The English Chess Federation's certificates. The following pupils have recently earned these:

Bronze Award: Courtney-Jane McCarvil, Claire Last, Megan Payne, Kaddy Diaby, Emily Patterson, Georgia Williams, Ellie Payne, Neo Last, Sophie Smith, Peace Abraham and Alex Last

Silver Award: Michael Curran, Louis Unsworth and Jessica Bradley

Gold Award: Eric Johnson and Sukhmen Sandhu

Well-done to all these pupils for their hard work and perseverance. We have many, many talented chess players in the school.

Next term we will be taking part in a national tournament. In previous years several of our pupils have played at the mega and even the giga-finals which means having to compete against many other players from schools in the South of England. We also hope to arrange local, friendly tournaments with other schools in Kent. Good luck to all our Chess players.



Lunchtimes at Napier

We have now had the 'Family Service' from Chartwells for two terms and within this period our school lunch uptake has increased by 50%. Many more pupils enjoy serving themselves from the vegetable, salad and sweet trolleys. They are trying new foods, particularly vegetables and salad and there is a marked decrease in the amount of waste. Our rule: 'Take what you want to eat and eat everything you take' is having a great impact on pupils' choice and enjoyment during lunchtimes. Parents who have come in for lunch have also noted a healthier lunch being served and pupils eating a more balanced meal. Look out for invitations from your child's class to come and join us for lunch.

These are some comments from our Visitors' Book:-

"Came in for school dinners with my son. The roast dinner was very nice, good to see healthy food also available for the children. Would come to lunch again – enjoyed the experience."

"Really enjoyed myself. Very well organised, pupils behaved really well."

"The school dinners were very good and choice of healthy afters brilliant".



Poppy Appeal

We participate in the Poppy Appeal each year, this year being no exception. We managed to raise **£44.25** and received an acknowledgement from The Royal British Legion. Thank you for helping us with this worthy cause.



Christmas Music at Napier

There has been a great deal of music making here at Napier, with performances of three Christmas musical plays in which all the children participated in singing the songs.

The Year 6 Choir has also worked very hard this term to learn some Christmas carols which they sang at a carol service in Rochester Cathedral with choirs from other Medway schools.

The Year 6 Choir was also invited to perform Christmas carols for the Masons, at the Masonic Hall in Gillingham on Saturday, 5th December. Although only half of the choir members were able to attend, they sang extremely well and their performance was very well received by the Masons in the audience who donated **£177.50** to the school.



Christmas Plays

We were pleased that so many of you came to see our three Christmas Plays in which every pupil took part. The Foundation Stage pupils were delightful in their play called: 'Christmas' in which they told the story of the different characters; the shepherds, the angels, the stars and, of course, Mary and Joseph. Lower School were brilliant in their performance of 'The Raggedy King' with some excellent solo artists and beautiful singing from Year 1 and 2 pupils. Finally, Year 4 and 5 pupils reminded us of the true meaning of Christmas in their performance of 'Home at Christmas' and how lucky we are with our families. We would like to congratulate all our pupils for their amazing performances and say how proud we all felt. Thank you also to all the staff and parents whose help is greatly appreciated.

Our collection for our chosen charity 'Shelter' raised **£212.06**. Thank you for generous donations for another worthy cause.

We know that the festive season has many events in school which the pupils and staff enjoy; the Pantomimes, Year 6 visit to Bloomsbury Theatre to see 'Skellig', the parties and Santa's Grotto. We are extremely grateful for the hard work of our Friends of Napier School who have helped to organise these events and raise funds so our pupils have a very enjoyable time.

Date for your diary: **Monday, 11th January at 1.30 p.m.** Friends of Napier Annual General Meeting. Everyone is invited and we hope to see many parents / carers at this meeting.

All that remains now is for us to wish you all a happy Christmas holiday and a prosperous New Year. We look forward to seeing all the pupils back in school on Monday 4th January 2010.

Yours sincerely

Z. Slade .

Zerina Slade (Mrs.)
Headteacher

