



WELCOME

Welcome to our SYMAT newsletter.

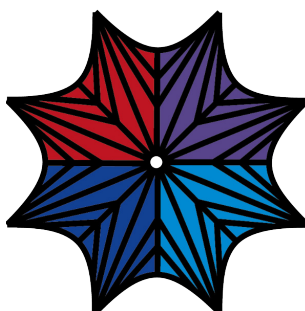
We have had a particularly busy and at times difficult term. In September we had hoped that we could look forward to the new academic year with ever reducing covid-19 rates. Unfortunately, that has not been the case. The continued disruption that the pandemic brings to schools and families looks set to continue past Christmas. Our schools will continue to try our best to make sure our children and young people are educated, supported and nurtured. Your continuing support and the hard work and commitment of all within our schools is testament to the values we all share and work to.

Fantastic things happen in our classroom every day. At this time of year where our thoughts are on family, friends and community we have pride in the strong bonds and ties our family of schools have and the partnership working that enables us to support all our children, wherever they are educated within the trust, enabling them to be the best versions of themselves.

From all at SYMAT we wish you a peaceful, safe and very happy Christmas.

Steve Lewis

CEO – SYMAT



SUPPORT
INSPIRE
ACHIEVE
FLOURISH

Archbishop of York Junior School

This term, at AYJS, we have placed a strong emphasis on Wellbeing and the positive impact this has on all aspects of life. Research shows there are five simple things you can do as part of your daily life – at work and at home – to build resilience and boost your wellbeing.

These simple actions are known internationally as the Five Ways to Wellbeing. We have embraced the 5 ways to wellbeing and placed them at the centre of many activities this term: CONNECT; BE ACTIVE; TAKE NOTICE; LEARN NEW THINGS; GIVE. .



“It is widely recognised that a child’s emotional health and wellbeing influences their cognitive development and learning, as well as their physical and social health and their mental wellbeing in adulthood.” Public Health England (2015)

We have celebrated and enjoyed many successes and fun activities. We started the year with a ‘Wellbeing Week’ - enjoying art activities which celebrated difference; introducing ‘Jigsaw’ sessions; embedding our school vision and Christian values; discussing responsibility and the impact of pupil voice

Wellbeing House Day (CONNECT)

We had a wonderful ‘Wellbeing Wednesday’ in October when all pupils took part in 4 fabulous activities designed to promote healthy living and a positive mindset. The children worked with their house groups in mixed year groups all day.

- > ‘Drumba’: a fitness and wellbeing activity combining music, drumming and coordination.
- > Brain Gym: activities to exercise the mind led by the School Council.
- > Team building: challenges that developed communication, cooperation and decision making skills .



By the end of the day we ALL felt very empowered as ‘Wellbeing Warriors’.

Winning the City wide Jack Archer Walk to School week award and the CYC COP26 Glasgow to York sustainable journeys challenge (BE ACTIVE)

We are very proud to announce we achieved 1st place in this city wide competition!!!

We achieved an overall average for the week of 95.7% sustainable journeys. FABULOUS!!!!

Counsellor Ian Cuthbertson presented the trophy to our ECO TEAM – who shared it with the whole school community at our Celebration Assembly on Friday.



We also won the CYC COP26 sustainable journey challenge and were interviewed by GB news!! We were told our film clip was featuring at the COP26 conference!!

“Be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.” - 1 Peter 3:8

1 Peter in Action

This half term, classes in Dunnington have been busy putting their new school bible verse into action. Children discussed with their teachers what they wanted to do to demonstrate the important values contained within the verse, making their own decisions about what was important for them to do to make an impact. We have had a range of responses, such as charity collections, bulb planting in the playground, letters to local care homes and notes of thanks delivered to staff. It has been great to put our positive school values into action, and make a difference!

“We are more united and have far more in common with each other than things that divide us.”- Jo Cox

Connecting Classrooms-Our Virtual School Trip to Nepal!

On Wednesday 8th December, a long-awaited Zoom call took place with our partner schools both in Nepal and in the UK.

After a few connectivity problems, we gathered many of our children together and connected with children in their classrooms in Nepal. The children in both countries enjoyed taking part and listened intently during the 30-minute call. A representative from each class was able to ask a question and these varied from, ‘What time does your school start?’, ‘How many children are there in each class?’ ‘Do you celebrate Christmas?’ and perhaps the favourite, ‘What do you like to eat?’ We shared information about our national dishes and discovered that the majority of people in Nepal are Hindus and therefore do not celebrate Christmas. The Nepalese do celebrate many other festivals though. We found out too that in Kathmandu and Bhaktapur they do not have snow, which surprised many children because Mount Everest is in Nepal. Our children picked out a lot of similarities between the schools in the two countries and also pointed out some differences.

Our children were also amazed that the older Nepalese children could speak English so well and that for the children in Nepal it was nearly their home time, when we had only just begun the day! We hope that we will be able to have more zoom calls in the future to learn from each other and collaborate further on projects.

Escrick CE Primary School



We have had a wonderful term back at school and time has flown by. For the first time in Escrick's history we have had seven straight year groups and the children have really enjoyed being back in the classroom with their friends.

In the autumn term, after consultation with members of the school community, we launched our new Values and Vision Statement. It is based around a quote from the bible 'Every person is an individual and also part of a community' 1 Corinthians 12:12-27. We value all of our children and foster a community spirit as at our school we want everyone to FLOURISH - Friendship; Learning; Opportunities; Unique; Respect and Resilience; Included; Solve problems and be Happy.



Our youngest children have really settled into school life and have participated in many experiences including weekly Muddy Days in our own school forest, learning about Divali and they also starred in an Outdoor Performance of Whoops a Daisy Angel! They really enjoyed performing for their parents and had lots of fun singing these new songs.

This term, Year 6 have enjoyed learning about the ancient Chinese civilisation of the Shang Dynasty. Children have discovered how the first forms of written language were developed through 'Dragon Bones' and then they made their own using clay! The class have also made traditional Chinese artwork, learnt about how the Shang people communicated with Gods, explored where the Shang people lived and how they developed their society. Children also thoroughly enjoyed creating their own modern day Chinese inspired meal, they prepared the ingredients, cooked with a wok and then finally enjoyed the feast!



In Science, children have made periscopes, steady hand games, and investigated the life of a lesser known scientist called Lewis Latimer, an African American who helped Edison discover the carbon filament for lightbulbs!



All of the children have embraced the full curriculum and the return of some extracurricular clubs. They were rewarded for their hard work by a fantastic surprise. The children spent a playtime mesmerised by Pancho Libre, a world class circus performer from Mexico. The children were fascinated, the skills displayed were amazing and we were all blown away by the performance.

Fulford School

We have been very excited to bring back extra-curricular clubs, activities and visits to Fulford. We have launched rehearsals for our school production. Next year we will proudly present 'The Wizard of Oz.' Our music and drama departments have been delighted by the enthusiasm of our students and the talents they have shared.



These talents were very much on show in our Winter Concert. There were fantastic group and individual performances. It was the first public performance we have been able to host for 2 years. A big thank you for all the hard work that went into making it happen.

Amongst the many trips staff organised this term, pupils had the opportunity to see Manchester City beat Leeds United 7-0! There were visits to the theatre to see Wuthering Heights and The Wizard of Oz. A London residential visit was organised by the RE department. Sixth form students made

up for lost social time with friends with trips to Flamingo Land and the bowling alley. Year 8 pupils who missed the city bus tour when they had to isolate last summer had a great, if somewhat cold experience seeing and hearing about the history of York on an open topped bus in December. Pupils also went to The Deep in Hull, attended drama masterclasses, took part in chess and public speaking competitions, experienced specialist lectures and engaged in college visits. This was all in addition to the 70 plus school clubs that meet on a regular basis.

All pupils attend two assemblies each week. One focuses on year group achievements and the other addresses issues relevant to life in modern Britain including Black History month, mental health, remembrance and informed consent. These are delivered by heads of year, senior leaders and students. They tie in with our school core values of honesty, empathy, ambition, respect and tolerance.



Year 11 pupils have completed mocks and year 13 are preparing for them after Christmas. Pupils are working hard in lessons and making good progress. They have cooperated really well in following covid-19 related restriction and have dealt with the challenges they have faced with resilience and good humour.

Wheldrake with Thorganby



Educational Visits

Year 6 had a fantastic trip to Robin Wood in October. The weather wasn't kind to us but the children (and staff) loved every minute and showed such amazing resilience and teamwork.

We also had a wonderful time at the pantomime to see Dick Whittington at Joseph Rowntree Theatre. We couldn't have been prouder of our children, who represented our school so well. Without Mrs Childs, this trip would not have gone ahead. Thank you to her for organising.



Zero Waste

We are currently completing a Zero Waste Project. Every class has looked at "a week in the life of my waste" which involved researching an area of waste. Based on their findings, immediate actions, short, medium and long-term goals and a dream goal have been determined. We will work on these throughout the academic year. Thank you to Mrs Coleman for all her hard work leading this project.

Curriculum Days

This term we have enjoyed a pirate day in KS1, a Tudor day in UKS2, which involved a key stage debate, and a Social Enterprise Day, where year 5 and 6 children developed a Paper Pledge aiming to reduce our paper usage and consider what we could do to help save the Brazilian Rainforest. Already, the children in year 5 and 6 have written to the Press, led Collective Worship and run events, including a bake sale, a sponsored run and a bring and buy sale in order to raise money for charity and school technology.

Christmas Events

There has been a really Christmassy atmosphere around school. The children in KS2 and the Worship Group have taken part in community carol events. We sang carols for Sharing Life, a local charity seeking to overcome loneliness, and at various locations throughout the village.

We were thrilled to be able to hold our performances of this year's Christmas play, Wriggly Nativity. The children were superstar performers, speaking their lines clearly and singing loudly. Thank you to the parents for providing costumes and following our audience guidelines. Massive thanks to our Key Stage 1 and Early Years teams for pulling off a fabulous show. Finally, a huge well done to all of our children.

Every year, each class designs and creates artwork, which is hung in St Helen's Church, Wheldrake, in time for our school service. These remain in church throughout the Christmas period. This year, Mrs Sagaas, organised our theme around the local artist, Mark Hearld. Each class designed their boards based on The Twelve Days of Christmas using Mark Hearld techniques as inspiration. Mark Hearld saw our boards and said: "Spectacular Bravo" "I think they are so bold, graphic and strong in design - Ace".



Role of the Estates, Facilities and Compliance Manager for SYMAT



Hi, I'm Jenny Scholes the Estates, Facilities and Compliance Manager for SYMAT

I have worked within the SYMAT central team for the past 3 years, having previously worked as a School Business Manager in a number of primary schools across York for over 14 years. My background is in facilities management and health and safety and this role gives me the opportunity to share my knowledge and experience with others.

I can often be seen walking around in my high vis jacket liaising with contractors. Since working in the SYMAT, I have worked closely with Project Managers, contractors and schools to secure bids from the EFSA and others to ensure that our school buildings are maintained for the future, these include:

- Three roofing refurbishments at Fulford School;
- New gas boiler at Dunnington to replace the old oil boiler;
- Safeguarding works at Escrick to improve perimeter fencing and electronic access gates – Jan 2022;
- New build expansion at Fulford School – £6.5 m new extension and remodelling works – Jan 2022 ;
- Re-roofing works AYJS – bid submitted for EFSA CIF (Condition Improvement Fund) round 2022-23;
- A number of smaller re-modelling works have taken place at Fulford School – new Pupil Support Unit, 3 new changing room facilities, new computer room, a number of temporary classroom unit installations, to name a few.

Each school undertakes three health and safety audits a year, and where possible, I attend each audit to support the Head and School Business Manager to ensure that all our schools remain compliant with all statutory regulations.

It is a diverse role where you can guarantee no two days are the same. It is a privilege to work closely with many different groups of people, all with the same goal of providing a safe environment for staff and students to teach and learn makes for a challenging but rewarding job within the SYMAT.

