

THE TREEHOUSE SCHOOL UPDATE

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The Treehouse School

Gracie and Jess 'operating' on an injured dog



A Different Kind of Education

Recently, I was reminded that the Finnish education system, often lauded as one of the best in the world, values the 'development of the whole child,' including multiple intelligences (smart areas) and talents. Furthermore, the Finnish National Curriculum emphasises that school education must provide all students with opportunities to develop all aspects of their minds. It also ensures that students are given sufficient time to pursue their self-directed activities. Self direction and the opportunity to develop personal skills and gifts are valued highly at The Treehouse.

The Finnish system gives me hope that there is another, more effective way to educate children and young people so that it is of benefit to them without destroying the spark that makes learning such fun in the first place. Here in the UK, as we continue to move further towards parrot-fashion learning and testing, let's hope that somebody, somewhere in a position of authority, is looking into a healthier alternative.

Beat the Winter Blues

The Beat the Winter Blues party was a great success. Initially set up by Vicky, this year the event comprised: a family meal; live music; craft activities; and a paying bar. Forty families attended and there was a lovely, relaxed party atmosphere in the Pavilion.

Huge thanks to Vicky, Sophie, Eleanor and their team for organising such a successful event, and for raising £802.00 for our new school.

'Food for Thought' Thoughts!

Our second 'Food for Thought' event was a tremendous success raising approximately £500.00 for The Treehouse. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, and we received several glowing messages following the event.

The team involved deserve huge thanks for the work that they put into the lunch, which as anticipated, was delicious...

"I don't know where to start to thank you for lunch at the Partridge today. The children are a credit to you, so polite, confident and clearly enjoying the experience of 'working' in a restaurant..." Wendy (guest).

Dates for Your Diaries

Mon 7th March	Nixercise, please collect your child/ren from the park.
	Year six choreographing the dance for the Festival with Andrea at The Scout Hall.
	7.00 pm Film Festival – Gang: please wear your festival t-shirt, black and white clothing and silver accessories.
Tues 8th March	8.45 am Swap Shop at The Treehouse; please bring in any unwanted new or nearly new items to exchange.
	10.30 – 11.45 pm Judo
	2.30 pm 'Winter Blues' thank you.
	7.00 pm Film Festival – Gang: please wear your festival t-shirt, black and white clothing, and silver accessories.
Weds 9th March	Optional 10.00 am start for those that need it.
	Really Wild Day – dress up as a wild animal and please bring something for us all to enjoy at our animal-themed lunch.
Thurs 10th March	12 – 6.00 pm Refashion Event. Gang members, please e-mail Lee if you would like to attend this event as a spectator.
Fri 11th March	Friday Forest at The Arboretum. Home drop off.
Sat 12th March	Happy 12 th Birthday Alice

Not long to go now until our 'Peake Versus Vader' film premiere at The Film Festival on Monday and Tuesday evening at The Corn Exchange. We hope to see you there!



Going for Gold!

Keeping you in the Loop - Food portions

As well as enjoying a range of absolutely delicious, healthy and nutritious food at The Treehouse (thank you Jo, Sue, Lucy, Cassie and Kate), lunchtimes are a great opportunity to develop various ('smart') areas, including the children's ability to make conversation and develop good manners. Recently, as we learn more about food and diet from a range of professionals and sources, we have also used this time to help the children to take more responsibility for the amount of food that they eat.

As you are probably already aware, we have introduced an additional sized portion, which has had a really positive impact on the children. Knowing that they can select a 'micro' portion (a teaspoon - sized serving) of any part of the meal, has been a real success, and is a strategy that I would strongly recommend you use at home to develop the range of foods your child is willing to try. Over time, I suspect that you will see a big difference in their attitude, enjoyment and take-up of a range of foods.

Within our focus on portion sizes, we have also noticed that at the other end of the scale, some children ask for more food, as soon as they have finished their meal. Our current thinking is that if a child has been given the appropriate-sized portion for a child of their size in the first place, they may **want**, but do not necessarily **need** any more food. We now ask the children to wait a while at the end of their meal, before they request more, and very often they have realized that they are full. If they still feel hungry, they are offered more vegetables or salad.

Although it is early days, the impact of these strategies has been really positive. If you have noticed a difference in your child's eating habits at home, please do let us know.

Looking for something to do? How about:

*Organising your costume for Edith's 'Really Wild Day'. Dress up as a wild animal on Wednesday 9th March, when some real animals (reptiles, amphibians and insects) will be visiting The Treehouse! Prize for the best costume.

*Thinking about what you could make for Edith's Really Wild Day animal-themed-bring-and-share-lunch on Wednesday March 9th. Snake soup? Tiger bread sandwiches? Twiglets (stick insects!)

*Updating your diary so that you know what's happening next week...

*Planning a lovely day for your mum, so that she can relax and enjoy Mother's Day.

*Inviting friends or relatives to the Film Festival on Monday or Tuesday evening.

*Revisiting Ciara's 'three-plant-foraging-and-cooking' handout (attached with The Update) so that you know what to look out for when you are out and about. Ciara selected 3 really common plants (dandelions, nettles and goose grass), that we know are safe to eat and has provided some recipes that you can make with them.

*Creating your own comic strip using The Phoenix's awesome formula to create characters.



This week, a golden mention to: the 'Food for Thought' and 'Beat the Winter Blues' Teams; and to John Endean, Lucy, Grace, JC and Jo for stepping in to help when we really needed it last week.