

Mapledown School Newsletter

Spring Term– March 2024



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. We have welcomed parents on a fortnightly basis for coffee mornings and workshops such as RSHE (puberty and growing up) transitions and MOVE. 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 weeks**, 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 **"The Environment"**.

Dance competition

In February we were invited to take part in a Dance workshop held by Step Change Studios in partnership with Dance Barnet. The workshop was the first heat of the Dance Barnet initiative, aiming to promote inclusive dance and support more disabled people in the borough to be active. There were auditions at the end of the first day, and Tino got through to the next round, enabling him to benefit from 8 hours of 1:1 dance lessons. He will also be performing at a grand final event in May! Everyone tried their hardest and was fantastic!



World Book Week

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 whole school reading activities. Pupils were able to vote for their favourite door, which was "Winnie the Pooh" from Macaw class!





Science Week

This year's theme was 'Time' and pupils were able to explore this concept across meaningful activities, from delving into seasons in our sensory studio to experiencing building, cooking and much more throughout the times. We even cooked marshmallows on a bonfire!



Red Nose Day

Thank you all for taking part in our Red Nose Day fundraiser. We raised £99.70! Pupils had fun hunting for red noses and took part in a school disco on 22nd March.

Special Events!

Throughout the term we have been lucky to welcome a number of organisations who provided some wonderful workshops and performances for our pupils. We welcomed "Snow White" the pantomime in January, saw Flamingo Chicks and the Children's ballet in February, had a visit from "Animal Therapy Wild science" in March and of course we are holding our own dance festival this week!

We also celebrated **International Women's Day** on 8th March, when female staff and pupils received a daffodil.



Stars of the term

We welcomed parents and Governors on 22nd March to celebrate our Stars of the term. The pupils who received their special certificates were: Leo, Constantin, Maryam, David, Ahmed, Ali, Nikkel, Carlton, Reuben, Hazel, Zahra, Savannah, Brandon, Grady and Max. Well done everyone!

Work Related Learning, Careers and work experience

Preparing for life after Mapledown, and Careers Education are a fundamental aspect of our curriculum. Work related learning is an integral part of the whole school curriculum and more specifically of the PSHE curriculum that is taught to all students as they move through the school. Work related learning can therefore take place via classroom-based learning, workplace visits, work placements, development of skills for independence and visits to the school by local employers and / or providers. Students have the opportunity to develop their enterprise skills by undertaking specific projects. For some students this will be a chance to develop an awareness of the workplace while for others it will be an opportunity to improve skills that may help them to enter the job market at some point in their lives. Our students have opportunities to participate in a wide range of work placements which may include visits to off-site venues and guided tours of establishments. Some students however will have more formal work placements through local employers, where appropriate. Students can also access work opportunities in school, via work experience in various areas (i.e. school kitchen, admin office, classrooms, caretaking).



This term our pupils have been taking part in a variety of activities, from assisting with lunches to completing administrative tasks. Some pupils have been undertaking work experience at the local Pavilion, led by Related Argent and our staff, and at a local Pizzeria.



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, with an average of 98% satisfaction (roughly 75% “strongly agree” and 23% “agree”), with the main dissatisfaction being around therapies.

It was lovely to see so many wonderful comments about **what the school does well**, for example: “everything”, “This school meets every goal. It’s a great place for children to progress and do well. My son loves coming to school and they cater for him really well. It has a family type environment so you feel like everyone knows your child and can go to anyone about any concerns”; “Communication between school and home, flag issues regarding my child and answer and respond. Love how the school nurses are proactive!!! Big clap for them”; “Encourages development, celebrates achievement and high standard of care”; “Excellent team”; and so much more!

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 already followed up on, or which we will be addressing next term, such as:

“More therapies sessions and therapists”- *as a maintained school we are not in control of therapies, which are commissioned by Barnet and delivered by the NHS. We are however having ongoing meetings about the need to be allocated more. We have also purchased “top ups” where possible, and will continue to do so.*

“Outings seem to have decreased” – *we will be working with all class teams to look at how we can ensure more regular access to our local community.*

“Buildings improvement” – *as our new built is dependent on the Brent Cross Town regeneration, we try and keep our current facilities as well maintained as possible, and are working with the local authority and Related Argent (Brent Cross West) towards alternatives whilst we await the rebuilding of Mapledown.*



We are still recruiting trustees and volunteers to support our worthwhile association. If you would like more information, please contact us via fom@mapledown.barnet.sch.uk or leave a message for our Acting Chairperson Pete Korniczky with our admin staff - 020 8455 4111.

Parent Governors

We need enthusiastic and committed parents from a variety of backgrounds. You do not need leadership or education experience; just a desire to give back to the school and its community and a proactive approach to becoming involved as a member of a team. If you are interested in finding out more, or to nominate yourself, please contact Sue O’Halloran, Chair of Governors at suemohalloran@gmail.com or our Vice Chair Pete Korniczky (who is also a Parent Governor) at peterkorniczky@btinternet.com or me at head@mapledown.barnet.sch.uk for a chat.

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 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.

Dates for your diary

Thursday 28th March	End of Spring term 2024
Friday 29 th March – 12 th April	Spring / Easter Break
Monday 15 th April	Students back to school
Monday 6 th May	May Bank Holiday – School closed
Monday 27 th May – 31 st May	Half term - School closed to students
Monday 3 rd June	Inset day - School closed to students
Tuesday 4 th June	Students back to school
Wednesday 12 th June	Memorial Day (more info to follow)
Wednesday 26 th June	Parents' consultations
Wednesday 10 th July	Enterprise Fair
Monday 22 nd July	Graduation (two sessions, morning and afternoon)
Tuesday 23 rd July	End of Summer Term
Wednesday 24 th July	Inset day - School closed to students
Thursday 25 th July	Summer Break 2024 starts - School closed to students
Monday 2 nd and Tuesday 3 rd September 2024	Inset days - School closed to students
Wednesday 4 th September	Students back to school

Have a lovely and restful Spring break, and see you all on Monday 15thApril

Wishing all families celebrating a blessed Ramadan filled with joy and blessings.

Warmest wishes for a joyful, peaceful and blessed Easter to those celebrating.

