



THE COURT

The Avanti Court Newsletter

Message from the Head Teacher

Dear Parents/Carers,

Ambassadors have been chosen and voted in by their class. These group of students will work closely with senior leaders to find ways in which they can support and impact on their school. Well done to everyone who applied. We will have other opportunities for children to lead including playground buddies, reading heroes...watch this space!

Please would you complete the Ofsted parent survey? Obviously if there are any concerns please find a way to communicate this to us so we know how to improve what we do. The problem with the survey is that it is just a tick box survey with no opportunity for detailed comment – so alongside this is our own paper survey which was handed out this week. Please return by parents evening which is next Thursday.

Book week was splendid and it was wonderful to invite our very own artist/author in resident. Emma’s work is dreamlike and influenced by Eastern art traditions. And how great to see our little (and big) animals coming in two by two into school.

With kind wishes James Biddulph, Head Teacher

Your Voice Counts

**EVEN IF YOU DID THE SURVEY LAST YEAR
PLEASE DO IT AGAIN FOR 2013-14**

[http://parentview.
ofsted.gov.uk](http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk)

MINI BUS: is starting on 18th November run by FOAC. 14 children are using this bus as a trial and FOAC will decide whether this is viable to continue in Spring with more children. If you are interested please contact FOAC who will collect names on a data basis.

Home Learning @ Avanti Court

Research questions benefit of homework

Homework can cause family friction, particularly when middle class parents pressure their children to succeed, according to a report published today by London University’s Institute of Education. And the benefits of homework are often negligible, concludes Susan Hallam in her review of 75 years’ worth of studies into homework. The issue has been causing controversy for generations in the US, Europe, Australia, the Far and Middle East, as well as the UK. Dr Hallam urges schools to focus on the purpose and quality of homework, not the amount, and makes a case for homework being done in out-of-hours school clubs rather than at home. At home, rows about homework can damage the parent-child relationship and outweigh any educational advantage, she says.

“Homework can also create anxiety, boredom, fatigue and emotional exhaustion in children, who resent the encroachment on their free time, even though they think homework helps them do well at school,” believes Dr Hallam.

Her book, *Homework: the Evidence*, finds that family rows can lead to homework being deliberately not completed. **“Parental help may also develop dependency or helplessness in the child.”**

She adds: **“Parents have the most positive influence when they offer moral support, make appropriate resources available and discuss general issues. They should only actually help with homework when their children specifically ask them to.”**

Dr Hallam feels the evidence points to the effectiveness of homework clubs, which give children the benefits without the rows at home: **“Children feel [clubs] make homework more enjoyable and give them a better chance of passing exams.”**

“They provide a suitable learning environment with appropriate resources and adult help if necessary, and they take the pressure off the parents. They may assist in raising standards for those who need extra support or who find it difficult to do homework at home. As such they help to bridge the gap between the haves and the have nots,” she says.

Homework can boost achievement, but only when set in moderate amounts, argues Dr Hallam. She says the government’s guidance of one hour a week for five to seven-year-olds, rising to two and a half hours a day for GCSE students, is untested. **Dr Hallam asserts that the overall contribution that homework makes to school achievement is small compared with prior knowledge, the time spent on task, good attendance at school, motivation and self-confidence.**

• *Homework: The Evidence* by Susan Hallam is available from the Institute of Education, +44 (0)20 7612 6050, ioe@johnsmith.co.uk

Does more homework help? Look to the research. Do you read with your child for 10 minutes every day? Do they read with you everyday? Do you talk with your child about learning? Visit the library? The park? Because worksheet type homework doesn’t seem to raise standards...just fills time and keeps children quiet?

2013: Autumn 2 08-11-13
Book week ignites imaginations of all

Safeguarding

Darren Southam

A very warm welcome to Darren our new Site Manager. Seeing him dressed as an elephant shows that already he is committed to being part of our school community!

If you notice anything about the site please speak to him in the morning or contact the office who will log this in his book.

COOL MILK

<https://www.coolmilk.com>

We will be offering milk to all children under the age of 5. All children 5 and above will be able to purchase milk daily and will drink at play time. All children are offered milk at lunchtime.

E-safety is so important. Reflect on these questions...

Where do your children use the Internet? Bedrooms? Living rooms?

What do they access? Mobile phones? Laptops?

Do you know what they use? What they do? Are you really sure if there are restrictions on the technology?

Have you spoken with your child about safety on the Internet?

www.nspcc.org

<http://www.kidsmart.org.uk>

Check out photos of Book week on our facebook in the next few days!

*The Divine has given us many ways to worship – Hindu, Christian, Muslim, Sikh, Agnostic, Shamanist...our school aims to help build **REAL** community across all traditions and keep our Hindu faith alive*

Mrs Bana led an assembly on Bullying with all the children. This is part of our work on Anti-Bullying...and on going

Fun Clubs..Collecting children from clubs...as we have a small space to wait, please arrive to collect your child 10mins (max) before. Cleaners are in and out during this time and as children are on site we want to keep them safe.

Key Dates:

14th November: Parent consultations 1.30-5.30
15th November: Children in Need day – bring a teddy and £1
15th November: Maths Calculation Workshop
17th December; Winter Festival of Light and Nativity

Check term dates on our website

www.avanti.org.uk/avanticourt

Ethos Corner: Deities
Based on the teachings of Sri Chaitanya, who is God (Krishna) and who came on earth some 500 years ago to spread the message to find your loving relationship with the Divine, Krishna, our school has different deities. A deity is not a statue but we believe that the all-powerful Divine is a form of the Lord (one reason why we respect all living things). We understand that as we look at deities, the Divine spirit looks back at us. This is called taking Dharshan.

Gaura Nitai (Chaitanya and Nitanyanda) are in the Head Teacher's office (guiding all that he does! – or doesn't do!!) (don't tell him though). In Collective Worship room we have Jagannath deities. We sing the Maha Mantra which is an audible way to remember and connect with the Divine. We sing and some children close their eyes and pray, thinking of their understanding God. Sometime children offer flowers or leaves that they have collected.

The Head teacher leads stories, to illustrate our values or a particular festival. On Monday he told the story of Govardhan Puja, with children acting out the story (Lord Indra created a storm with rain (coming from water pistols). We then said a prayer and left singing Hare Krishna Mantra.

FOAC Raise the Roof!

Well the children of Avanti Court had a blast at the end of term Diwali Disco! Thank you to all those that helped out at the event...Now for the funds raised....i'm very pleased to let you know that we have raised a grand total of £400.24! Thank you to all that bought tickets and for the generous donations made! These funds will be added to those raised last year and will be used for the benefit of our children.

Quotes of the week: (2 for your thoughts!) "If I were asked to define the Hindu creed, I should simply say: Search after truth through non-violent means. A man may not believe in God and still call himself a Hindu. Hinduism is a relentless pursuit after truth... Hinduism is the religion of truth. Truth is God. Denial of God we have known. Denial of truth we have not known." M Ghandi

"Should even one's enemy arrive at the doorstep, he should be attended upon with respect. A tree does not withdraw its cooling shade even from the one who has come to cut it."

– Mahabharata 12.146.5