



We are so pleased to welcome our children back into school after the half term break, and to continue to keep schools open during this second national lockdown period. We are in no doubt that school is the best place for children to be so that they can continue their learning, personal and social development in as normal a way as possible, despite everything that is happening around them. Thank you all for continuing to place your trust in us by sending your child to school.

School leaders report how understanding and supportive our parents and families have been during what has, without question, been the most challenging time for schools in my entire 30+ year career. Schools are currently open, but are operating with many staff absent as a result of working from home if they are clinically extremely vulnerable, self-isolating as a result of track and trace, or being ill themselves with one of the many illnesses that circulate in schools at this time of year. Our staff are working at the frontline of the Covid pandemic and obviously face their own anxieties about this, yet continue to support children and families as well as ensuring that every child, whether working in school or from home, is given every opportunity to continue to access teaching and continue to learn. Our school staff are unsung heroes, and I thank you all for continuing to assist them with your support and understanding at this difficult and stressful time.

Thank you to all parents who have followed our request to wear face coverings when bringing to and picking up your children from school. We are doing our utmost to keep everyone as safe as possible and really appreciate your support to do this. Please see how else you can help at the end of this newsletter. Please also ensure that, if your child experiences any symptoms of Covid (persistent or continuous cough, high temperature or loss of taste or smell), that you do not send them to school and arrange a Covid test as soon as possible.

Across NPAT, and with nearly 4500 children in our 11 schools, we have obviously seen a number of positive cases and have children who are self-isolating for a variety of reasons. Our brilliant school leaders and their staff have worked hard to ensure that if this is the case, they can offer your child great learning opportunities from their homes using technology or, where this is not possible, written tasks which teachers will feed back to children about. In the meantime, this newsletter is filled with some of the amazing opportunities that we are offering children across our schools this term with a little glimpse of some of the things to come, including our Royal Shakespeare Company project in the spring term. We are really pleased that, despite the challenges that we are facing every day, the show is very much going on!

Julia Kedwards,

Chief Executive Officer



An exciting end to the half term was had at Rectory Farm Primary School.

To help support learning about the HS2 Project for Year 3 children at a time when trips out of school are best avoided, staff at the school got creative and organised for a miniature steam train to puff into the school playground.

Four different year groups benefited from the visit, with Year 5 children, for example, consolidating learning on their recent topic of The Industrial Revolution.

It was a positive end to a challenging term which gave the children an exciting start for their new topic as well as the fun of experiencing a ride on the mini train.



It was reported that all the adults present very much enjoyed themselves too!

Northampton Primary Academy Trust

Abington Vale Primary School, Blackthorn Primary School, Ecton Brook Primary School, East Hunsbury Primary School, Headlands Primary School, Lings Primary School, Rectory Farm Primary School, Simon de Senlis Primary School, Thorplands Primary School, Upton Meadows Primary School and in partnership with Weston Favell CE Primary School

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Dear Children,

Fascinatingly, there have been some creatures let loose, walking freely amongst your school. It appears that some have left footprints behind.

I have looked into which animals they might be and I have put their pictures on this postcard. Can you tell me anything more about these creatures?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sir David Attenborough

Yr 1

Abington Vale Primary School

Northampton



Sir David Attenborough has inspired millions by bringing the natural world into our homes.

But thanks to a life marked by a tenacious desire to explore, innovate and enlighten, his impact on our understanding of the natural world continues to be felt by generation after generation. As part of the NPAT wide science curriculum, Year 1 classes will receive an unexpected postcard from David Attenborough guiding them to examine a collection of strange footprints that appear on their classroom floor.

Pictured here, children at Abington Vale received their post card at the end of last term. It inspired the class to research Sir David with many children recognising that they had heard his voice before. The children then had to work together to match up the prints with the animals pictured on the reverse of the postcard.

Which animal walked by here...?



When parents are asked who runs their child's school, most - quite rightly - immediately think of the Headteacher and senior members of staff. However, behind the scenes at all NPAT schools is a governing body who hold this team to account, making sure that the best decisions are being made for the school, its pupils and staff and supporting the team to improve where needed.

Whilst these governing bodies are not involved in the actual day to day running of our schools their work is vital and you may well see them in your school at parent's evenings, school events or on monitoring visits which provide a close up picture of how things are going.

NPAT support and reinforce our governors' commitment to our schools with a full and ongoing training programme. The contribution of our governors has not stopped during Covid and lockdown. Meetings continue to take place virtually, as does training. So far this school year the training available to our governors has included induction training for new governors, safeguarding children from a governance perspective, Business and finance and effective teaching and learning.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE—become a SCHOOL GOVERNOR

Email admin@npatschools.org for more info

THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Take One Picture

An annual highlight of NPAT Year 4 children's learning, Take One Picture is the National Gallery's national programme for primary schools, which aims to inspire a lifelong love of art and learning.

Every year, the Gallery take one picture from the collection to inspire cross-curricular work in primary classrooms.

Pictured right is this year's focus painting Orazio Gentileschi's 'THE FINDING OF MOSES'.



The approach is cross curricular, so the children not only have the opportunity to be creative in their art but also through their writing to investigate the themes further.

A visit to the National Gallery in London for all year 4 children and locally hosted displays of the work created by the children in response to the piece are usually highlights of the scheme and are being tentatively organised for the summer.

Watch this space!



RSC Associate Schools Programme

Spring One is when children across the trust engage with a Shakespeare play as part of their English curriculum, as we work in partnership with the Royal Shakespeare Company as part of the Associate Schools Programme.

Due to the challenges brought about by Covid-19 this has meant that work has been undertaken to update the programme for this year to ensure it meets safety guidelines. As a result teachers will engage in remote, rather than face to face training from the RSC as well as working in collaboration with one another using technology. Sadly, the First Encounters production that the trust were due to host in the Autumn has been postponed however there is every hope that this will run again next year.



Work from last year's target play **THE MERCHANT OF VENICE**



This year's play will be A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM which will form the first play in a cannon of plays that children will encounter as they progress through an NPAT school.



Children will engage in drama activity and Shakespearian language to produce writing outcomes. Some children will also rehearse for a digital performance of the play using music, dance and drama, instead of our annual event at the Royal & Derngate.

Despite everything that is happening with Covid-19 currently this still promises to be a fantastic curriculum opportunity for children.

Watch this space for further information.

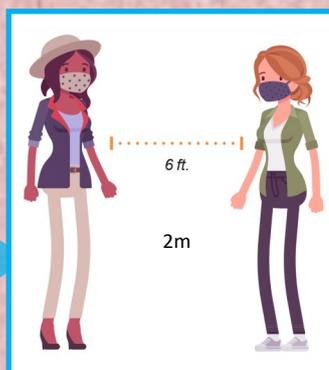


Just a reminder...

All parents and carers should now wear a face mask when on NPAT school grounds. If you are exempt from wearing a face mask, please contact the school to inform staff. Government information on mask wearing and exemptions can be found by clicking [HERE](#).



Parents and carers should make every effort to remain 2 metres apart from one another at all times on school grounds.



Only **one** parent or carer to drop off or collect a child from school