



HEALTHY SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER July 2011

The summer holidays are just around the corner and, as the school year comes to an end, it seems a good time to highlight some of the recent activities and initiatives that children have undertaken as part of Milverton's commitment to being a "Healthy School."

Walk to School Week

Back in May, Walk to School Week focused on travelling to and from school in environmentally sustainable ways. Families rose to the challenge by walking, riding bikes and scooters, and by "parking and striding" each morning. To encourage independence amongst our youngest children, the school grounds became "Parent Free" on several mornings. Children found their way from the school gate to their classrooms on their own. It was a great success!



Building on that experience, all children took part in a workshop led by Jean from Roadwise Education. The children learnt where and how to cross the road safely. They talked about what clothes we should wear when travelling out in the dark and how we should use both our eyes and ears to help us spot traffic. Evaluations of these workshops show that children know that learning about safety on the roads is important and as a result of the workshops they feel safer when crossing the road.



Community Litter Pick

An enthusiastic group of children practically swept the neighbourhood clean one afternoon during Milverton's annual Community Litter Pick. Teams of children and parent-helpers scoured the nooks and crannies around the school site, the playing field and the nearby park, Stamford Gardens. They collected a surprising amount of litter, carefully sorted into recyclable and non-recyclable piles. Employees from the Council gratefully received the rubbish and shared some interesting facts about recycling in Warwick District. Thank you litter pickers!



Healthy School Questionnaire

Recently children have been asked to fill out questionnaires that aim to solicit their opinions about "me, my health, my feelings, and my school." The results of the survey will give us insight into students' knowledge and attitudes, and inform how we address some of these issues in the future.

Creative Gardeners

The Healthy Schools Working Party ran a competition to encourage growing your own and reusing resources at this year's Summer Fair. The Creative Gardener competition challenged school families to grow plants in the most unusual container they could find. Among the clever and humorous entries were a toothpaste tube and a potty! Well done to all the winning entries, pictured right: Leila, Amelie, Max, Harry, Matilda and Adam.



Please, No Sweets as Birthday Treats

One of our aims as a Healthy School is to teach children about the importance of healthy eating habits so that they will be able to make informed decisions about their diet for themselves as they grow up. To support this goal, students at Milverton learn about the nutritional value of foods and discover what makes up a wholesome diet. They also have opportunities to grow vegetables, taste a variety of foods, discuss dental hygiene, and celebrate and be thankful for the food we eat.

Giving out sweets to celebrate birthdays contradicts what we are teaching about healthy eating and compromises children's health in several key ways:

- Sugary snacks in between meals are one of the main causes of tooth decay.
- High sugar foods in between meals cause blood sugar levels to rise sharply and have been linked to sugar cravings, hyperactivity and decreased learning performance.

Besides the health concerns, many parents are unhappy about sweets being given out at school for other reasons:

- It causes problems when siblings have not been given sweets at the same time.
- Parents would like to decide for themselves when their child is allowed to have sweets.
- Children feel pressured to bring in treats for their birthday because other classmates are doing it. There is a culture of expectation developing that all children should bring sweets into the classroom on their birthday.

For the above reasons, we ask you, as members of our Healthy School, to support our learning goals. **Please do not send sweets or cakes into the classroom to mark birthdays or other occasions.** Please keep these for celebrations/parties out of school. Be assured that teachers will continue to celebrate children's birthdays in other ways.

Groundforce Milverton Takes Off

Many thanks to all the sponsors of the recent Milverton Yomp! Children completed laps around the playing field, raising money (which is still being counted) for the school's next big project: Groundforce Milverton.

Focused on developing an informed and achievable plan for maximizing the use of the school's outdoor areas, this exciting project was launched with a parent and community consultation meeting. Out of this has come a vision for the work:

As a school we want our school grounds to be:

- enjoyed by all members of the school community
- interesting and inspiring
- accessible all through the year
- used creatively within the curriculum
- a resource for extra-curricular activities
- used to help children learn about sustainability
- manageable and sustainable

A comprehensive survey of the grounds has been completed and ideas for transforming the space are being considered. Work will be ongoing and progress in stages. Look for more news and opportunities to get involved in discussing plans and to assist in this effort when the new school year commences in the autumn.

Help the Planet, Help Milverton: Recycle!



The school now has a textile recycling bank. By depositing your unwanted items in it you will help raise funds for the school, as Milverton will be paid 20p per kilo collected.

Any of the following items can be deposited:

- Adult and children's clothing
- Shoes and trainers
- Handbags and belts
- Sheets, curtains and towels

All items must be clean and dry, the clothing wearable and shoes paired.

Place items in small plastic bags with the handles tied before depositing them into the bank (large bin bags can block the shoot and prevent other donations). The bank is situated in our recycling area just inside the gate on Greatheed Road and is accessible at the beginning and end of the school day. Please note children must be supervised when depositing items in the bin.

The used clothing is exported, providing a much needed resource for under-developed countries. Other items are recycled into household products e.g. car insulation, furniture padding, and paper. If you would like more information you can visit the website www.uktextilerecycling.co.uk

It's 5 to 9 – Be on Time!

Getting to school on time is important; it helps children to be ready to learn as soon as the school day commences. Please make every effort to ensure that your children are on the school grounds by 8:50 in order to make their way to their classrooms by 8:55. Help us meet our goal of decreasing the number of children arriving late in 2011-2012.

Helping with Healthy Schools

The Healthy Schools Working Party meets periodically to identify ways to foster the physical, emotional, and social health and wellbeing of Milverton students. We consider a large range of issues and projects such as encouraging environmental sustainability, improving the school grounds, promoting healthy eating and physical fitness, and developing meaningful connections to the community. We welcome new members! If you are interested in participating next year, please contact Ben Wilde.