



May 2014

Dear Parents

Ralph Sadleir newsletters are like some people's calendars; they seem to come around very quickly and remind us that another half term has passed.

This half term has seen many successes for the school. The year 6 football team won the county 7-aside title and returned with another trophy for our cabinet. In doing so they have set us a challenge as our current trophy cabinet is not big enough for the two large trophies they have won this year. A slightly smaller trophy was won by the year 8 Maths team when they were runners-up in the County Maths challenge. This was a superb result and really reflects the mathematical talent within Ralph Sadleir. Has your child ever brought home the weekly Maths Challenge for you to try? If not, do ask them to copy it down and let you have a go!

This morning we welcomed friends from KhandelLight into assembly. Dr Peter Gough gave an illustrated presentation to the pupils showing how the money raised by Ralph Sadleir pupils over the past 14 years has been used to improve the lives of people living in the Khandel region of India. It was very humbling to think how much good even a small amount of money can do in other countries. The assembly concluded with two year 8 pupils presenting Dr Gough and Yvonne McPartland with a cheque for £500, proceeds from a non-uniform day in December and donations made into the KhandelLight box that is always displayed in school.

Next half term we turn our thoughts to 'The Future'. This will be the theme of our final Cross-Curricular Day of the year but in many other ways we will be looking to the futures of our pupils as they prepare to move to the next stages of their education. Some pupils started this yesterday when they visited Astrium in Stevenage and were inspired by the technology and engineering they saw. Career thoughts were set in motion for a number of the pupils.

Please keep looking at the website and at Mr Spong's blog so that you keep up to date with all our news as it happens. As always your feedback and ideas are greatly appreciated.

My fingers are crossed for a warm and sunny half term holiday and for the final weeks of term.

Liz Hinton



Dates for your Diaries

Summer Term 2014

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| 1 st Half Term | Tues 22 nd April – Fri 23 rd May |
| May Day Holiday | Monday 5 th May |
| Half Term Break | Mon 26 th May – Fri 30 th May |
| 2 nd Half Term | Mon 2 nd June – Fri 18 th July |
| School Year Ends | Friday 18 th July at 2.30pm |

Autumn Term 2014

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|--------------------------------|---|
| Inset Day | Mon 1 st Sept |
| New Yr 5's only | Tues 2 nd Sept – 24 th Oct |
| All Students Return | Weds 3 rd Sept – 24 th Oct |
| Half Term Break | Mon 27 th Oct – Fri 31 st Nov |
| Inset Day | Mon 3 rd Nov 2014 |
| 2 nd Half Term | Tues 4 th Nov – Fri 19 th Dec |
| Occasional Day – School Closed | Fri 5 th Dec |
| Christmas Break | Mon 22 nd Dec – Fri 2 nd Jan 2015 |

Please visit our website to view more calendar dates for 2015.

DINNER MONEY

Summer Term 2014

Per Day - £2.15

Per Week - £10.75

2nd Half Term - £75.25

Whole Term - £124.70

If your child is going on one of the various school trips please deduct the appropriate amount.

Cheques payable to

Ralph Sadleir School

Please put the child's name and 'dinner money' on the back of cheques.

Please note that meals should be paid for in advance and that any family debt over £30.00 can be referred to County for retrieval by their legal team.

Changes to meal patterns

A meal pattern has been set for your child.

Any changes to the pre-defined patterns must be notified to the school office **before registration** otherwise you will be charged for the school meal.

Please contact the office if you have any queries.

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Attendance

If your child is absent from school it is essential that you telephone the school before 8.45am.

If we do not hear from you, your child's absence may be marked as unauthorised.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATIONS

Herts County Council is working to promote free school meals and educational benefits to make

sure that as many eligible children and families as possible get the support they are entitled to.

Families are able to apply in any of the following ways:

Online: at www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals.

Smartphone: using the LookingLocal app available from app stores.

Digital TV: The Community Channel – press the red button

Wii/Xbox/PS3: at www.lookinglocal.gov.uk/hertsdirect

Phone: 0300 123 4084

We can help you if you do not have access to the internet.

Funds4Schools

We are collecting again for Funds4Schools. The next collection date is Tuesday 15th July from 9am.

You can collect a bag from the school office.

Thank you.

A message from the Ralph Sadleir Association

The recent Stars in Their Eyes event raised a fantastic £1,183.24 (£200 up on last year) and our tombola May Day stall raised £300.40.

Both events were extremely successful and we would like to thank the parents for supporting the school by making donations and offering their time to help.

Money raised will go towards our continued drive towards a new minibus.

If you have any good fundraising ideas or can help us at the RSA, please get in touch.

Further details about the RSA can be found on the Ralph Sadleir website, within the About Us section.

Success in the County Maths Challenge for Y8 Team

Congratulations to Kira B, Ben G, Holly R and Ryan W who represented Ralph Sadleir in the Final of the County Maths Challenge Competition and achieved a fantastic second place! Only one point separated them from the winning team, Roundwood Park School, Harpenden. For more details and photos see our school website - <http://ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk/county-maths-challenge-2014/>



School Website

We are looking for parental feedback on our school website. Your thoughts and opinions are extremely valuable to the improvement of the site. If there is anything you think the site still needs or would just like to provide general feedback, please click on the red website feedback button that appears on the right hand side of every page. Thank you.

Sainsbury's School Sports vouchers

We are Collecting! If you happen to have any **Sainsbury's School Sports vouchers** at home, we would really appreciate these at school. We use the vouchers to acquire basic sports equipment such as football and netballs and are a vital boost to our equipment here at school. The collection box is based in reception and we would be ever so grateful for any vouchers you may have.

Uniform

We are having a purge on uniform, particularly the length of skirts for girls. Some skirts are so short that it is impossible for the girls to sit in school and not display what they are wearing underneath. Wearing PE shorts under skirts is not an option. Skirts should be no more than 3 inches (7 cm) above the knee; in some cases they are substantially shorter than this. I am asking that parents either buy their daughter a skirt of the correct length, send them in in navy (non-fashion) trousers or contact the school to arrange for a suitable skirt to be loaned until one can be purchased.

Similarly many of the shoes being worn are unsuitable and do not give the feet sufficient support or protection. Irreparable damage is being done to the developing bone structure which will result in many of our pupils having problems with their feet in later life, possibly having to have painful operations. Likewise, trainers should not be worn for school. They are designed in a different way to shoes and for a different purpose and are not meant for all day wear. As with other items of uniform we are happy to provide pupils with suitable footwear until more appropriate shoes can be purchased by parents.

Pupils leaving school for appointments

Please be aware that the school will not release pupils from school during school hours unless collected by named Parent/Guardian. If you wish to collect your child from school during these hours please telephone the office or send an email. Thank you.

H.A.N.D. News is Hertfordshire County Council's free online newsletter with information about benefits, entertainment, activities, support groups, courses and much more for children and young people with additional needs. This newsletter is also for parents and carers of children and young people with additional needs. Feedback from parents', carers and other professionals is that they find this newsletter invaluable. Please read the newsletter at

<http://handnews.hertscc.gov.uk>

Thank you.

Dinner Money – Important notice

As from January 2014 we will be able to accept payments on +pay for termly and half termly dinner monies. Other payments can be sent to the school but we will no longer be able to accept cheques for less than £10.75.

Cross Curricular Day – 30th April 2014.

We have some super write-ups from students in each group about the last Cross Curricular Day held on the 30th April.

Please take a look at our website page to read the articles and see some photos of the day

<http://ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk/xcd-30th-april-2014/>

Visit from Airbus Space and Defence Ltd

On the 25th of April 2014, Year 7 and 8 had a visit from Airbus Space and Defence. This local company, just up the road, in Stevenage, makes amongst other things, satellites. The company is split up into four main parts; space systems, military aircrafts, intelligence & security, and electronics. The talk was mainly on space systems, because it followed on from a project we did in our recent STEM lessons (science, technology, engineering and mathematics).

They spoke about a really interesting mission that they are working on – the Mars Rover- which is due to take off in a few years. Although there have been other Rovers that have gone to Mars, this one is unique. It takes twenty minutes for a signal to be transmitted from Earth to the Rover on Mars (and vice versa). One of the main problems with the previous Rovers have been that when they are approaching large rocks, a manual instruction from Earth needs to be given to the Rover to make it change course. The twenty minute delay means that the instruction is received too late, meaning that the Rover has already crashed into the rock by the time it receives the instruction. The new Mars Rover is fitted with many sensors and a computer able to process the information picked up by the sensors. This enables the Rover to sense the terrain, and plot a course, avoiding large obstacles.

There were many other missions explained, for example a spacecraft that is due to travel nearer to the Sun than any other spacecraft/satellite has ever gone before. They also spoke about ‘BepiColombo – Mission to Mercury’ - where a craft is going to Mercury to test many things, like how strong the magnetic field is (having a magnetic field is rare for a planet).

We learnt that without satellites, there would be no television, no satnavs or mobile phones. Many other everyday electrical items depend on satellites to function fully.

This talk was thoroughly enjoyable, and I learnt so much. It gave me an insight into what working for a space company would be like - so much fun! I was shocked that such an interesting company is just a few miles away, and that I could be working there soon (as long as I continue to work hard in my all my lessons!). It was indescribably great!!!

By Harvey B.



Architecture Workshop

On Monday 19th May Year 6 took part in architecture workshop. The amateur, Ru, showed us how to make shelters.

First of all Ru told us how to make tetrahedrons from six sticks and four rubber bands. Then she talked about what features were needed in a shelter in the arctic, rainforest and desert. She showed us how to make a banana truss by tying three sticks together and placing a tetrahedron in the centre. Then she told us we were making shelters suited for one of the environment we had discussed. She also said it had to be big enough for our group to sit in. She split us into groups of five to start building our shelters.

My group decided to do the artic. We didn't use a banana truss. Some of the key features were a small door, slanted roof, fire, lamp and storage. After everyone had finished, Ru tested them by shaking the shelter; ours passed the test but Ru accidentally removed a rubber band so it collapsed.

The architecture workshop was a brilliant and educational experience. I wish I could do it again.

By Juliana H.



Ofsted Parent View

Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about our school at any time of year. It is also a great tool to help us know which areas are working well and which can be developed further.



Parent Views asks for your opinion on 12 aspects of your child's school, from the quality of teaching, to dealing with bullying and poor behaviour. They use the information you provide when making decisions about which schools to inspect, and when. By sharing your views, you'll be helping our school improve. You will also be able to see what other parents have said about the school. Or, if you want to, view the results for any school in England. Access via the school website or <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/login?destination=give-your-views>

News from Year 5

We would like to tell you a bit about what we did two weeks ago on Victorian Day. Victorian Day was divided into two halves. In one half of the day, year 5 took part in the K'nex Challenge which was run by Claire Teague from Glaxo Smith Kline.

In the challenge each pair had to design a helmet that was fit for a purpose. The helmet had to fit the person modelling it and also had to have special adaptations to make it suitable for its job. For example if you designed a motor cycle helmet you had to explain how it would keep the rider safe in an emergency.

We had great fun designing our helmets and then we had to present our designs to everyone and talk them through our adaptations. The winners on the day were Isaac and Sophia for their Police Riot helmet and Jack and Ella C for their house helmet. But what has K'nex got to do with the Victorians?

Well there are two words which connect K'nex to the Victorians and they are design and adaptations.

Design

We had a quick look at the work of Isambard Kingdom Brunel who was one of the greatest engineers of the Victorian Age. Amongst other things he designed and built the Great Western Railway from London to Bristol, including all the stations, bridges and tunnels.

Brunel wanted to build the fastest railway possible but he only had a budget of £6million pounds. Brunel worked out that if he made the railway as straight as possible and kept it as level as he could, it would be cheaper to build and faster to travel on.

We had a look at how he designed the bridge over the River Thames at Maidenhead. He used arches to support the weight which kept the design low and cheap to build.

In pairs we had a go at building bridges with plasticine. Our bridges had to be at least 2cm off the table surface and have a span of more than 7cm. We put weights onto our bridges to find out how strong they were. Some people managed to get over 2 KG onto their bridge before it collapsed.



The word Adaptation brings us to the work of another famous Victorian – Charles Darwin. Charles Darwin was born in Shropshire and was very interested in the natural world. After studying divinity at university, he managed to join a five year scientific expedition on the survey ship HMS Beagle.

Darwin went on adventures to islands that few people had been to before and he began to notice that on some of the islands he visited the birds were very different even though they were all types of Finch. When he looked closely at these birds he realised that their beaks were different and their habitats varied as well.

He began to realise that over time the birds had become adapted to the particular habitat on the island they were on and had developed a beak shape to suit the type of food available.

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News from Year 5 contd...

We carried out an experiment (using tweezers and bird seed) to see if beak shape would affect the type of food you could pick up and we found that it did.

Charles Darwin went on to develop his ideas about evolution. When it was published it upset many people but it has come to be recognised as a major advance in scientific understanding.

Although we only had a brief introduction to the ideas of two famous Victorians we are looking forward to learning more about them through our history lessons.

