Federation Newsletter

February 2024

Attendance and Punctuality

It is vital that children come to school on time every day. At **Pepper Hill** registration starts at **8.30am** and **at Stanton School** it begins at **8.45am**. Doors open 10 minutes before registration. More details about the school day can be found on Stanton School or Pepper Hill School websites.

Did you know *arriving 5 minutes late every day is equal to 3 days of learning missed each year.*

Every month we award '*Perfect Attendance*' certificates to children who achieve 100% attendance throughout the month. In January we presented 75 certificates at Pepper Hill and 187 at Stanton. We hope we can give out even more in February.

School Uniform

It is important that children wear the correct school uniform when they come to school. Please ensure your child is wearing a school jumper in blue and black shoes. For more details about school uniform requirements please visit Pepper Hill School or Stanton School websites. Please speak to the school office who have a stock of second hand uniform available.

Artsmark Gold

We are proud to inform you that Pepper Hill and Stanton School have again, been awarded the Artsmark Gold Award by the Arts Council England. This is given in recognition of the opportunities for children to participate in all areas of the arts including art, music and drama.

Young Voices

Year 5 and 6 children visited the O2 Arena in London to participate in the Young Voices Concert 2024. They worked hard learning all the songs and actions. It was a fabulous atmosphere and a wonderful multi-sensory experience. The children all had an amazing time singing their hearts out with the Young Voices choir.
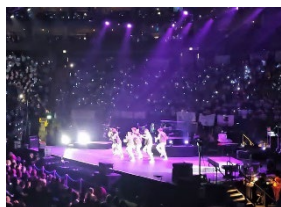
Parent's Evening

Our next parent's evening, for children in Reception to Year 6, will take place remotely via School Cloud on **Tuesday 13 February 3.30pm to 7pm.**
At these meetings parents will be able to discuss their child's progress in English and maths with their class teacher.

Booking details will be sent out via ParentMail.

Of course, should you have any worries or concerns in the meantime please speak to your child's class teacher.

Mental Health and Safer Internet Week

This week the children will be taking part in **Children's Mental Health Week** which, this year, has the theme '*My Voice Matters*'. The week will focus on empowering the children by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. Children who feel that their voices are heard and can make a difference have a greater sense of community and self-esteem.

The **Safer Internet Day** theme is *"Together for a better internet."* The children will design posters and learn how to keep themselves safe online.   With increasing numbers of children accessing a range of online platforms, and emerging concerns on how they interact with one another, this is an important life skill. We have also attached a useful guide for parents to this Newsletter.
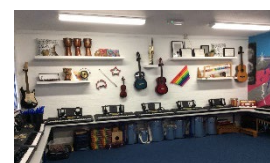
Book Fair

Thank you to everyone who purchased a book at Stanton's recent Book Fair. Over £1000 of books were sold in total, which means we raised over £500 to spend on new books for our library.
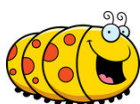
Refurbished Music Room

We are proud of our newly refurbished music room which looks amazing! The children are really enjoying using the space for their music lessons.

Half Term

We break up for half term on **Friday 16th February** and return to school on **Monday 26th February**.

What Parents & Carers Need to Know about
TODDLERS & SCREEN TIME

The toddler years are full of excitement, exploration and energy. It's a critical time in children's development, when brain connections are rapidly forming. Youngsters often begin to discover devices around this age, as they learn to communicate with friends, play games and watch videos (Ofcom recently found, for example, that one in five 3–4-year-olds in the UK uses social media). These activities can make a child happy and relaxed but have a damaging impact if overused. Setting screen time limits for toddlers can be a challenge, so we've pulled together some suggestions for making sure your little one is interacting with the online world in a safe, healthy way.

ONLINE SAFETY CHECKLIST

✅ PARENTAL CONTROLS
Children need to be shielded from content that's not age appropriate. You can do this by adjusting parental controls and safe search settings on the devices, apps and games they use.

✅ ONGOING SUPERVISION
Try to stay engaged and present in what your child is doing digitally. Make time to talk about what they enjoy and how they can stay safe online.

✅ OFFERING HELP
Teach your toddler to ask for help – and that they should always tell a trusted adult if they're unsure about anything to do with a device, or they see or hear something that makes them scared or upset.

✅ COMMUNICATION IS KEY
Emphasise that your child should check with you before they do anything online for the first time – such as watching a new show, playing a new game or exploring a new app.

✅ FACE TO FACE IS ACE
Support toddlers' development of language and other skills by prioritising games or apps that encourage face-to-face interaction – like learning to read or count with an adult.

Advice for Parents & Carers

MODEL IT
Your toddler is watching and learning from you whenever you pick up your phone. Even babies are aware of screens and the attention their parents give to them. By showing you know when to put your phone down and focus on something else, you're modelling an important behaviour for them.

CONTROL IT
Use tech to control tech. Most devices and individual apps have settings that allow you to restrict screen time. Decide on the right length of time and use the settings or a timer to block access. This is especially useful for very young children, who simply see it as the device 'turning off'.

ANNOUNCE IT
When a toddler's screen shuts off suddenly, it can lead to frustration and tears. Let your little one mentally prepare for the end of screen time by announcing they have five minutes left, two minutes left and so on. You could also set an egg-timer, alarm or buzzer to go off just before time's up.

DELAY IT
Try to avoid letting children start their day with screen time. Once they're online, it can be hard to get them back offline – and can set a negative tone for the rest of the day. Routine and structure are important for toddlers, so encourage them to enjoy some other activities before the screens go on.

TRADE IT
You could try offering rewards and alternatives in exchange for screen time – for example, having a device-free day to get a playdate with a friend at the weekend, or skipping screen time one evening in return for a trip to the ice cream parlour tomorrow.

EARN IT
Screen time can definitely be used as a reward. You could opt for the classic "no screen time until you've tidied up your toys" or you could get creative and award screen time in relation to successful tasks: eating all of their vegetables earns 10 minutes on their device, for example.

REMOVE IT
Keep family mealtimes, social gatherings, children's bedrooms and other important occasions and places screen free. Remember to turn off TVs that you aren't watching, because even background noise can distract from you spending quality face-to-face time with your young ones.

SWAP IT
Put together a bag of things that your children love playing with – and get them to help choose what goes in there (items like stickers, pens, small toys, Lego or teddy bears are ideal). Then encourage them to pick something to play with from "the special bag of fun" instead of staring at a screen.

Meet Our Expert
Cayley Jorgensen is the director of FaceUp South Africa: a reporting system currently being used to combat bullying in schools and businesses around the world. FaceUp helps to give a voice to bystanders by encouraging them to speak up against unacceptable behaviour.

National Online Safety®
NOS
#WakeUpWednesday

🌐 www.nationalonlinesafety.com   🐦 @natonlinesafety   f /NationalOnlineSafety   📷 @nationalonlinesafety