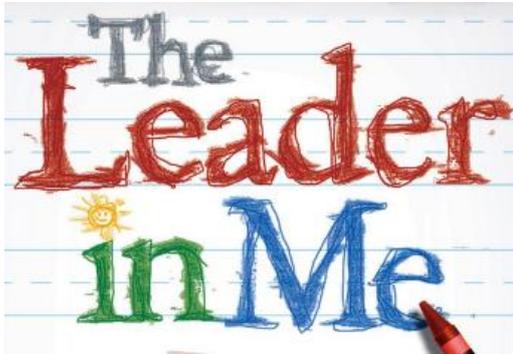


ALWAYS AIMING HIGHER, TOGETHER

Newsletter 2.14 – Monday 18th January, 2016

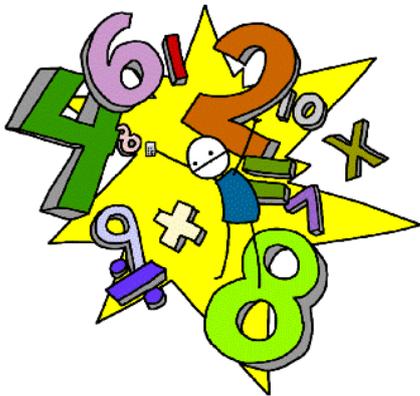


YOUTH LEADERSHIP

Congratulations to the children who have successfully applied and been selected to become **Playground Leaders**. As they applied, children had to explain what would make them good leaders.

Children clearly understand that leadership is about **'DOING'**, **'SHOWING'**, and **'INSPIRING'**.

Qualities identified in the children's applications included **kindness, honesty, passion, positivity, hunger for justice**, and even **'x-ray vision'**.



MATHEMATICS WORKSHOP – FRIDAY 22ND JANUARY, 08:30-09:30

Year 2 and Year 3 parents/carers are invited to attend a Mathematics Workshop on Friday, straight after drop off.

Mademoiselle Mahlojian will go through some examples of mathematical activities which you can use with your children at home to support their learning.

All parents are encouraged to have a look at our Calculation Policy available [here](#). It will show you what methods are used at La Fontaine. Remember that supporting children with methods you might have been taught as a child can often be confusing.



FAMILY DINING – WE ATE CABBAGE ON DAY ONE, AND IT WORKED!

It was great to see an article about our Family Dining ethos published in Teach Primary.

To read it, please go to www.lafontaineacademy.org/curriculum. You'll see how Family Dining is rooted in Character and Growth Mindset principles and how it contributes to our belief that 'every minute counts'.

A huge **Thank You** to our staff for helping make this happen!



ABSENCE REQUESTS

Please, can we remind you that absences during term time are rarely granted? This is in line with our Attendance Policy (see [here](#)).

We have an attendance target of 97.5%. Any child whose attendance is below 95% is reported to our Education Welfare Officer and is monitored very closely.



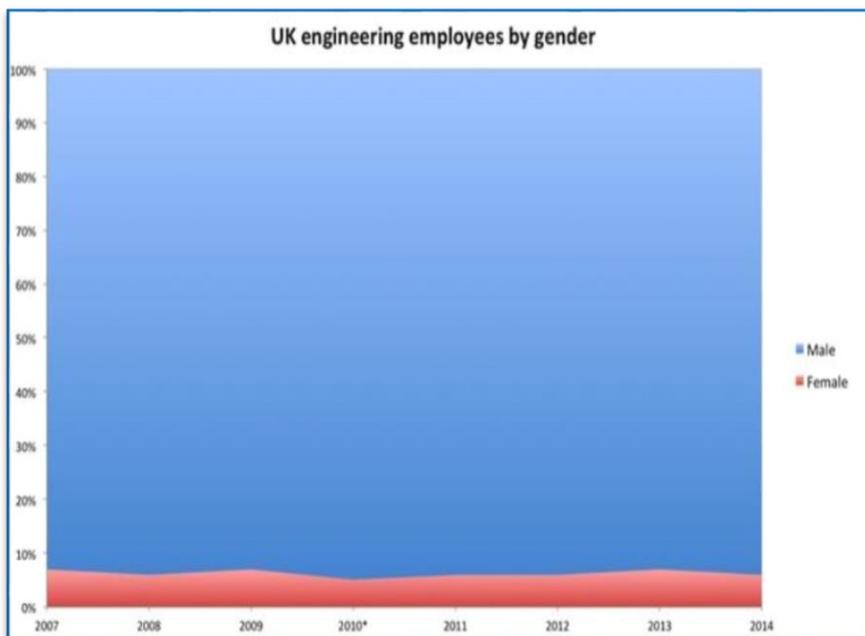
CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Remember that, at the beginning of every half term, we upload our **Curriculum Maps** and our **French Learning Overview** to our website. Look at them to see what learning is going on in your child's class.

All our Curriculum Maps are now available at www.lafontaineacademy.org/curriculum.

ATTENDANCE – OUR TARGET IS 97.5%

Every minute counts!		MARIE CURIE	YANNICK NOAH	ANTOINE DE SAINT-EXUPÉRY	SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR	GEORGE SAND	JACQUES-YVES COUSTEAU	TOTAL
ATTENDANCE	LAST WEEK	93.2%	94.5%	98.3% 🏆	93%	98.5% 🏆	99.7% 🏆	96.2%
	SINCE SEPTEMBER	95.4%	96.5%	97.2%	96.2%	97%	97.7% 🏆	96.6%
PUNCTUALITY	LATE CHILDREN LAST WEEK	1	1	0 🏆	1	1	1	5



GIRLS AND ENGINEERING

Despite many of our girls really enjoying our ICT and Coding lessons at schools, it seems that British society is not (yet) enabling them to flourish as potential future engineers.

In a few weeks, we'll be organising a special workshop to share with you some ideas to further encourage your child (boy or girl) to engage even more with the basics of engineering and coding.



To get started, become a role model to them and go to the [Hour of Code](https://code.org/learn) website where you can access easy-to-use activities: <https://code.org/learn>.

Every time
YOU smile,
I smile ❤️

ASSEMBLY – FOCUS OF THE PAST FEW WEEKS

Smiling is something we so much need! We have been talking about the fact that a smile can be very contagious. Please, remind your child that smiling at someone is often the best way to show them they care. The phrase '**I smile, you smile**' is one we use a lot in Assembly! Give it a try!



Another phrase we use as a way to get children to focus on **Growth** is: '**Today should be better than yesterday**'. This enables children to ensure their work improves all the time, in line with our aim to '**Always aim higher**'.

Again, try it with them: ask them if what they're doing shows that they've improved on yesterday's work...



This is probably the one your child (and yourself!) should be most familiar with.

To grow, **we need to try new things all the time!** We need to be **adventurous**.

Trying new things should be/become a habit, otherwise children grow to become worried when they face challenges.



FRENCH CLUB FOR PARENTS/CARERS AND FRIENDS

Clotilde - one of French parents – is re-starting a **French Club** for adults on Thursdays, between 14:15-15:15.

If you would like to join on Thursdays, please send Clotilde a text message on the following number: 07809 438 369.

In addition, remember that there will be a special **French Coffee Morning** on Friday 29th January (next week) between 08:30-09:30.

No prior knowledge of French is required to join the **French Club** and the **French Coffee Morning**: just a wish to learn new things!

As ever, feel free to bring some cakes. Eating cakes seems to help with learning, we're told!



TROIS PITONS COLO – FRENCH HOLIDAY CLUB

- Taster Day - Wednesday 17th February
- Easter programme - Tuesday 29th March - Friday 8th April
- Summer programme - Thursday 21st July - Friday 19th August

The staff at Trois Pitons Colo are very excited to be welcoming their first ever 'Dinosaur' – Dexter – to this year's taster day. It will be a Dinosaur-themed day and children will have the opportunity to ask questions, take a 'Dino-selfie' and to interact up close with Dexter.



More details (including a video of what the Dinosaur will look like) available at www.lafontaineacademy.org/trois-pitons.



SO, HOW WAS YOUR DAY? TIPS FOR PARENTS/CARERS!

- What was the best thing that happened at school today?
- Tell me something that made you laugh today.
- Where is the coolest place at the school?
- Tell me a weird word that you heard today. (Or something weird that someone said.)
- Tell me about something you've learnt today and which you could teach me.
- If I called your teacher tonight, what would she tell me about you?
- How did you help somebody today?
- How did somebody help you today?
- Tell me one thing that you learnt today.
- When were you the happiest today?
- Who would you like to play with at playtime that you've never played with before?
- Tell me something good that happened today.
- What word did your teacher say most today?
- What do you think you should do/learn more of at school?
- Who in your class do you think you could be nicer to?
- Where do you play the most at playtime?
- Who is the funniest person in your class? Why is he/she so funny?
- Tell me something interesting someone told you at lunchtime today.
- If you got to be the teacher tomorrow, what would you do?
- Tell me about three different times you used your pencil today at school.





DISH OF THE DAY



Family dining teaches children social skills that cannot be underestimated, and at La Fontaine, to paraphrase William Horman, table manners maketh 'man', says **Sebastien Chapleau**...

If you call La Fontaine Academy between 12-1pm, you'll be greeted by an automated message telling you that the school office is closed. That's because office staff, along with all our teachers and teaching assistants, are in the hall, eating with our children.

In that hour our hall becomes a family hall. It gets rather noisy. However, as a team of teachers, it's a noise of which we're proud. If you pay attention, what you'll hear is children talking to each other in a very civil and courteous way. You'll hear adults and children chatting about non-academic topics such as their favourite games, sharing jokes and, generally, building great relationships that aren't just class-based. You'll see our administrative staff eating with our children, connecting to what

school life really is about: our children's education.

At La Fontaine Academy, a great emphasis is placed on the notion of family dining. This is part of our character education and is used as a way to develop soft skills amongst our children: skills such as table manners, conversation, patience, and curiosity. In practice, family dining is very straightforward:

> We have round tables so we can eat facing each other. Eight people per table – seven children, one adult.

> Plates and cutlery are placed on the tables, which children set themselves – 'Pass the plates, around please. I'll pass the forks and knives.'

> Food and water is provided for each table of children to serve out themselves (with a bit of support from helping adults for the younger ones).

> There is only one food option, so everyone gets to try new things. (Unless someone has specific dietary requirements – e.g. medical, religious, cultural – everyone is served the same meal.) Being fussy, as we clearly tell parents / carers when they come to our open days, isn't a dietary requirement.

> We take our time: we take at least half an hour. If someone finishes early, he stays at the

table and has a chat with his friends.

This is a rather traditional way of looking at how children ought to eat, but a way which we strongly believe will help our pupils in the future. The reason for this is twofold:

1 Many children's eating habits are unhealthy. Not only because of the content of what they often eat, but also because of the way they eat, i.e. too quickly!

2 Many children, sadly, as they grow up, don't develop those crucial social skills which, in later life, have a considerable impact on their economic prospects. Many young adults find it difficult to interact in social contexts where eating formally is the norm.

More and more schools in inner-city contexts are adopting family dining as part of their focus on developing successful life habits in their young people. Oasis South Bank Academy, for instance, has developed a Table Manners policy, demonstrating that such an aspect of their students' education had to be thought through very carefully. Leaving things to chance, I would argue, simply will not

do. Reach Academy Feltham, similarly, places family dining at the heart of its practices in order to support children to grow in terms of their social confidence.

Many might argue that such things aren't part of what teachers should have to do. We're not lunchtime supervisors, after all. At La Fontaine Academy, we believe the opposite. We believe that it is part of our mission to go the extra mile and support children with any aspects that relate to their academic and emotional wellbeing. Family dining is just one example of what it means to go beyond what's expected.

Our new reception cohort, on their first day at school in September, were greeted with a plate of sausages and cabbage. Many of our children had never tried cabbage and, lo and behold, they all tried it and ate it! Some dishes have been more difficult than others, but with passionate adults at every table encouraging you to try something new, things are made much simpler than you might imagine. And when you receive emails and letters from parents / carers telling you that things are much easier at home, you know that you've done something right.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sebastien Chapleau is a Future Leader and headteacher at La Fontaine Academy in Bromley (lafontaineacademy.org).

