



Snow Days

I am very sorry that so much disruption was caused to families due to the snow closures last week. Decisions were made according to advice from weather forecasters, police advice not to drive, and reports of treacherous underfoot conditions around the school which would have compromised the safety of children, parents and staff attempting to get to and from school. The school Facebook page played an important part in sharing information. The amount of snow did not match predicted levels but I hope you had the chance to enjoy playing with your children with it. The children enjoyed their playtime on Wednesday, so hopefully some lifelong memories will have been created last week.

Mrs Knowles

Unfortunately for us Mrs Knowles and her family have decided to move back to East Anglia and she will be leaving us at Easter. I know it was a very difficult decision for her. She adores the children in her class and has stated that St Joseph's is the best school that she has worked in. However for all of us family should come before work and she has made the decision in the best interests of her family. We will be very sad to see her go. She very quickly became part of the St Joseph's family and has done a marvellous job inspiring the learning of the year 2 children this year. We will get a chance to say an official good-bye to her towards the end of term.

World Book Day

I am sorry if any of the children were disappointed that they could not wear their costumes (or parents exasperated after wrecking their brains to come up with an outfit idea) on World Book Day. We already have so many enrichment activities planned this week that we cannot fit a new Book Day in too. Neil Armstrong will visit Class 2 on Wednesday and the Life Caravan will be in school on Thursday and Friday. We have rearranged the day (not world-wide but at least in St Joseph's) for Tuesday 13th March.

Basketball

On Sunday 25th February we had high hopes for our year 3 & 4 basketball players as they arrived at the Pavilions for the finals of the tournament, as they had qualified for the finals by winning all five of their games. I began to feel something was not quite right when I noticed the size of some of the others warming up on the court. I wasn't sure if they were playing in the schools tournament or playing for the Raiders later in the afternoon. Unfortunately for us they were in our competition. Although our qualifying rounds had been for year 4 children, the other rounds were for children up to year 6. There were two other schools there, Oreston and Drake. Both schools have basketball as part of their culture and most of the children had enjoyed coaching from Raiders players for the last four years. Our children had three lunch-time sessions from a has-been rugby player. Despite the disparity in size and experience our children were fantastic. They won the hearts of all of the Raiders staff and improved with every half of each game they played. The cheer when we scored our first basket was the loudest of the day. All ten children battled for the full twenty minutes of each game on the full-size court and I couldn't have been more proud of their 'never-say die' attitude.

Escape Rooms

You may be aware of the concept of 'Escape Rooms' where teams are faced with unfamiliar situations where they are forced to think creatively and analytically; offer possible solutions; listen to others; learn from failure; and work together to achieve a rescue or escape from the situation they are in. That type of problem solving fits in very neatly with our vision for how we want children to learn at St Joseph's.

Unfortunately escape rooms are relatively expensive and seldom allow primary school children to take part. During the teachers' training day we tried to design situations which would replicate the experience at a level that our children could enjoy. After trialling the rooms we designed, we found they need a few tweaks but soon we hope to be able to see our older children 'solving' these rooms and designing new ones for younger children. Parents might even get a go if you are lucky.

Diary Date - Friends of St Joseph's Cake Festival - 22nd March. Details to follow soon.