

# ALWAYS AIMING HIGHER, TOGETHER

Newsletter 3.19 – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February, 2017



## SAINSBURY'S KIDS VOUCHERS

If you shop at Sainsbury's, please help us collect as many Kids Vouchers as possible. The more vouchers we collect, the more free sports equipment we'll be able to get from them.



## SWIMMING FROM AGE 4 – STARTING STRAIGHT AFTER HALF TERM

We are all looking forward to starting our swimming lessons in a couple of weeks. A huge thank you to those parents/carers who have signed up to help.

### Final reminders:

- Children do not need goggles. They need to learn to swim without them.
- Children with long hair need to wear swimming caps. For those with short hair, it's not compulsory. However, if you wish them to wear one, that's fine. **As white swimming caps seem difficult to find, any colour will do.**

### Additional information:

- On their swimming day, children will need to come to school in their PE kits. This will enable us to get changed more quickly at the swimming pool. PE kits will need to be brought back to school the next day.
- Children will need to bring a towel to school. Please, label the towel with their name and try to ensure they bring the same one every week so that they get used to what it looks like.
- Boys need to wear **swimming trunks** and girls need to wear **1-piece swimming costumes**. **Bikinis** and **shorts** are not allowed.
- Children with long hair will need to have them tied up.
- Make sure your child wears a warm coat, gloves, and a scarf in the first few weeks, as they might get cold while traveling back to school.
- On their swimming day, children will be served packed lunches (provided by the school).
- Please, provide your child with a healthy snack (e.g. cereal bar, piece of fruit, etc.) for them to enjoy after their swimming lesson.
- The pool will be closed to the public while our children have their lessons.
- Children will be supervised by our staff and by professional swimming instructors who are used to teaching young children.



Thanks to the parents/carers who have paid for the swimming lessons already on ParentPay. There are still, however, some families who haven't paid. As explained before, if the £18 is a barrier, please let me know. This will be dealt with in confidence.

## AIMING FOR 97.5% FOR ATTENDANCE AND 100% FOR PUNCTUALITY

Every minute counts!		MARIE CURIE (RECEPTION)	YANNICK NOAH (RECEPTION)	SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR (YEAR 1)	MARIE JOSE PEREC (YEAR 1)	HAROUN TAZIEFF (YEAR 2)	GEORGE SAND (YEAR 2)	JACQUES-YVES COUSTEAU (YEAR 3)	LUCIE AUBRAC (YEAR 4)	TOTAL
ATTENDANCE	LAST WEEK	98.3% 🏆	100% 🏆	98% 🏆	99.3% 🏆	99.1% 🏆	96.1%	95.2%	100% 🏆	98.3% 🏆
	SINCE SEPTEMBER	96.6%	96.1%	95.6%	97.2%	96.1%	95.9%	95.9%	97.1%	96.3%
PUNCTUALITY	LAST WEEK	98.7%	100% 🏆	98%	99.3%	99.1%	96.1%	100% 🏆	100% 🏆	99%



### 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.



### DIVERSITY DAY ON THURSDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY

Children should come to school in clothes that represent their country/ies of origin (i.e. traditional costumes or clothes of the colour of their flag(s)).

Children should bring £2 to school (which will help us cover the cost of a Problem Solving workshop which took place last week + a Steel Pan workshop taking place this week).



### INSET DAY ON FRIDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY

Please, remember that Friday 10<sup>th</sup> February is an INSET Day for our teachers. This means that the school will be closed. All staff from the 13 Academies that make up STEP Academy Trust will be meeting on that day.

Children should come back to school on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> February.



### SUCCESSFUL LAUNCH OF DADS' CHOIR

All dads/uncles/grandpas, etc. are welcome.

Great fun! Great fellowship! We'll meet every three weeks or so.

Our next rehearsal is this Wednesday (8<sup>th</sup> February, 19:00-20:00ish) as we're already preparing ourselves for a special performance on 10<sup>th</sup> March (PTA Wine and Cheese evening, for International Women's Day)!



### PLASTIC LIDS FOR SUSTAINABILITY MURAL

As part of our work on the United Nations' Global Goals, we will soon create an art piece at the back of our stage using flat plastic lids. Please, keep hold of the lids from milk bottles, water bottles, soft drinks, etc. Please, carry on sending plastic lids to school.

We need lots more!

# SWIMMING WITH 4-YEAR-OLDS

The sooner children learn to swim, the better. Not only is it a fun skill to gain, it's hugely character building too, says **Sebastien Chapleau**...

**A** recent survey by the Amateur Swimming Association points out that 45 per cent of seven-to-11 year olds are unable to swim 25m – the length of an average-sized pool – unaided. It also points out that nearly 1,300 primaries (66 per cent) do not teach swimming, even though it is on the curriculum. And even those kids who do get to splash about for a while only get, on average, around 10 hours in the water a year.

At La Fontaine Academy, a state-funded Primary School in Bowley, South-East London, we place a strong emphasis on character education (as defined by KIPP leaders: [kipp.org/our-](http://kipp.org/our-)

approach/character) and have decided to take all our children to weekly swimming lessons for 12 weeks, from the age of four.

This, we quickly realised, generated some rather quizzical looks from parents, swimming instructors and other local schools. While it's acceptable for parents to take their very young children for swimming lessons on Saturdays, a group of 25 schoolchildren getting on the bus to the local pool seemed to many to be the strangest thing on earth. I'll never forget the faces of the swimming instructors when we arrived for our first lesson: we had told them many times, as we produced our risk assessments, that our youngest children were four, but for some reason they hadn't fully realised that four-year-olds are actually pretty small.

Swimming is very much part of our character education agenda at La Fontaine Academy. We strongly believe that education is something that should focus on academic success, while also encompassing character building. In broad terms, we believe academic skills are what will get you to an employer's door, and character is what will enable you to get through that door. So how does swimming contribute to character development?

#### **GRIT: Building perseverance and passion for long-term goals**

Swimming is not something you master quickly, and it really takes you out of your comfort zone. Children learn to not give up because of initial apprehensions or setbacks,

#### **ZEST: Developing an approach to a life filled with excitement**

One of our mantras at school is 'Try something new' and zest is one of the necessary preconditions for our children to try new experiences.

#### **OPTIMISM AND CURIOSITY:**

**Knowing that with effort the future holds positive possibilities**

Along with grit and zest, the idea that it's important to want to try new things without fear has been reinforced by taking our children swimming.

#### **SELF-CONTROL: Regulating thoughts, feelings and behaviours when they conflict with valued goals**

It was a challenge, but the children learned to get over the excitement of being in a swimming pool with all their friends to prioritise listening to a swimming coach who is asking them to pay attention to her instructions.

#### **SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE: An awareness of people's feelings and navigating social situations**

Taking the bus every week with lots of people onboard, getting changed without help and putting your swimming kit in your bag without mixing up your friends' socks with your own, these things can take years to develop for young children. Our children are now confident with all of these aspects, and similar issues in class and at home are now much easier.

#### **GRATITUDE: Appreciating benefits we receive from others, and reciprocating**

Where our school is located

there are quite a few independent (fee-paying) schools that have their own pools. Our children and their parents realise we've had to work hard to make things happen. We're very fortunate that we have been able to use our PE and Sport Premium grant to make swimming lessons accessible to all our children, free of charge. And we will show gratitude by writing to Sports England and relevant officials to thank them.

The children's progress, as you might expect, has been tremendous. The old adage 'the younger you start, the quicker you learn' is certainly true when it comes to swimming. I would strongly encourage others to give it a try. Organising swimming lessons can be a logistical challenge (particularly when public transport is involved), but the payback outweighs the headaches by far. In this sense, it is a clear investment, with high returns, in terms of things like learning behaviour, organisational skills and emotional well-being. These areas, by the way, are just other words for what we've called 'character'.

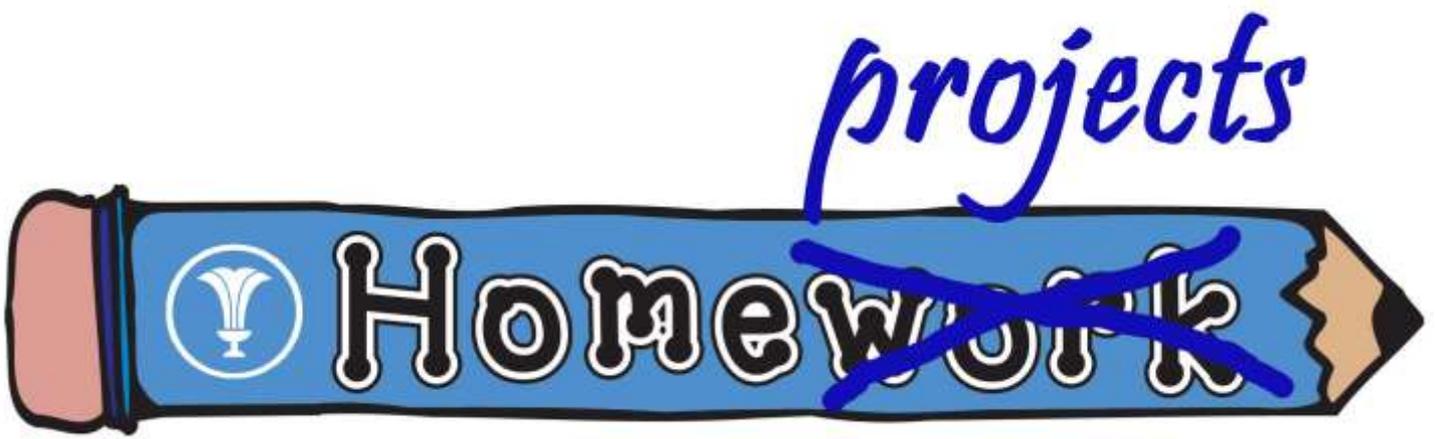


#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



**Sebastien Chapleau** is the Founding Headteacher of La Fontaine Academy (@FontaineAcademy), a member of the STEP Academy Trust and a member of the Future Leaders Network.





Dear Parents and Carers,

What thoughts spring to mind when you read this word? What memories linger either of doing your own homework as a child or the time spent encouraging or cajoling your own child to complete school tasks set at home?

Homework, research clearly demonstrates, has **very little impact on progress and attainment**: see [here](#) for a summary from the Education Endowment Foundation.

At La Fontaine we love to try new ideas that benefit our pupils and their families and homework is no exception. In line with our recent workshops on “Attachment,” the encouragement to spend time together as families and in conjunction with the Oracy Projects in school, we would like to invite all pupils and their families to engage in a project **collaboratively** to research, write up and present in a Homework Fayre on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2017.

Each Year Group has a theme for their Homework Project and pupils and their families can work on a project together to showcase at the Homework Fayre:

- Reception: Changes
- Year 1: The Great Fire of London
- Year 2: Earth, Our Home
- Year 3: Footprints from the Past
- Year 4: Active Planet

**Homework projects should combine planning, research and evidence of different research sources and methods** (e.g. Notes, mind maps, pictures, the internet, books, quotes, statistics, personal interviews, timelines, visits to places with links to the project etc.) and **creative and innovative ways to present these**. Projects should include:

- Rationale behind the project – WHY choose this project?
- Good quality, age appropriate writing (improvement drafts)
- Data (graphs, tables, maths)
- Creative presentation (models, inventions, music, podcasts, video, book writing, Art, Engineering)
- A description of the “Process” from research to project completion
- Photographs at each stage of the collaborative project process.

The Homework Fayre will take place at La Fontaine Academy on the evening of Friday 24<sup>th</sup> March from 5pm to 7pm and all will be welcome to come and view the wonderful work produced within families.

In addition to this, pupils will be expected to learn spellings, times tables and individual learning set by the teacher to aid progress but all other homework time at home should be directed to collaborative project work.

**We'll discuss more at our next Coffee Morning workshop on Friday 24<sup>th</sup> February.**

### PTA COFFEE MORNING – FRIDAY 24<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY

Please join us for this special coffee morning after drop off. This will be an opportunity to find out more about how Classlist can help us and to respond to your interrogations, if you have any. We would like also to get your feedback, observations and suggestions about Classlist to make sure it gives us its best.

We will also discuss about the organisation and planning of our next event: Cheese & Wine evening where both men and women are invited!



### CHEESE & WINE / DAD'S CHOIR – FRIDAY 10<sup>TH</sup> MARCH

This event will be hold at the school from 7pm onwards. We will be enjoying the Grande Première for **La Fontaine Dads' Choir** and celebrating the international Women's day.

**This event is for both women and men.**

Ticket price is £7 to include one drink on arrival and a cheese buffet, followed by a cash bar. Please purchase it online directly at [Cheese & Wine / Choir Event at Classlist](#). We need to know how many are coming for organisation purposes so please, if you intend to come, buy your tickets now.

If you would like to participate in this event or discuss about it, please contact event coordinator Ozlem at [ozlemjones1@gmail.com](mailto:ozlemjones1@gmail.com).

If a personal or financial issue is holding you back from attending an event or participating in any way, please contact the PTA Chair Amell Amatino [ml.amatino@gmail.com](mailto:ml.amatino@gmail.com) in strict confidence and every effort will be made to help to solve the issue including giving an appropriate discount when appropriate.



### EASTER EGG HUNT – FRIDAY 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH

The PTA will organise an Easter egg hunt and tea in the last day of Sprint Term. It is a free event with families and siblings are welcome too.

**Volunteers are needed please!**

Coordinator is still to be appointed so if you want to volunteer or participate in any other way please contact the PTA at [contact@lafontainepta.org.uk](mailto:contact@lafontainepta.org.uk).

Please RSVP at [Easter Egg Hunt Event at Classlist](#).



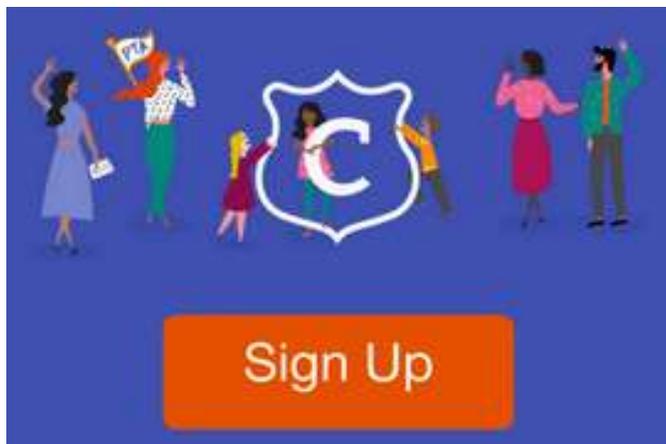
### TUESDAYS GET FIT SESSIONS

Calling all LFA parents and carers who are looking to "get fit" in 2017. Fay - a qualified fitness trainer - is running a free circuits fitness session in the park close to school after drop off on Tuesday mornings. It is suitable for all levels of fitness and aims to have you building strength and cardio fitness whilst having lots of fun. If you would like more information, please contact Fay at - [faytilson@gmail.com](mailto:faytilson@gmail.com).

### HELPING PARENTS AND CARERS BUSINESSES

We encourage LA Fontaine Academy's parents and carers to send us information about their businesses so that, in a further way to support and grow the La Fontaine community, we will help promote parents' and carers' businesses by publishing them in the newsletter and on the PTA's website. If you are interested, please contact PTA member Lucy Mooney [lucy.mooney@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lucy.mooney@hotmail.co.uk).

## CLASSLIST – OUR OFFICIAL COMMUNICATION CHANNEL



As many of you are aware we have now gone live with our new school community communication tool, **Classlist**. We are pleased to see so many parents and carers already signed up and can't wait to start using **Classlist** to its full potential.

Most of you are aware what **Classlist** is, but for those of you who do not.... The way it works is when you sign up you are a member of your child's class and year group.

You can only see member details of other parents in your groups. You can change the privacy settings as soon as you sign up and

are accepted to show the details you want others to see. It's a really easy tool to use and is much more secure than Facebook as no one's profile is open to public sharing.

Class reps are going to be using this to make announcements and we hope in the future the school will also use this to post out announcements to the whole school so there will be less paperwork to go missing from bags.

We are currently discussing how the school can post up the homework each week (as well as going out in book bags).

You can use it to message individuals so will be great for party invites (choose Event menu time then click on [**CREATE** red button]), there is a section to post lost uniform items, you can join the car share and see other parents who live near you among other things.

French after school club and Tennis club now have groups up and running and will be administrating the allocation of places on **Classlist** so please ensure you are signed up and ready if you wish to apply for a place on either of these clubs.

It's a great tool and really easy to use, please join up as otherwise you may miss out on important announcements, information and opportunities.

There is now an app available for all iPhone and iPad users and an android version on its way within the next week or so.

The link in case you haven't received the invite is <https://login.classlist.com>.

So please sign up and become part of La Fontaine's online village!



### ITALIAN COFFEE PODS

One of the La Fontaine' mums provides great coffee pods - Nespresso and Lavazza A Modo Mio compatible coffee capsules - at <http://www.neropurocaffè.com>.

**NERO PURO CAFFÈ** has all its coffee roasted and packed in Italy giving you the ultimate coffee experience in the comfort of your own home or office. There is 15 % of discount for every purchase for La Fontaine parents.



### CASH BACK OFFERS

Please, visit the following page on our PTA website for more cash back schemes at [www.ptalafontaine.org.uk/offers](http://www.ptalafontaine.org.uk/offers).

**STIKINS®** multipurpose labels [www.labelplanet.co.uk](http://www.labelplanet.co.uk) or [www.name-labels.com](http://www.name-labels.com). Please, quote **33431** when ordering. PTA will receive 30% on all orders.

**Yellow Moon Craft Shop** [www.yellowmoon.org.uk](http://www.yellowmoon.org.uk). Please, quote **LAF50523**. PTA will get back 10%.

**Field & Flower Farmers' Meat** [www.fieldandflower.co.uk](http://www.fieldandflower.co.uk). Please, quote **LAFONTAINE**. PTA will get back 10%.

**Micro Scooters** from <http://www.micro-scooters.co.uk>. Please, quote **140999**. PTA will get back 10%.