



2016-2017

Number 20

## An Lester Trumach - The Packet Ship

27 February 2017

Dear Parents

*I am almost tempted to give this newsletter the title Finance Edition as so much of what I need to say concerns money. The section on School Funding overleaf uses much of the wording of a 'model letter' prepared by the NAHT to help schools to inform parents of the significant concerns we have with regard to the recently reported pressures on school's budgets. Funding has become so critical for so many schools around the country that it means whilst the campaign for assessment reforms and the challenge against the forced academisation of schools continue, with the Budget statement due next week, this is a key focus.*



**TESCO** Bags of Help

We've yet to hear from the TESCO Bags of Help organisers, but are hopeful that Marlborough's outdoor refurbishment project was successful in our aim to secure the **1<sup>st</sup> place £5000** award. Whatever the final outcome, we are very grateful first to have been included in the February round and then for all the support we have been given. Keep fingers crossed!

The school parliament has an Outdoors Working Party (ODWP), which includes pupil representatives. They have been meeting with staff and governors to work out the way forward in re-opening our school grounds as soon and as well as we can. The whole project is an enormous one and is not easy to keep the balance of highly creative ideas within practical and realistic objectives.



Ever since the storm damage that struck soon after our Big Digs, it seems as if this preparatory work has been going on forever, however, as we aim to do the work properly and ensure that it is both lasting and flexible the planning stage has been fairly drawn out. The 'ODWP' collected ideas from all the children throughout last year and have followed this up with their own research and discussions with professionals. We are now pulling final thoughts together and preparing drawings for work to begin. Being realistic, we do have to break the whole project into a series of tasks and to prioritise each element. The children working on the panel have been very understanding about this, and patient with what must seem a very long process but I'm hoping the end is in sight and that we'll soon see some clear evidence of all the energy the school family has been putting into this area for so long. Initial steps will see the area outside the infant classrooms landscaped and sensitively surfaced so that it is an attractive, accessible and exciting play and learning space. We've also been able to deck y4's small courtyard making it accessible for all children and, when paint and structural work is completed, adding to the packet ship theme. Improvements with other areas around the school will continue, and to help make our money go further we will welcome help from parents - please look out for further calls for help and be ready to step aboard with any events we arrange. Thank you to those parents who are already helping very generously with time to keep the allotment and school gardens on course.

Thank you to everyone who contributed cakes for the y3 Cake Bake last week. This raised £117.91. Once we receive tenders back from companies able to carry out the specialist outdoors work, we'll have a clearer picture of how far our funds will reach and the ODWP should be able to publish their long-term plan. This should help in targeting the moneys that you have raised and in tying further Cake Bakes to distinct future projects.

<http://marlborough.eschools.co.uk>



## Community Defibrillator Appeal... Success!

Thanks to donations received from the Falmouth Harmony Choir and the Fire Stations Firework charity fund (£400 and £500 respectively), we are now in a position to go ahead with ordering and installing a defibrillator for the school and local community. I would like to thank

Michelle Wills-Mack, Lisa Walker and Melissa Pentecost in particular for their vision and energy in rising to this challenge. Thank you too, to everyone who has supported them.



## Headteacher's Coffee Morning - Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2017 - 08:45

in the staffroom (or school hall if necessary). We've received three replies from people wanting to attend the coffee morning and one from someone who would like to but is unavailable. Please let us know if you'd like to join us. As mentioned this is an informal gathering, an opportunity to ask a few general questions and also for me to hear your views. We're particularly interested in your ideas for making the parents' Marlborough Mariners group an effective body for helping parents to be involved in the school.

If you have under-fives, feel free to bring them along – we've a few toys to help entertain them, but there will not be a crèche, so parents will need to be responsible for their own little ones.

Last Week				Total		
1 <sup>st</sup>	Pelham	34	7	1 <sup>st</sup>	Fox	38
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Swiftsure	31	5	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Swiftsure	34
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Fox	28	4	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Freeling	28
4 <sup>th</sup>	Freeling	26	3	4 <sup>th</sup>	Pelham	27
5 <sup>th</sup>	Chichester	21	2	5 <sup>th</sup>	Chichester	18
6 <sup>th</sup>	Walsingham	17	1	6 <sup>th</sup>	Walsingham	14

## St Patrick's Quiz Night – Friday 17<sup>th</sup> March 19:00 (quiz to start 19:30)

Come and join us in a fun social gathering in the school hall on St Patrick's Day. There'll be some 'Irish' style entertainment and refreshments and a general knowledge quiz. All you need to do is to put a team together – up to 8 people with a £10 entry to cover prizes, etc. Let the office know if you're coming ... the more the merrier!



## School Funding

You may have seen a number of stories in the press recently around school funding and television and radio programmes this morning made the reports of what many now recognise to be a crisis leading stories. The headlines are worrying and it is important that as parents you are aware that Marlborough is not exempt from the problems. Like many schools across the country our budget has been under pressure for some time and with tough decisions before us, it is very difficult to see how we can maintain some of our core services.

Our school is not alone. The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT) has shown that more than half of school leaders feel that their budget would be untenable by 2018/19. The National Audit Office estimate a £3 billion real terms cut across all phases and in all schools. This doesn't just affect us. Analysis of the Department for Education's own data projects that schools in our local authority will lose over £2.6 million in total. For Marlborough this amounts to a loss of £12,182 per year, which means £56 for each child.

The cut in our funding is in fact less than that many other schools face, but the background to the recent headlines is complicated. The difficulties have been caused by a proposed new funding formula for schools, which initially looked like it should address what has meant an unfair shortfall for Marlborough over many years, but which have also been exacerbated by significantly increasing costs that more than cancel out any of the benefits we had hoped to see.

The governors and leadership team will work hard to ensure that any cuts have the least impact on teaching possible. However, rising costs and a frozen budget mean that this will not be straightforward and we cannot guarantee that there will not be an impact on teaching. Please be assured that we will continue to take the utmost care with budgets, to ensure that all the money we do have is spent effectively on your children. We also promise to let you know you in plenty of time if our budget means we'll have to take a significant decision on staffing or activities.

We are also letting the local authority and government know just how serious the funding crisis has become.

*Rob Davies*

<http://marlborough.eschools.co.uk>

