



Tockwith

CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY ACADEMY

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing this newsletter after having talked to Year 5 about their trip to Tadcaster Grammar to watch some of our past students perform exceptionally well in the High School Musical performance. I've also listened to a very excited Year 1 talk about their party frock for the disco which was attended by 176 children. It's moments like this that makes you realise what a great place Tockwith is to go to school.

Thank you so much for returning your signed Tockwith Community Contracts. This was composed by the children, parents, governors and staff of the school and replaces the old home school agreement. It ensures that we are all on the same page and allows us to inspire everyone to reach their individual potential and, through our Christian Values, prepare them for the future.

On the next 4 pages there are 2 letters that will be a very interesting and useful read for you. We want to be transparent about the how we are moving forwards strategically and the financial constraints we are facing in our school. The first letter is written by Sue Corbett, the chair of governors and me and the second by Ebor's Financial director, Andrew Robinson, and me

For those of you who have been in the school, you will have seen our new amazing art work in the hall. I spoke to the artist about our school and our vision and values after having spoken to the staff and some of the children. I hope you agree that it perfectly sums up Tockwith. I would like to say a massive thank you to the PTFA who have funded the artwork. Keep your eyes open for the next piece of art coming!

I wish you all an enjoyable and hopeful restful week!



Justin Reeve
Headteacher

Letter from Sue Corbett (Chair of Governors) and Mr Reeve

Dear Parents/Carers

Our first full Governor Meeting of this year was one of reflection and of looking to the future. We discussed what we do and what it means to be a Governor.

We talked about things that were working well, our curriculum and compliance liaison links with staff, our learning walks, pupil voice and Gordon when we celebrate the achievements of our children, our knowledge of our subjects and the school as ratified by the Ebor Skills audit and Effectiveness Survey and our fulfilment of the Governor key roles.

We also talked about the things we feel that could be improved and one of those was making ourselves more visible to our community.

So moving forward here are some of the things you may notice.

- Our photos in the entrance way
- Information about us in newsletters
- Introductions to us at school events

We also have a really useful section on the website where you can find out more about us. <https://tockwith.ebor.academy/governors/>

Also some of our Governors have linked themselves to classes in an effort to make us more accessible. We are currently discussing the things we can do to support the children and staff in our allocated class but one of the key things will be to provide you with the opportunity to give suggestions or things you think the Governors might want to discuss at their next meeting.

The Governors and Senior Leaders have met recently to discuss our Strategic plan for the future.

We talked about the growth of the school and our increasing numbers, which although very exciting for us will mean change will be happening.

With any growth there are many factors to be considered and taken into account. These elements are the things which will eventually shape the future.

One of the key considerations is the financial constraints that are facing the school. A document outlining the current situation in our school will follow from Ebor Academy Trust.

Over the past couple of years we have really noticed the additional costs from inflationary rises. This has affected all areas of school life from building maintenance to well deserved annual support staff wage increases which are not subsidised by the government.

We also receive funding for the number on roll from the previous year which for the past 3 years has been lower than the numbers we have in school.



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As a result of the additional houses being built, the school receives money from the developers for 'educational enhancement'. This is to enable the school to allow for the growth. This fund has not been adjusted to take into account the substantial increases in costs in all aspects of the building work. This is also released in thirds as the houses become occupied. Spending has to be approved by North Yorkshire Council and Ebor Academy Trust.

In 2022/23, we increased our Pupil Admission number from 30 to 40 which has meant we now have to carefully consider the organisation of the classes in the school. We had to increase to ensure children in catchment receive a place at their local school.

We talked about the implementation of the new school class structures, which will be dynamic moving forward, and the regular monitoring that is going on to ensure that all children are accessing their core offer and that we are meeting the needs of all. Ideally, we want to ensure that we can keep to our 2 year planning cycle as much as possible.

Mrs Williamson reported back that the Inspire Unit was working well and shared her monitoring schedule with the strategic group.

We did some modelling around classes and what things might look like next year and we talked about the space in school as our numbers grow. Although we have formulas to work to around numbers of children the new developments will bring and some indications from Tick Tock about our predicted Reception intake, no decisions can be made until next year when our actual numbers are clearer.

To be clear and transparent our time line for the year shows why we cannot make decisions early.

Admissions

Admission opens from 12th October - 15th January

18th February 2024 - no changes can be made after this date

16th April - National Offer Day

1st May 2024 onwards late applications

June to July 2024 - Appeals process

Teaching staff

24th May - Teachers for the following academic year are provisionally confirmed.

We also discussed how to ensure that parents and carers were consulted in the processes in the coming months. We will be exploring this more moving forward and also researching the best ways for this to be facilitated.

However what we can do is reassure you that the discussion process has already started and will continue throughout this year.

There are lots of positives around being part of a thriving and flourishing school, especially one as amazing as Tockwith where the staff are so dedicated to making sure every child, their needs and future are considered.

Yours sincerely

Justin Reeve Sue Corbett
Headteacher Chair of Governors

Financial Management at Tockwith

Dear Parents/Carers

Financial Management

Financial management is a strength at Tockwith Primary Academy. The Leadership Team continues to identify ways of ensuring the front line teaching and learning provision is protected, as much as possible, in the challenging times.

Ebor Academy Trust uses a series of metrics to measure how a school is spending its funding, with individual targets set, and those are monitored and reported monthly to help support good financial management whilst providing assurance of the on-going financial stability in an uncertain financial environment. Tockwith are currently predicting a breakeven in-year position for 23/24 academic year.

Cost Pressures

General inflation has been running at levels of up to 11%, which is much higher than our increases in funding, alongside this well publicised increases in wholesale energy costs have added significant cost pressures to academy budgets.

Academy budgets are under further pressure from under-funded Support Staff Pay awards and part-funded Teacher Pay Awards.

Split Year group Classes

Staff costs are a significant part of an academy's overall cost and therefore they are monitored closely. Difficult decisions around class structures continue to be a requirement for most academies, none more so than those who are funded at the Minimum per-pupil level (MPPFL) like Tockwith.

For the 23/24 academic year, Tockwith Primary Academy has an 8 class structure, including one mixed Reception/Year 1 class.

The funding models are based on average class sizes of 28 pupils per class, therefore to ensure that the funding covers all of the costs of running a class and the school, schools must try and maintain this average class size. This may mean that schools are required to split or combine year groups across classes to remain financially viable.

Academy Funding

State run mainstream academies are funded by the Department for Education, via the local authority funding formula. The North Yorkshire funding formula mirrors the government's National Funding Formula (NFF) and is calculated the same way as any other school.

The amount of funding a school receives is based on a lump sum amount, a basic amount per pupil, the deprivation levels of the school catchment area and the number of pupils entitled to Free School Meals.

Deprivation

Tockwith Primary Academy receives no funding for the area deprivation funding factor. For comparison purposes, one Ebor school in a high deprivation area receives c. £570 per pupil. Based on Tockwith's current funded pupil numbers that would equate to an extra £125k per year.

Minimum Per-Pupil Funding Level (MPPFL)

The NFF determines that all schools nationally are entitled to be funded at a minimum level per-pupil. Where an academy's per pupil funding is less than the MPPFL value, a top-up payment is paid to bring the funding allocation up to the level of the MPPFL.

For the past 3 years, Tockwith Primary Academy has not met the minimum level per-pupil and has therefore attracted the MPPFL top-up funding.

The minimum rates are given below, together with the % increase year on year.

MPPFL Rates:

- 2021/22 £4,180
-
- 2022/23 £4,265 (2.03% increase on 21/22)
-
- 2023/24 £4,405 (3.28% increase on 22/23)
-
- 2024/25 £4,536 (2.97% increase on 23/24) (predicted value)
-

High Needs Funding

Nationally, local authority budgets are under significant pressure to adequately fund SEN provision. The number of SEND pupils has doubled across North Yorkshire in the last 5 years. Schools are required to fund the first £6,000 of funding for each SEND pupil from their own basic funding with additional High Needs funding provided by the Local Authority via an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP).

Yours sincerely

Justin Reeve
Headteacher

Andrew Robinson
Finance Director

Governors—what can we celebrate!

At the end of every governors meeting they are asked about things we can celebrate.

Mrs Hackforth commented



We, as Governors, are regularly given updates as to how we are faring within the Ebor Schools and are thrilled to hear that at the moment, we are "top of the league" in pupil attendance which is a great accolade to all parents/carers who manage to get Tockwith pupils to school. Long may this continue!!

Safer Internet Day

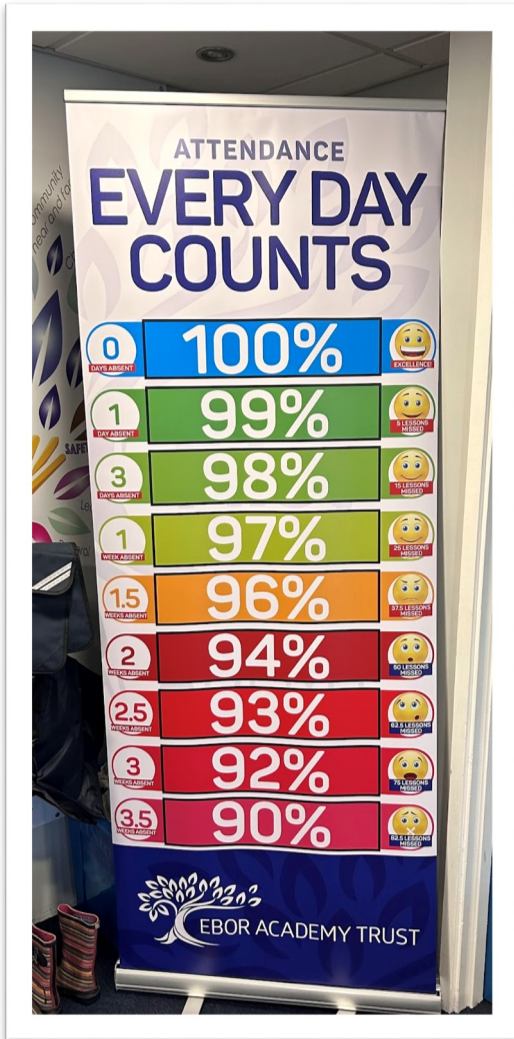
In Reception, we have been learning all about people who help us. PC Dan came to visit us and spoke to us all about the Police and what they do to keep us safe. He showed us how handcuffs were used and Miss Davidson pretended to be arrested. We asked lots of questions and even got to try on some police hats!

We also had a visit from Katherine the vet and Neville who showed us what Vets do to help all sorts of animals. We had the chance to listen to Neville's heartbeat, who was such a good and friendly pretend patient.



Attendance

Thank you also for your help in raising our attendance levels. We have noticed an improvement in children attending school and we are now just above the 97% target. This is fantastic! We have recently had a competition to celebrate the best attended class and the winner was Year 3. They received a £50 amazon voucher to spend on the class and one of the children received a £25 Lidl voucher. I want to emphasize that if your children are too unwell to come into school please do not send them in. The area we have the biggest challenge with is tackling holidays taken during term time. For example, in the final week of this half term, the attendance for the school was 92.6% which is 2% lower than the national average.



Over the last couple of years we are seeing an increase in the number of fines being issued by North Yorkshire Council in relation to pupils being taken out of school to go on holiday in term time. Attendance data is submitted to North Yorkshire at the start of each half term, it is reviewed by the Safeguarding Team and fines issued if applicable. Below is some information from North Yorkshire:

- September 22 - July 23 = 14 fines issued (all paid)
- September 23 - October 23 = 5 fines issued (3 paid, 2 unpaid), 3 pending issue
- In accordance with DfE guidance, all monies are used by the LA to finance the administration of the scheme

Children's mental health week.

Good mental health lays the foundation for children to develop, learn and grow into happy, healthy adults. By addressing children's mental health, we can give them the tools and support they need to thrive in life.

As part of Children's Mental Health Week, each class took part in mindful yoga sessions in the hall with Miss Butterill. Children learnt various breathing techniques to calm the body and ease any anxious minds. Everyone was fully engaged in a meditation focusing on gratitude. We ended with a tranquil 'beach' relaxation to fully release any tension in the body and mind.

Children's Mental Health Week provides an opportunity for schools, parents, and communities to come together and discuss the importance of mental health.

Miss Butterill



China, Lego, Lyfta and Year 2

We had the opportunity of travelling to Shanghai for the morning, albeit by the internet. By clicking on the link we got to join an online lesson all about Lego, joining children from schools around the country. We watched a video about a lady who made some weird and wonderful Lego creations, and even got to look around her work and home space. We were all amazed by what she had made and the imagination she had. The children were keen to ask some questions to the online teacher who was able to tell us how long it takes to build some creations and the biggest one she had ever seen. It generated lots of exciting discussion and inspiration to make some of our own. Thomas shared his Lego Lamborghini, sadly a bit too small to go for a test drive in!

It was interesting to see different people making their own creations and they could make whatever they wanted. ~ Georgia

I liked how you could travel all around the world and see lots of things by just clicking a button. We even got to ask her questions. ~ Toby

We could see that you could make them as big or as small as you wanted and use lots of colours or just one colour. ~ Florence S

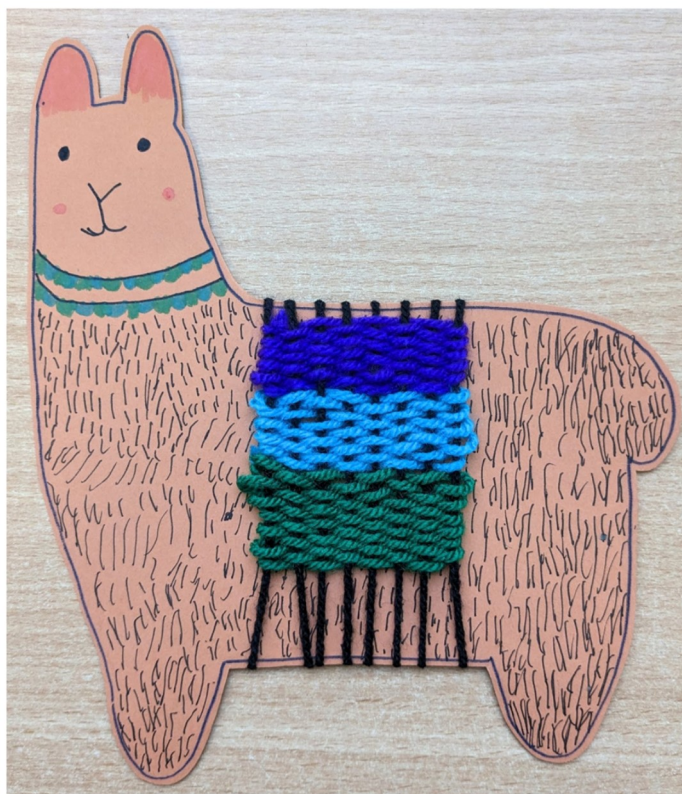
I like how they could make whatever they wanted and then put them all together to make a big flower. It looked amazing. ~ Leo

I enjoyed the video and being able to go inside the factory and inside her own house. We saw a Lego dress. ~ Frankie



Art club

Lots of wonderful art has been created with the Year 6's, during the past 5 weeks. Learning lots of new skills and techniques with our colourful POSCA pen abstract faces, black and white zentangle letters and our lovely llamas with woven woolly blankets. The children loved creating these and giving their llama's names! I must admit these do make me smile, as each llama has its own individual character. Year 5's turn after the half term break ~ Mrs Starr

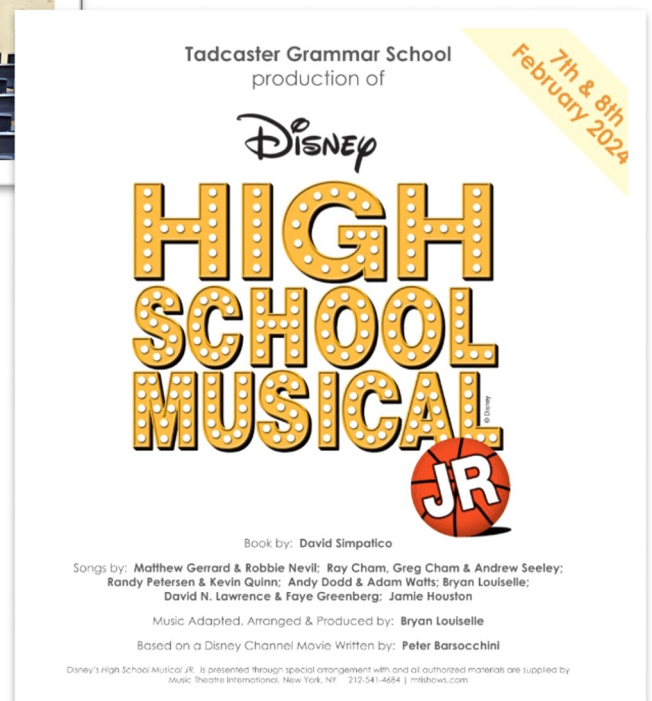


High school Musical

"Tadcaster's version of High School Musical was great; they got all the tiny little details from the film. They picked good choices for the roles and everyone was trying their best for the production. It was also good to see Tadcaster Grammar School and all the people who used to go to this school before. The singers and the dancers were brilliant and I felt like I was watching the actual film. Songs like Bop to the Top and We are all in this Together were especially good. They also had good determination since the person who played Troy had a microphone that kept cutting out but they always kept going and acted like nothing was wrong. It was amazing in all and I'm excited to see another one in the future." Holly Year 5

"High School Musical was thought out and planned to perfection. The characters really put in the effort to be their roles. Each and everyone one of them resembled the musical amazingly. It also might have persuaded some of the pupils to want to go to that school and be in one of their musicals. We saw some of the school's old pupils playing roles. I have watched High School Musicals before but some people in my class have not and they said it painted a clear image of what the actual presentation looks like. My classmates and I loved it and would love to see another musical from Tadcaster Grammar School. Each student works their socks off to achieve their amazing performance." Alannah Year 5

"High School Musical at Tadcaster School was very thought out and came to perfection. You could see that a lot of singing and acting practice had gone into it. The singing was on point and it really made you feel that you're in the moment. They did everything with emotion whether it was sadness or anger, you really felt what the characters were going through. The lighting was perfect on which character was speaking/singing. Overall the performance was very flamboyant with the costumes and structure of the play." Theo and Zach Year 5



Pastoral at Tockwith

We all need support at times and that is what we will continue to offer our children and their families at Tockwith School

The pastoral support at Tockwith continues to grow and develop right across the school because we know that if children feel their best they are in the best place to learn.

Sarah Slack

Pastoral Lead

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Healthy Snacks

Please can I remind you to send in healthy, nut free snacks with your children please?

We are having a couple of bags of crisps and chocolate bars slipping through the net.

I will also speak to the children about prematurely dipping into their packed lunches rather than taking their snacks.

The NHS have some great ideas on their website.

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-snacks/#:~:text=1.,spread%20or%20a%20fruited%20teacake.>