

Mr Bates' Blog May 2018

A lot has happened since the references to snow in my last Blog - in fact, it's sun hats and cream at the ready as we seem to lurch from one record breaking weather event to the next!

New staff

It has been a particularly busy few weeks for Mrs Davis and me as we have been on the trail of appointing new staff for September. We started the process looking for one person to replace Mr Lewis, but ended up appointing 2.6 people as, typically for here, things changed around us in a short space of time with Mrs Jones also finishing (Higher Level Teaching Assistant) and Miss Miles expecting her first baby (very exciting for staff and pupils alike!! Congratulations to Ms Miles and her partner!). We observed a total of 16 prospective candidates and ventured as far as Berkshire and Bristol in our quest for the best! (we are only as good as the staff working with the children)

Replacing Mrs Lewis will be Chloe Furnival and covering the maternity will be Connor Williams. We also took on Emma Jones from Victoria Village Primary (in Abersychan - the school is closing down) on a 0.6 basis to cover teaching time that we have lost elsewhere. All three were highly impressive in delivering lessons and we are looking forward to working with them over the coming years.

Classes are yet to be determined for next year, but we will contact you after Whitsun with details ahead of 'Move Up Day' on Wed 4th July.

Welsh Government Tests

Testing has been completed now for all the pupils in Years 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 and raw scores submitted to Welsh Government for standardisation. Results should be back and with you for the 3 areas (reading, maths procedural and maths reasoning) just before we break for Summer.

We did have a few children upset about taking the tests and they found the experience worrying. I agree that testing our younger pupils is not ideal and I am challenging the system but it is the system!

We're thinking about how we can talk more to the younger children ahead of these tests to try to settle them and to let them know that it's really ok- tests at this stage don't determine the type of child you are and nothing bad will happen as a result!

On a positive note, perhaps the discontent from the likes of me has been recognised - next year's tests will be online and adaptive i.e. they will do the

tests on an iPad (or equivalent) and if they get the first question wrong, the next question will be a bit easier or, conversely, if they get it right, a little bit harder. This is the type of test we currently employ at the school ourselves, for example, in Accelerated Reader assessments and should be a lot less stressful and a lot more meaningful in terms of outcomes.

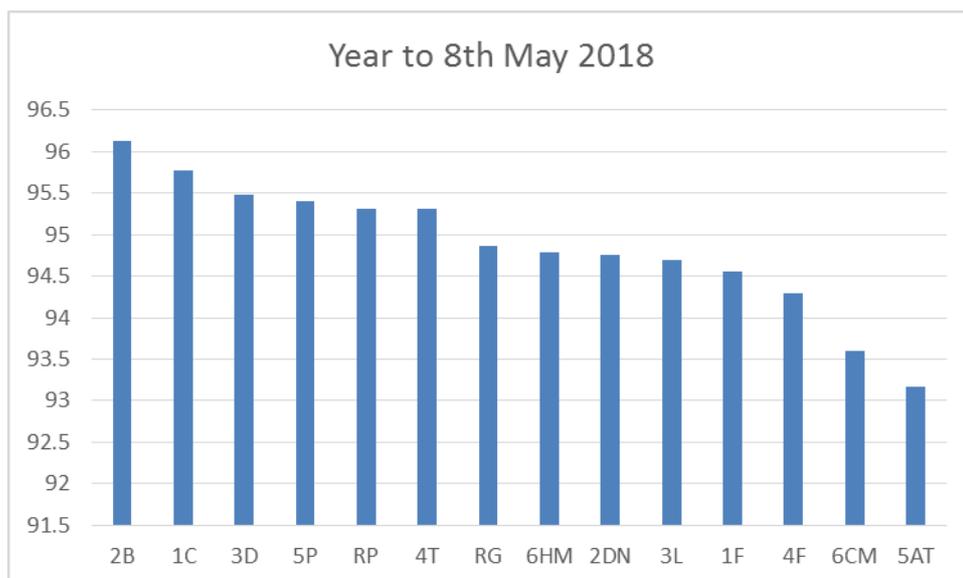
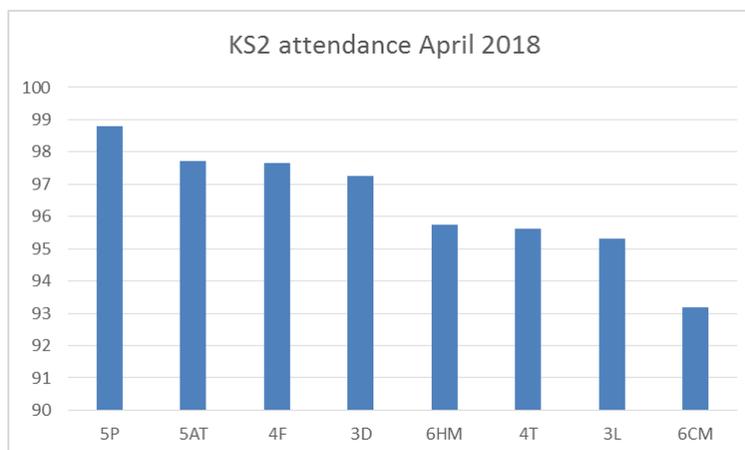
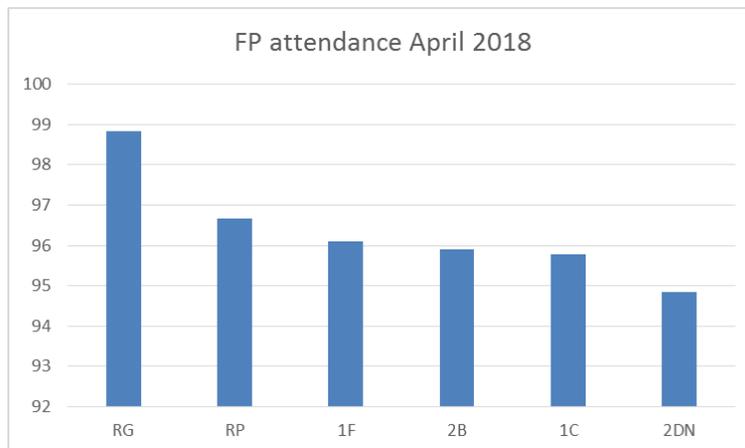
Principality Stadium Success

Well done to Max, Madoc, Aneurhan and Alex (and Iwan the mascot!!) on winning the regional cup final at the Principality Stadium - what a fantastic day out in the sunshine!



Attendance

April's data as follows:



Our attendance was looking pretty ropey a few months ago but is coming back well - thanks for your support in getting them in!!

Physical Wellbeing

You would be hard pressed to have missed the public health messages that are coming through thick and fast via the media at present. Regards primary age children, roughly half of them are overweight and 1 in 5 obese. We are doing some good work on this (e.g. daily mile, Joe Wicks week) but probably should be doing more and are planning to do so over the course of the coming academic year - any smart ideas on improving diet and increasing physical activity more than welcome!



Everyone getting stuck in to Joe Wicks week!

On a personal note...

As you know, I love to get out and about and headed to West Wales and Newport over the bank holiday. We had a mixture of sunshine and fog and even lost one of our dogs, just above a 200 foot sheer drop on the coastal path. We heard a noise some time later and saw his nose, poking out of the mud! I managed to dig him out by hand as you can see! Let's hope this bank holiday weekend is a great one for us all!



All the best.

SB 17/05/2018

