



# Mapledown School Newsletter

Spring Term– March 2023

## Message from the Headteacher

Welcome to our Spring term Newsletter - the end of another busy term! The pupils have been busy taking part in a number of whole school events as well as working hard in lessons. After previous restrictions due to COVID, our doors have been open and we have welcomed parents on a fortnightly basis for coffee mornings and workshops such as transitions and communication. As always, we thank you parents, carers, families and young people for your support and engagement, and hope that everyone manages a safe and restful Spring break.

Staff and students have had a wonderful term in school. We held a number of events, such as our **World Book week** and **Science week**, which our students thoroughly enjoyed.

As always our students have worked hard, both within lessons but also throughout the school grounds, on the main site, @Whitefield and @Cophall.

Our termly topic was **"Spring into Action"**.

Macaw class worked together to create a wonderful display, using control technology (switches and appliances) to dry the paint. Everyone took part!



All our students, across all sites, learned both onsite but also within local community settings.







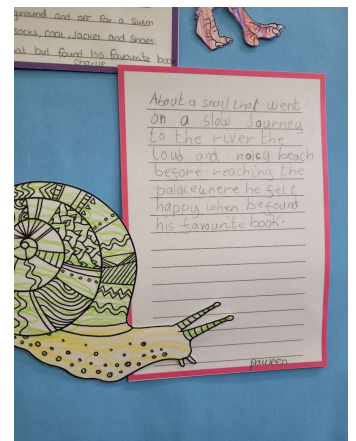
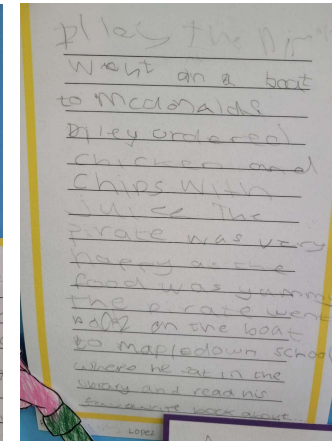
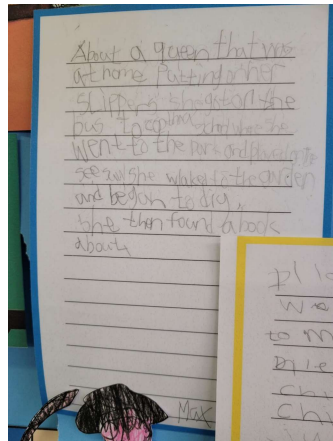
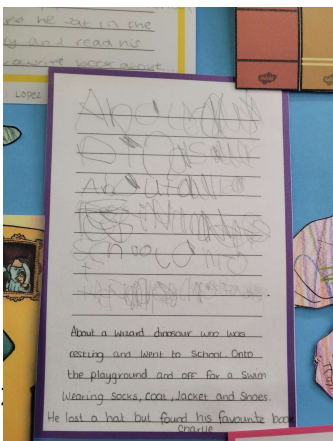
## World Book Week - March 2023

Pupils spent a whole week discovering new books and stories.

Pupils worked together to create door displays reflecting their focus book and took part in a whole school book treasure hunt.



Hummingbird class also wrote their own stories!





We had a special assembly with a parade to celebrate dressing as our favourite characters.



### Science week

The British Science Week's theme for this year was "Connections" and it took place last week.

We held interactive workshops, which were delivered by Science Boffins. Each class took part in simple science activities throughout the week, and this culminated in a whole school assembly when classes shared what they had been working on.



### Family Survey

Thank you to our families who engaged in the **family survey** at the beginning of the term. We had over 50 responses, which is about half of our school population.

It was lovely to see so many wonderful comments about **what the school does well**, for example: "everything", "the school is truly amazing and goes above and beyond for the child and also they really care for the families involved. They are invested in our children wholeheartedly and we are truly grateful", "Good observation and information sharing", "Very helpful, attentive and patient with students", "Celebrates

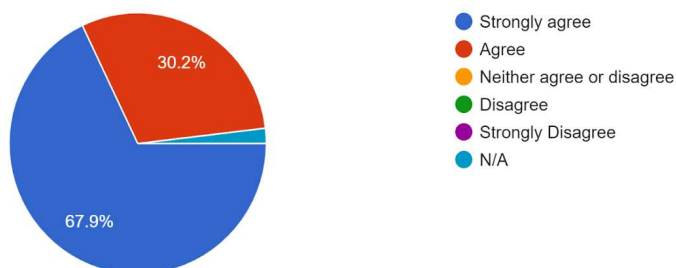
achievement and health care”, “Great communication and information from the class teacher and support staff, all staff are very friendly and approachable”, “Quick replies to my concerns. Keeping me informed at all times”, “Happy environment”, “Everyone's amazing”, “Doing a great job”, “Excellent team”, “My child comes home happy every day”, “Keep up the good work!”.

I asked you **how the school could do better**. Many of you were so kind to say “nothing”, however there were a few comments which we have followed up on, or which we will be addressing next term:

- Meeting with the headteacher - *we have introduced fortnightly coffee mornings and are alternating between workshops, led by Sue Hart and relevant school staff (therapists, nurses) or external speakers (social care), and coffee mornings where parents can have a chat with me over tea, coffee and biscuits and can discuss any number of topics.*
- “More face to face reviews to assess my child’s progress” - *this year, in addition to EHCP reviews, we have reintroduced termly parents’ consultations for which families are invited to attend in person.*
- A few of you would like to know more about the specific topics that have been taught throughout the weeks, and the specific skills and goals being worked on - *the goals are shared with you at parents evening and EHCP reviews, but we will also ensure parents receive a copy of their child’s KPLT (Key Personal Learning Targets). We will also share the termly topics with you.*
- Therapy provisions - *although a few of you would like more individual therapies, we are extremely lucky to now have a wonderful therapy team: **Jeremy Hasson** (Physiotherapist) works with pupils two days each week, with assistance from **Elaine Murphy**. **Anna Knight** and **Beth Bamberger**, Speech and Language Therapists, do a total of 4 days a week at school, and **Molly Singleton** (Occupational Therapist) has been allocated a full day at Mapledown. We are also very lucky to have **Antonio Losilla** and **Natalie Palmer** (Integrated Therapy Assistants) who work under the direction of our therapists and assist with programmes and resources in classes. We also have a wonderful nursing team, with **Lisa Lewington** (Nurse), **Mili Nangla** (Healthcare Assistant) and **Katie Gallagher-Moran**, Specialist nurse for SEND and team lead for Barnet Special School Nursing who has joined us this term.*

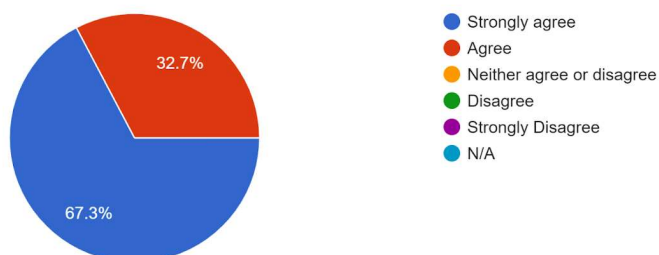
My child is happy at school.

53 responses



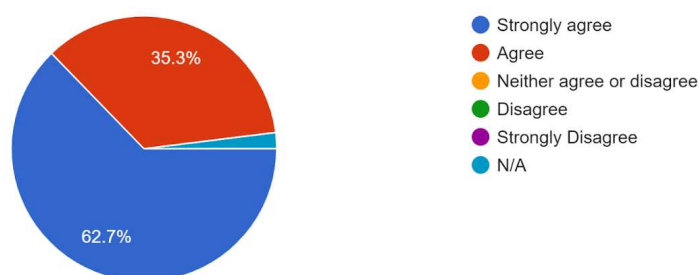
My child is well cared for at school.

52 responses



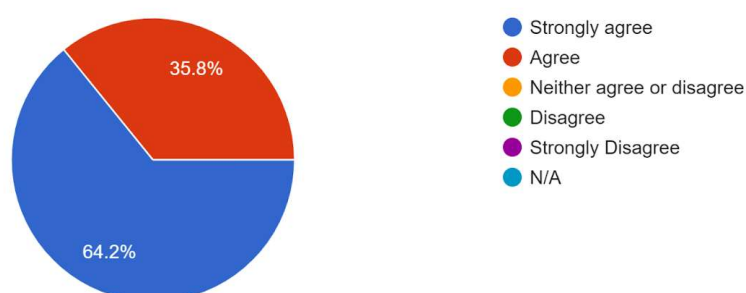
My child's educational needs are well addressed at school.

51 responses



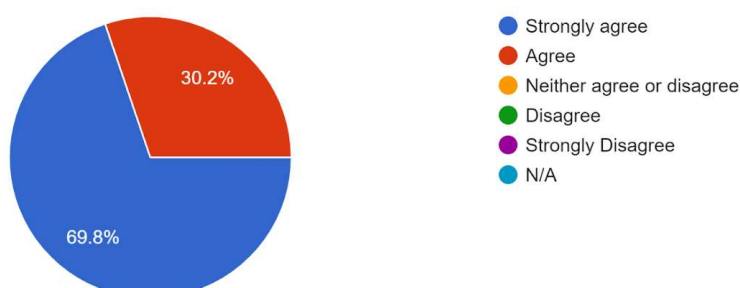
My child is safe at school.

53 responses



The school is welcoming, friendly and communicative.

53 responses



### Resources

With ever shrinking budgets we are continuing to provide pupils with the necessary equipment and healthy snacks. We always appreciate a box of tissues and wipes for each child. Don't forget to send your half termly donations for snacks and cooking ingredients of £10 per half term. If you are unable to contribute, please do send in your child's daily snacks.

### Curriculum update:

Despite the restrictions we endured last year, the school completed the work on developing a brand new curriculum. There is more information on our website, and families are encouraged to discuss at EHCP reviews, parents' consultation evenings and of course at forthcoming coffee mornings. The main focus of our curriculum is to develop independence in all areas of learning, including communication.

We aim to provide a motivating and engaging context in which pupils can achieve and make progress based on their assessed levels and next steps in a personalised way, with the following as a foundation to the delivery of the curriculum:

- communication and interaction, which is fundamental to learning and building relationships
- personal and social development including awareness of self and own emotions and relationships with others.
- independence including life-skills
- engagement and enjoyment

For pupils to access a sequenced, broad and balanced curriculum at a differentiated level meeting statutory requirements, we have developed 4 pathways which enables further personalisation and progression: Pre-Formal, Semi Formal, Formal and Reaching Higher.

Communication and developing literacy skills are key to our pupils' success in all areas of the curriculum and everyday life. Therefore, we are rolling out PODD (Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display, a symbol based communication system), and we have adopted a whole school approach to teaching reading (including phonics where appropriate) and writing.



Our school has chosen Twinkl, an approved phonics teaching programme endorsed by schools and validated by the DfE to teach early reading and spellings to pupils ready to engage in subject specific learning. Teachers have been assessing all pupils to determine which pupils are ready to progress to formal sessions.

### **Our whole school topic for next term: Great British Summer!**

Throughout the summer term, pupils will be reading, in addition to their favourite books, a number of non fiction books (recipes, travel logs, etc), focusing on money in maths, nutrition and health and exercise in science, collages in art, music festivals, families and friends in RSHE, and outdoor PE.

### **Governor recruitment:**

**The Governing Board is in urgent need of parent views to expand our capacity. At present, the Governing Board is under-represented in this area, leading to limited capacity for Governors to make sure the school is led adequately with all views represented. Without your help, this could put us in a less favourable position with external stakeholders, such as Ofsted.**

**We need to recruit two parents who can represent parents' views on the Governing Board. Your invaluable point of view, as a volunteer parent governor, can help to shape our pupils' future. Helping the school be the best that it can be is exciting! As a parent governor, you would be required to attend three full governing board meetings per year. They take place once a term, on a Monday at 7pm. You would also have the opportunity to join one of the committees (Health and safety, Finance or School Improvement), and this may involve meeting with school staff during school hours.**

**You do not need any formal qualifications, but must be confident with IT, using emails and electronic communications. All we ask is that you are an independent thinker, able to bring a parents' view to the table, and that you are interested in getting involved in children's education. In return, you will get full training, and will be part of a friendly team.**

**Think you might be interested? Please contact the school office ([office@mapledown.barnet.sch.uk](mailto:office@mapledown.barnet.sch.uk)) and someone will get back to you! Please provide some information about yourself and why you think you would be suitable for the Parent Governor role. We look forward to hearing from you!**

### **Staffing update:**

We say goodbye to one of our teachers, Nicole Lamparska-Stack, who is moving on to a new career, and we wish her good luck for the future.

Welcome to Gabrielle Balielo, who will be taking over from Nicole as Phoenix class's teacher. Gabrielle has 17 years of experience in education, and she has more recently worked in a special school in a nearby borough.

### **Shopping Online?**

**Help us raise money for the school.** The initiative **Easyfundraising** is steadily raising money for FOM (Friends of Mapledown School - Cricklewood), but it desperately needs the support of many more people in our



community in order to have a significant impact on fundraising. **So how does it work?** You shop directly with the retailer as you would normally, but if you sign up to: [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) for free and use the links on the Easyfundraising site to take you to your chosen retailer, then a percentage of whatever you spend comes directly to your nominated cause (FOM) at no extra cost to yourself.

**Workshops and Coffee Mornings - all taking place at Mapledown main site, open to all parents**

Wednesday 19th April 2023	<b>Toileting and Incontinence</b> - advice from the school nursing team
Wednesday 3rd May 2023	<b>Coffee Morning</b>
Wednesday 17th May 2023	<b>Relaxation and Stress Management for Parents</b>
Wednesday 7th June 2023	<b>Coffee Morning</b>
Wednesday 21st June 2023	<b>Sensory Integration and Processing</b>
Wednesday 5th July 2023	<b>Coffee Morning</b>
Wednesday 19th July 2023	<b>Challenging Behaviour</b>

**Dates for the diary!**

**April 2023**

Easter / Spring Holidays - Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> April – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April

Inset day - School closed to students - Monday 17<sup>th</sup> April

Summer Term Starts - students back to school – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April

**May 2023**

Bank Holiday Monday 1<sup>st</sup> May – School closed

Bank Holiday - His Majesty the King's Coronation - Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May - School closed

May Half term - Monday 29<sup>th</sup> May – 2<sup>nd</sup> June - School closed to students

**June 2023**

Students back to school - Monday 5<sup>th</sup> June

Sports week – week beginning 26<sup>th</sup> June, more info to follow!

Parents' consultation evening - Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> June

**July 2023**

International Enterprise summer fete– 5<sup>th</sup> July

Leavers' Graduation Ceremony – To be confirmed

Star of the Term Assembly – Friday 14<sup>th</sup> July

End of Term - whole school Celebration/Assembly Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July

Last day of Term - Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July

Inset day - School closed to students - Friday 21<sup>st</sup> July

Summer break starts - Monday 24<sup>th</sup> July - School closed to students

**Have a lovely and restful spring break, and see you all on Tuesday 18th April, as Monday 17th April is a Staff training day.**