



EAGLES
PRIMARY ACADEMY

Newsletter

Term 1 2023

Wellington Eagles 'A School for the Curious Child'





WELCOME

Wellington Eagles 'A School for the Curious Child'

I am delighted to welcome you to our first solo newsletter for Wellington Eagles Primary Academy.

At Eagles, we pride ourselves on being a school for the curious child with a thriving school community and great ambitions for all our pupils. Our core school values of Kindness, Curiosity, Grit, Acceptance, Courageousness, and Integrity are woven into our curriculum, learning environments and partnerships as we show pupils how they can live their lives using these values daily in all they do.

Curiosity is our driving principle for creating an inspiring and challenging global curriculum. We have high expectations for every pupil and create learning experiences that challenge, extend, and deepen learning and thought. When answering the question, 'what do we want our Eagles children to do, know and be...', our team will explain we want every child to develop a love of reading and learning, be passionate and relentless in their pursuit of excellence and to use curiosity as the starting point for understanding themselves and others. We believe 'excellence' encompasses academic excellence, attitudinal excellence, and aspirational excellence and this drives all we do in day-to-day life in school.

We teach every pupil to approach life from a place of kindness and compassion. Being compassionate, helps us to seek resolution, and as global citizens we need our future generation to be able apply their knowledge and skills to the many situations that an ever-changing world demands of them.



Our pupil leaders play a key role in all aspects of school life, so please encourage them to apply and join in with these opportunities.

Firm in our belief that children come first, we strive to ensure that every pupil and their family is welcomed from their first day with us and feels happy and safe in their environment. We offer a varied selection of enrichment and enhancement experiences that develop character and foster opportunities to learn critical skills using the arts, outdoor learning, and investigations. Our partnerships with our trust schools, parents & carers, wider community and professional colleagues is central to all we do.



Through collaboration and a relentless quest for excellence, we strive to do and be the best that we can be in our work and play. Our staff are dedicated and professional; each person brings something unique and special to Eagles. We all care passionately about making our school a vibrant, inclusive, and engaging place that children are proud to belong to and love to attend.

Our school therapy dog 'Lillibet-Rose' is a mischievous cocker spaniel and was named by the children after the late Queen Elizabeth II and her sister Princess Margaret Rose. The children felt the name Lillibet-Rose would be a reminder for us all to continue to mirror the values our late Queen; in her acts of charity and tireless work to support others. Lillibet supports all our pupils and brings joy to the Eagles community every day with her mischief and energy!

At Eagles, through the approach of kindness and compassion, we encourage learning to be a process of exploration, trial, and error. We teach children to know, understand and celebrate this journey, using mistakes to grow from being a novice to developing expertise. Through our inclusive curriculum and wider learning opportunities, we show pupils how their resilience, strength of character and passion for learning will help them develop the highest aspirations possible for their own futures.

It is always a delight to greet families at the gate every morning and to welcome you into our school. Our mission this year is to further develop and build our relationships with our families.

**Have a wonderful festive season,
Mrs Johnson-Motyl & the Eagles team.**



○ BE KIND ●

● BE BRAVE ○

○ BE HONEST ●

● BE CREATIVE ●

○ BE HUMBLE ○

● BE THANKFUL ○

● BE HAPPY ●

○ BE YOU ● ○



SAFEGUARDING

Our focus for this safeguarding article is helping families to keep children safe on the numerous chat apps that are available.

It may feel confusing for adults to know what apps children are using and if they are safe, especially as children are so good at navigating the online world – often better than adults!

The article and tips below will hopefully help parents and families be more aware of how to keep children safe. If you have any questions, please speak to one of our safeguarding team who will be happy to assist you.

Help children stay safe on chat apps

Messaging and chat apps are a great way for a child to stay in touch with their friends and family but it is important both of you are comfortable with who they are talking to.

Talk to your child about who they are chatting to and how they know them. Remind them to be conscious of who they are sharing personal information with and not to share information with people they have not met before. This includes information like their name, location, email, phone number and school name.

What are chat apps?

Chat apps allow the user to send messages, photos, videos and documents, as well as creating large group chats.

Some apps allow users to message people they do not know, so your child could receive messages from people they do not know - most apps have settings to allow this to be changed so that they only receive messages from people they know. With your child, make sure these settings are in place and show them how to reject requests from people they do not know.





SAFEGUARDING

Even with friends, your child might see something that upsets them. Explore each app to see if there are reporting and blocking features. Show your child how to use these features and talk about situations when they might want to report or block.

Safety settings in chat apps

A risk for children and young people using chat apps is being added to group chats where they don't know the other people in the group, which could increase the chance they come across upsetting or negative messages.

Many of the chat apps have different privacy settings to help restrict who can contact you. If your child is using a chat app, we'd recommend looking at the privacy settings to see what's most appropriate. If there aren't any options to restrict contact then we'd recommend that your child doesn't use the app.

WhatsApp safety settings
+

Kik safety settings
+

Telegram safety settings
+

WhatsApp

Omegle

Telegram

Viber

Signal

Facebook messenger

Discord

Snapchat

Kik

(i) WhatsApp safety settings

To prevent children being added to groups by people they do not know in WhatsApp, we recommend changing the group chat settings from 'Everyone' to 'My Contacts Except...' and using the tick icon to select all contacts. The 'My Contacts Except...' option means only your child's phone contacts, except those you exclude, can add your child to groups. But by selecting all contacts, it means that nobody should be able to add your child to a group chat without first sending them an invitation.

(ii) Kik safety settings

In Kik's privacy settings, there is a 'Let Friends Find Me' option, which allows users who already have your contact details to connect with you. This option is turned on by default so make sure to switch this off.



SAFEGUARDING

(iii) Telegram safety settings

Users of Telegram have privacy settings available to help you manage:

- who can see your phone number
- who can see when you were last online
- your profile photo
- who can call you
- and who can add you to groups and channels

Talk to your child about what they are sharing

It is important for children and young people to be aware of what they are sharing online and who might see it. It can be helpful to compare it to what they would be happy to share offline.

For example, they should not give their phone number to someone they didn't know who approached them on the street, so it's important to not give it to someone you've only met online.

Remind them that they should not share private things, such as:

- personal information, like emails, names, phone numbers, location and school names
- photos of themselves
- photographs of their body, including photos or videos.

Children and young people should also consider that what they are sharing online may be shared further, to people they do not know, and they don't have control once it has been shared.

Popular chat apps

If you have any questions or would like to speak about anything that concerns you, please get in touch with our school safeguarding team on 01264 316400 (Eagles) or 01264 310780 (Lions).

Alternatively, if you are worried about something a child or young person may have experienced online, you can contact the NSPCC helpline for free support and advice. Call on 0808 800 5000.

attendance **MATTERS**

Attendance Advice for Parents

We thought you'd appreciate some more information on term-time absences, as some of you will have received letters regarding your children's attendance and punctuality.

Absences due to illness are unavoidable in most cases. There are also times when a child is ill in school and we have to ask you to pick them up early. And, of course, the '48-hour rule' applies when pupils are physically sick or have an upset tummy.

But there's no getting away from the fact that good attendance and punctuality is vital to good progress. This page explains school's position in this area, and our official duties and responsibilities to the Department for Education (DfE) and Wiltshire Local Authority (LA).

Reporting an absence

There are several ways a parent or carer can inform us of absence, and of course we have to be satisfied that it's someone with parental responsibility giving us the information:

- by telephone
- by email
- dropping into the office

The office staff record this information and communicate it to the teachers.

For safeguarding reasons, it really is vital that you let us know **each day** why your child is absent from school. If we don't hear from parents, we'll ring first to ensure that they are safe at home and will follow up with an email if required.

In some cases, if we're particularly worried or have not had a response from a phone call or email in a timely manner, we'll do a home visit and then if necessary, inform social care and the police, who can do a welfare check on a child at our request. This is something we don't want to have to do, but we have a duty of care to follow up on the absence if we're at all concerned.

Looking at this from a parent's perspective, it really is essential that you let us know the reason for absence, otherwise it has to be marked on the register as an 'O'. Unauthorised absences (including code U for late arrivals after the register closes at 09:00) are the reason that some parents have been fined or taken to court for their child's poor attendance.

Letters to parents regarding absence

Our attendance procedures can be found on the school's website. We begin this process when a student's attendance falls below 96%. This could have been due to a holiday at the beginning of the year or a spell of illness, particularly in the Autumn and Spring terms when the flu and cold bugs are thriving. We aim to be considerate in these circumstances and we don't enjoy sending these letters out, but we hope you understand that we have a duty to alert parents to their child's attendance.

We send out letters to parents informing them that their child's attendance is:

- **90% to 96%** - Your child is below our 96% attendance threshold. We understand this may be due to a couple of days of sickness absence. We hope their attendance picks up.
- **Below 90%** - Your child's attendance is well below the 96% threshold. Unless a rapid improvement is made you will be invited to meet with the Class Teacher or Attendance and Welfare Lead to discuss attendance and your case may be referred to the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) within the LA.
The aim of these meetings is to give school, parents and the EWO the chance to sit together and look at reasons for absence, the impact this is having, and then discuss ways to improve the situation.

Ongoing poor attendance (below 90%) is shared with our Education Welfare Officer (EWO), to whom we report each half-term. This can lead to a Fined Penalty Notice (FPN) being served or even legal proceedings.

Please note that FPNs are issued by the LA and payments are made directly to them, **not** the school.

Term-time absences

In line with Government and Local Education Authority policy, any holidays taken in school time have to be recorded as an unauthorised absence. Our school is accountable to the DfE and Wiltshire LA for attendance.

Holidays in term-time are the main reason for lower attendance, and the LA ask schools to refer absences to them for the issuing of a FPN. We use NAHT guidance for 'exceptional circumstances' when making a decision about what is deemed authorised or unauthorised absence- and our reasons are closely monitored and scrutinised by the Local Authority. We may authorise a number of days off due to exceptional circumstances, but most do not fall under this category and have to be designated as unauthorised. This is then relayed to the LA who decide whether to issue a FPN. Please see our Attendance Policy for further details regarding Leave of Absence during term-time.

If a child is absent from school for 5 consecutive days (10 sessions), we would expect to see some form of medical evidence to support this e.g. text message confirming a medical appt. If we have reasons to suspect the child is not genuinely ill but has instead been away on holiday, we are obliged to report this to the LA who in turn may advise that a FPN is served.

Again, the FPN is not a school matter. It is issued by the LA and we do not receive the money collected from the fine.

Impact of absences

Absences affect how well children do in school. On the face of it, 90% attendance looks reasonable. But if you stretch that out over a child's time in school, 90% from Reception to Y9 means that a child has missed a whole school year!

Normally, lessons in school are progressive. At the start of a new topic, children learn the first ideas and 'building blocks' which are then built on over a week or term to help each child secure their knowledge and skills. Later, more advanced lessons rely on this earlier understanding to move the children forward. Absences cause gaps in children's understanding which then have to be filled in. Essentially, they're playing catch-up. This means that a Teaching Assistant who normally works with a particular group or child may need to be reassigned so that the child who was absent can have the extra input they need to catch up. In these cases, the absence is impacting on other children's education too.

Further guidance

For every school, the issue of children's absences is always difficult; but please be assured that our intent here is not to upset anyone, nor to be heavy-handed or awkward. Our intent is to keep you informed about our duty to your children as learners, yourselves as parents and also to the authorities that regulate school. We implore anyone who is struggling to get their child into school to contact their child's class teacher initially (and then Mrs Rose if the situation doesn't improve) to discuss the reasons and work on ways to improve attendance.



SEND FOR THE CURIOUS CHILD

A child with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) may benefit from our curious child approach as we welcome inquisitive minds and value alternative ways of thinking.

The start of the year can equally be exhausting for children with SEND. The change of routine back to school life after a summer off; new teachers, classrooms, friends and expectations can be especially difficult, and we are aware of this as a team. The staff at Eagles have fully committed to supporting the needs of all children, to enable them to succeed. This is an ongoing process. We work with our parents as a team and fully appreciate your support, suggestions, and communication.

What is important, is for us is to listen to the views of the families experiencing our support, so that we can work together as a team to provide the best possible chance for your child to succeed. We are welcoming parents into school to discuss their child's current support plans and through this process, gather our parents and carers voices. We also hold pupil voice meetings at the start of the year, and we follow this up with a revisit this month.

As a team, we feel that parents of all children whether on the SEND register or not, need to have the opportunity to talk to the SENCo and Headteacher in a relaxed atmosphere (with beverages).

We have planned this for 3 -3.30pm on the first Thursday of every month from January. We will send out more information about this nearer the time but please always speak to your child's class teacher if you have any concerns as we communicate regularly as a school team.





HOW OUR CURIOUS CHILD STARTS THEIR LEARNING JOURNEY AT EAGLES

The Nest children have had such fun this term. As staff, we have supported our many new arrivals and their adults into our flock welcoming them into our homely space.

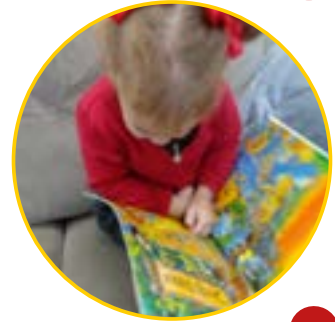
We have enjoyed watching the children settle into nursery life, building their confidence in accessing resources to support their own learning, with some children already feeling brave enough to join whole school assemblies on a Monday and a Friday!

Each year, the children who come to us are so different, with their own individual skills and interests. This group have amazed us with their love of books. They love to listen to stories being told by adults in the room but have recently begun to select their own book during provision, exploring it independently and even sharing their story with friends which is beautiful to see.

The children have enjoyed exploring celebrations with us from Diwali to Halloween and now we are all excited for Christmas! We have explored traditions in all of our different families and have learned vocabulary relating to these different events. As a setting we have been learning about the need to inspire children whilst letting them express their own artistic individuality.

For that reason, the Nest children have produced some amazing Christmas cards and crafts already, using their own experiences and imaginations. We are encouraging our littlest Eaglets in the school to become absorbed in the moment, to enjoy what they are doing and empower them to realise that their creations are important and beautiful.

Photos: Cutting our own snack gives us a sense of ownership and teaches us safety whilst improving our motor skills.





HOW OUR CURIOUS 4 & 5 YEAR OLDS LEARN AT EAGLES

Our children have had an exciting start to their learning in reception at Eagles with lots of fun filled days including, indoor and outdoor play developing their gross muscles, intriguing drawing club with a new book each week, learning new sounds in phonics (some of us are reading words), mark making, maths, making conversations and discovering snails, slugs and spiders.





HOW OUR CURIOUS 4 & 5 YEAR OLDS LEARN AT EAGLES

We had a very strange visit from an alien. After receiving a video message from the police showing what had been seen on our playground, the children went out to investigate and found some alien poo.

The children tried to find the alien, but later that day we got a message from the alien saying that he needed us to build him a new spaceship to get home. We were happy to help.





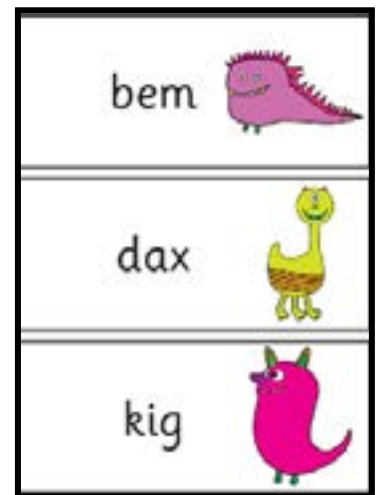
CURIOUS ABOUT PHONICS, READ ON...

At Wellington Eagles we are proud to use Read Write Inc (RWI) as our chosen phonics program. RWI follows a series of small steps, repetitive teaching, to ensure that all children meet the expected standard of reading by the end of their KS1 journey. With fun stories and skills, reading with the RWI journey sets our children up with foundational skills.

The phonics screening check is taken individually by all children in year 1 in England and is usually sat in June. It is designed to give teachers and parents' information on how your child is progressing in phonics. In 2022 nationally 75% of children met the expected standard. However, at Wellington Eagles we were excited to celebrate a 100% pass rate!

Through dedication of the KS1 team, every Year 1 child (2022/23) passed their phonics test using our RWI strategy: Special Friend, Fred Talk, Say the word. This strategy supports children to decode even the trickiest words.

As children's knowledge of words grow so does their confidence to try harder books. Using the RWI strategy when new words occur, means children have a strategy for life.





CURIOUS ABOUT PHONICS, READ ON...

Top Tips to prepare for the Phonics Screening:

- The most important thing you can do as a parent is to read with your child. Listen to them read and read to them - both activities are incredibly valuable. If they hear you read, they are hearing how to pronounce unfamiliar words and are developing new vocabulary.
- When you're listening to your child read, allow them time to attempt to decode unfamiliar words themselves. If they're struggling, you could help by pointing out the sounds in a word. For example, in the word 'treat' the sounds are /t/ /r/ /ea/ /t/.
- Look around your home and other environments (such as on trips out) for reading opportunities. Can your child read signs? Can they read a menu in a coffee shop? Can they read an advertisement, poster or leaflet?
- If your child is watching a film or the television, turn on the subtitles. They'll be hearing words pronounced and seeing them written down at the same time, which can be hugely beneficial for their reading and writing skills.

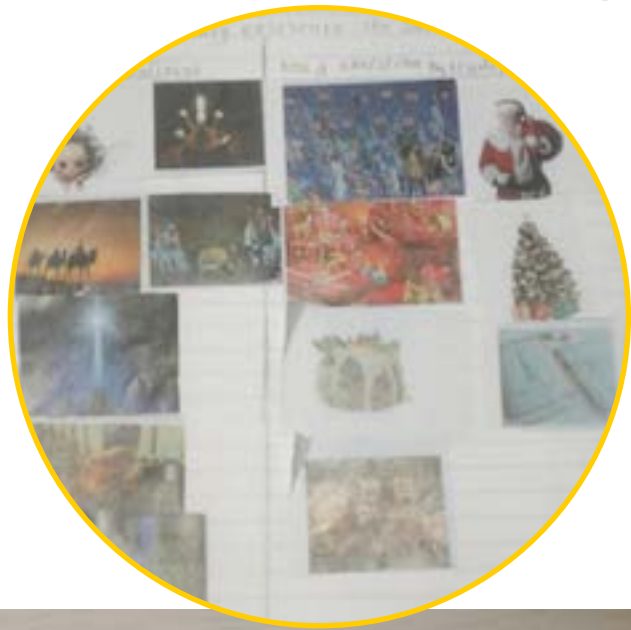



CURIOUS ABOUT HOW WE TEACH WORLD VIEWS AND RE? READ ON...

Over the past few weeks in Religious Studies, a lot of year groups have been learning about Diwali and Christmas.

In year 3, pupils have enjoyed making Rangolis, Christmas cards, and learning about Christmas from a religious perspective.

The year 4 class said they enjoyed learning about Diwali and knowing the reason why Christmas began.



The reception class have enjoyed learning about Diwali and Christmas in a creative way, too. Sophie from reception said 'I like making the Diwali lamps and lots of Christmas cards!'.




OUR PE OPPORTUNITIES FOR OUR CURIOUS CHILD

Our children in year 3 and year 4 have been working hard to develop their football skills in our PE lessons.

We have been able to apply the skills we have learnt to game scenarios against Wellington Lions. Both our year 3 and year 4 teams were successful in their matches against Wellington Lions and showed excellent use of the school values.

After the match, year 4 pupil commented 'I cannot wait for the next match against Lions, we are starting to make good friends with them.'

Our children in key stage 2 have been developing their water confidence and swimming skills at the Tidworth Leisure Centre, they have all really enjoyed their swimming lessons. A year 3 shared their thoughts 'I was really nervous before my lesson but it was actually really fun'.

alternative image? this one is very low quality and dark?





CURIOUS ABOUT THE PERFORMING ARTS

How we develop a love of drama for our pupils

The performing arts encourage children to think creatively and use their imagination in our school for the curious child, we strive to provide a range of opportunities to do this. Within the last term, we have had a number of exciting visitors.

The children were enraptured by Paul Cookson, a poet who performed his hilarious poetry for us and had pupils from ages five to eleven joining in with the repetition and rhythm.

“I loved the poem he performed with his Ukulele and how everyone joined in.” (Lola, Y6)

All the pupils at Eagles took part in a circus skills taster session provided by The Sports Project. Children were encouraged to use their bodies to create imaginative balances and understand the importance of communication and teamwork in building human pyramids to show and share with others. The children thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to have a voice and an audience outside of the classroom and their smiles were infectious.

Mrs McStea has worked hard to give more of our pupils a voice – voices in harmony with others! Our newly-formed school choir were amongst the special guests at Ludgershall Christmas Lights switch-on and performed a number of festive songs to entertain the local community.

The children were praised for their confidence and were an absolute credit to the school and we hope for more opportunities to perform in the community as our links develop.





CURIOUS ABOUT THE PERFORMING ARTS

With Christmas around the corner, the teachers are busy preparing Christmas celebrations at Eagles, we are proud to be offering four different performances for our parents. From the Nativities in nursery, reception and KS1 to the Christmas Around the World celebration in KS2, we are excited to harness the children's excitable Christmas imagination and give them all a chance to feel the pride of performing to their parents.

We rely on the use of drama in the classroom to enthuse and immerse our curious pupils in their learning. This term, in year 6, the pupils have been learning how to write arguments and balanced discussions involving a clever twist on the classic tale of 'The Three Little Pigs'. If you stepped into their classroom last week, you may have found yourself in the middle of a courtroom listening to their defence arguments for the Wicked Wolf!

Imagination and creativity are at the heart of drama and the performing arts and they are definitely in abundance with our curios and amazing Eagles pupils.



CURIOUS ABOUT HOW PARENTS CAN SUPPORT EAGLES?

You said... “How can we help and support at Eagles as parents and grandparents?”

We did... Volunteer packs, new PTA team, staff & families have volunteered to drive a shared mission to develop our curious child...

Wellington Eagles (new and improved) PTA Committee has had it's first very successful meet and greet, which recruited a lot of new members and support.

Since then, we have also held a planning meeting to organise the school disco and future events. We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone both staff members and parents for getting involved and supporting the PTA in helping us make Eagles the best school in the world for our children.

We have arranged our first event which is the Christmas Disco. There will be a 'chill-out' space too, so it is in an inclusive event for all our pupils.

At our next meeting we will be finalising our event plans for 2024. We welcome you all to come along to enjoy Joyce's baking and meet new families.

Once again, many thanks


Sarah & Ellie
School PTA Representatives





TEACHING OUR CURIOUS CHILD TO BE A LEADER

Eagles commitment to pupil voice continued this term with year 6 children invited to apply for the pupil leadership roles of head and deputy head pupils.



Candidates expressed their initial interest by submitting an application form stating why they would like to be considered and how they believe they will best fulfil the requirements of the role. Successful candidates attended Friday's celebration assembly, where they were awarded with their badges. Congratulations to Eagles Head and Deputy Head Pupils Harry, Keisha, Lola and Lydia. Also, to Suhani, who was appointed a new role as Charity Ambassador.

The first role of Eagles newly appointed pupil leadership team was taking part in shortlisting school council applicants. Each academic year two pupils from each class are selected to be pupil voice for their class. Due to the high standard of applications, the selection process was extremely difficult.

Congratulation goes to all the pupils who applied, and to Theo, Nicole, Bailey, Poppy, Anthony, Jeraldine, Cerys, Siteri, Caleb, Peyton, Charlie and Ruby for their successful appointments to Eagles school council.





TEACHING OUR CURIOUS CHILD TO BE A LEADER

Encouraging children to participate in pupil leadership opportunities to develop new skills forms an important part of each child's development in our school, inspiring pupil leadership to create a culture of ownership, collaboration and community in the classroom, school community and develop skills that children can carry over to adulthood.

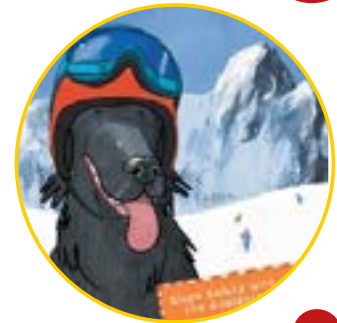
The Reconnection Room is a newly designated safe space for Eagles children. The room is used for soft starts, break and lunch time clubs, including our dedicated Dandelion lunch club for our military children. The room is also a dedicated space for children to talk with their Trusted Adults, take time away from their classrooms to complete learning jobs in a quiet space and take part in SEMH interventions or talk time.

If any of our families have any children's board games, jigsaws, soft toys or books they no longer use, please email admin@wellington eagles.org.uk for the attention of Miss Handley-Wells ref: Reconnection Room.

Each academic year, pupils from year 5 are invited to apply for a place in the 'Mini-Police' programme. This year we extended applications to any year 6 pupils who had not been able to take part in the scheme during the previous academic year, either due to other commitments or being new to our school community. On Tuesday 10th October, successful applicants attended a special celebration assembly where they made their promise in the format of a Police Attestation in front of their peers, families and Police partners.

This year's cohort will now go on to take part in termly practical sessions such as learning about the law and anti-social behaviour, taking part in speed awareness trials to name but a few.

The Mini Police Scheme is a means of engaging children within their school setting. It helps to address policing priorities, increase confidence and reduce perceived barriers. It is an opportunity for pupils to contribute to policing and community safety in a fun way and give young people a voice.





TEACHING OUR CURIOUS CHILD TO BE A LEADER

On Thursday 23rd November, Caroline Elliott who is a Snow Safety Educator, Search and Rescue (SAR) Avalanche Dog handler & inspirational Speaker inspired our children with a special assembly. Many of our children from Germany, Canada and Europe are/ were skiers/snowboarders and so the learning from this can be applied to them as well as general outdoor activities. The visit also complemented learning from last term re how dogs are used to keep people safe. Caroline has also written a children's book entitled Fjord's Mountain Mission. The book teaches children essential snow-safety knowledge through the eyes of Caroline's animal companion, Fjord.

At the start of the new academic year, we began trialling a new and exciting PSHE provider, 1Decision. 1Decision provide a suite of PSHE resources for primary schools in the UK.

At the core of the programme are a set of videos with alternative endings, based on different choices. 1Decision also supports the teaching of British values, protected characteristics and ultimately improve personal development for every pupil. If you would like to find out more about 1Decision, please visit Parent / Carer Zone | 1decision. Here you will also find video clips from some of the themes covered.

<https://www.1decision.co.uk/resources/parent-carer-zone>

