



Communication is a priority for us once again this year, we will communicate to parents and carers using **School Ping and My Child At School.**

In addition, we use **@DarlinghurstAcademy Instagram** to share what's going on within the Academy

#### February dates

- Tea and Talk – Eco – Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 8.45am
- Year 6 cake sale – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 3.10pm
- PTA 'Make Someone Smile' event – Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February 3.10pm

#### Save the date for March

- World Book Day – Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March

## Message from the Principal

Dear parents and carers,

This week was slightly different with the academy and families making adjustments in response to Industrial action. Thank you for your cooperation.

I have spent time visiting classrooms this week and seeing the children and staff in full swing. The Early Years was a hive of activity and during a lesson with children investigating how to reduce, reuse and recycle. They considered the question, 'Is it rubbish or can you make something using it?' In year four, children were exploring differences in chocolate as part of their connected curriculum science unit, between the lesson and the story of, 'Charlie and the Chocolate factory' it made me indulge in a chocolate bar that evening. In year six, the children engaged in discovery and dialogue about inherited characteristics and evolution. The children were full of

curiosity and the science lesson was enjoyed by all. I was extremely impressed with their knowledge and question. Children have shown creativity in the curriculum, enjoying links between Science, writing and art. One child showed me a great design of an adaptation of a creature, creating a new species whilst another shared their written response to the creative task of, 'What's beyond the door?'



The Hockey team shared their experience at the SPSSA hockey festival with me. For some of those children it was their very first time representing the academy and playing against other local schools. They did us proud and only lost one game and were full of the joy of competitive sport. Well done! I remember my secondary school days, playing indoor hockey and said that I would love to see them in action.

Our love of reading project has continued to take shape with the sharing of books and recommended texts. Children and staff have been adding these to their book areas and promoting the message – Read to grow! Should you have a recommended read that you can share or a memory of a favourite book, we would love to hear from you.



We have one more week ahead of the half term, with two focused themes – Children's Mental Health Week and Safer Internet day on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> February.



As always, enjoy your family time together.

Mrs Nicholls



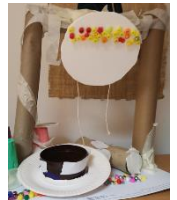
## Upper Key Stage 2 in the Spotlight

Year 5 and 6 have been working dutifully since the beginning of the year. The classes are all settled and are ready to learn, working towards their 'I can' statements and children are also working on their specific targets.

Our Connected Curriculum topic in year 5 this term is entitled 'Could we build a fairground here?' It is a science based topic with elements of geography and history. We looked at the forces that are at play in some fairground rides and the geographical make-up of the British Isles. We also learnt about the history of fairgrounds and the historic role of certain communities in continuing the tradition.



The children learned that fairgrounds use many different forces to create the various thrilling rides that we know use today: gravity, air resistance, friction and centrifugal force. One or two of the children even got a little wet when our experiments around circular forces were interrupted by an immovable object! Sir Isaac Newton would be proud. With Mrs Buckley in Art, the children even had a go at creating models of some rides of their own using recyclable materials.



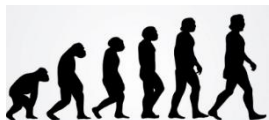
In Writing we began with an imaginary trip to the funfair that used our children's senses so that they could describe the various sights and sounds of a funfair. Who doesn't love a sticky candyfloss or hot bag of chips whilst you're being spun upside down? We also brought the idea of a travelling funfair into debate with an extended piece of writing about whether we would like a fairground in our local area. The children were excellent at weighing up the pros and cons and really tried to see both points of view. The jury is still out!

In our SPACE lessons, we looked at a wider range of issues such as resolving conflicts, respecting each other's personal space, friendships, peer pressure and the importance of vaccines. In RE, we explored the importance of prayer and whether or not you had to be in a place of worship to pray or if you could be in your own home. Looking at a variety of places of worship allowed us to delve into the similarities and differences of how respect is shown which fascinated the children.



Year 6 have been working hard this half term. They started the year with an assessment week and the teachers have used the tests to help plan their teaching in reading, maths and GPS.

Our connected curriculum topic is called 'Why do some creatures no longer exist?' The focus for this topic is the theories of Charles Darwin, specifically Adaptation and Natural Selection. We have learnt about his work in the Galapagos Islands where he identified how birds' beaks had adapted over time. We ran our own experiment with chop sticks, scissors, clothes pegs and tweezers to determine what characteristics a bird would need to pick up its food.



We are also learning about evolution this week and exploring pictures of skulls, phalanges and stone tools to decide how these have evolved over time. As well as humans, we have explored the evolution of elephants.



In RE, we have started our Hinduism topic and are learning about their key beliefs and traditions. In PSHE we have studied peer pressure, fake news and how technology can affect your mental health. In English, we wrote our own narratives about Pandora and the Na'vi, based on the Avatar



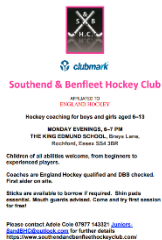
films. We have also written about discovering a new species of animal; the children have been incredibly creative and used the technical vocabulary of adaptation and evolution in their pieces. One group has been writing about 'The Tiger who came to Tea' and celebrated their writing achievements with a tea party at the end of the week.



We are busy working through the Year 6 maths curriculum, this term we have covered measuring (including metric and imperial) and area and volume of shapes. We are now giving out weekly maths homework which we mark as a class together each Friday and new homework is stuck in books – please remind your children to bring their books in each week.

## PE & Sports News

This week we took our hockey squad to the SPSSA hockey festival at Warners Bridge. It was the very first time representing the school for some of the children and as always they demonstrated great respect for the game, opponents and officials. In total they played 5 games which included plenty of wins and just 1 lose. Anyone who has played hockey will know just how hard it is to master and our children's hard work put in at training sessions shone through during the event. Their stick work and positional play was really something to behold! Well done to all involved. **Mr Felton**



If your child would like to have a go at hockey, we have attached a flyer from a local club to this newsletter. The first session is FREE, so go on.....give it a try!

## World Book Day

We are excited to be celebrating World Book Day again this year on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. As always, children will engage in learning and events linked to reading for pleasure, sharing their love of reading.

Last year was a great turn out of children wearing costumes linked to their favourite book or character or coming to school snug in their onesie because of the great association of bedtime reading. As an eco school, we love to see some of the creative costumes that children make from reusing items of clothing and accessories.

We look forward to this annual event and sharing images of the day with you. Should you take photographs of your children dressed ahead of school, please share with us subject: world book day [generalenquiries@darlinghurstacademy.org.uk](mailto:generalenquiries@darlinghurstacademy.org.uk)

## Join us during half term to plant fruit trees!

On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> February between 11am-1pm, members of the gardening charity, Trustlinks, will be planting fruit trees at the end of our field and they need your help! Trustlinks is a community charity focusing on wellbeing and using gardening to bring people together. Invite your parent/carer, Nan, Grandad, Aunty, older siblings etc... everyone is welcome! If you would like to join us please email [generalenquiries@darlinghurstacademy.org.uk](mailto:generalenquiries@darlinghurstacademy.org.uk). (All children must come with an adult)





## Renewed: Household Support Fund FSM Vouchers – FEBRUARY HALF TERM 2023

The Government has provided Southend City Council with additional grant funding under the Household Support Fund. Each eligible child will receive 1 x £15 voucher to cover the 1-week half term holiday period. Vouchers will be sent out on Monday 6<sup>th</sup>, via WONDE. Any questions/queries please email Miss Churchman [finance@darlinghurstacademy.org.uk](mailto:finance@darlinghurstacademy.org.uk)

## PTA

The PTA will be holding a Valentines Event – Make Someone Smile – on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February straight after school in the hall. The event is for children to create a little something for someone special in their lives, mum, dad, friend, grandparents etc. If you would like your child to take part, please use your ParentPay account to pay 50p to cover the cost of the gift to ensure a small token of kindness is available for them to create, you are more than welcome to purchase more than one gift. The Make Someone Smile event will be open on parent pay on Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January and will close on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> February.



Please collect your child from their classroom as usual and enter the office via the main office.

We look forward to seeing you for this lovely gift making event, for children to pass on a little something to someone special.

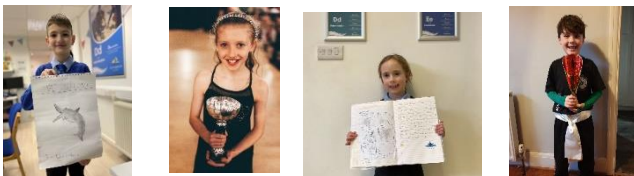
## Attendance

**KS1**  
Albatross 95.2%

**KS2**  
Seashell 97.9%  
Stingray 96.3%



## Proud to be me



What have you missed on Instagram this week?

