



# Lowther School Family Newsletter

Issue 14

2nd June 2014

[www.lowther.richmond.sch.uk](http://www.lowther.richmond.sch.uk)

## The Final Countdown

My goodness, it's the final half term of the school year— already! I can't quite believe it. During the course of the year I hope you have noticed the academic and social growth of your child. It is one of the great privileges of being a teacher—seeing children learn new and exciting things. This half term is a really important one— of course there are lots of fantastic school events planned but there's also the chance to reflect on your child's progress when you receive their annual report and also to look to the future as we announce our plans for next year. I hope this last half term is packed full of exciting discovery and learning. I for one can't wait to see what it will bring!

## Did you know facts about Lowther.....

We've just completed our annual school census and so I thought you may be interested in this assortment of interesting (and rather random) facts that you may or may not know!

- We only have 2 more years of expansion left now. This means we currently have 318 full time pupils (The national average is 251) When including our part-time Nursery children we have 370 pupils.
- Over 25 different languages are spoken at Lowther. 46% of the school community can speak another language other than English. This is not including Italian etc. which we learn at school!
- Our attendance target is 96% this year. At the moment we're at 96.4% (up from 95.4% last year) Please note I WILL NOT be authorising any term time holidays in the final term. Thank you in advance for ensuring your child is at school every day.
- Our last survey showed 88% of pupils were "Mega happy" at Lowther (with 98% overall happy)
- We've become TV stars—with the school featuring in adverts for Asda, Branston Pickle, a Channel 4 documentary and of course our upcoming ITV show. All in the last year!
- Our website has over 50 picture galleries and 20 video galleries—go check them out!

## Super Science - Homework Challenge

As you know the theme for this years Summer Fair is **Science**. To sit alongside this I am very pleased to announce the second ever Lowther Science Homework Challenge. For this challenge you'll need to don your lab coat, grab a test tube and get scientific! Your challenge is

### To plan and design your own Science experiment

This could be something like

- Testing a chemical reaction
- Investigating Friction
- Trying to separate mixtures
- Testing pulse rate
- Looking at circuits

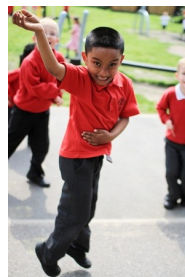
Or **ANY** other science experiment. To see what fantastic ideas children came up with last time go to the Homework challenge drop down on the website. You can also check out the Science Zone on the website to help you think of more great experiments. [www.lowther.richmond.sch.uk/science](http://www.lowther.richmond.sch.uk/science)

So get creative and have a go.

We are holding the **LSF Super Science Fair on Friday 13th June 2014 at 11am.**

This will be your opportunity to show Professor Lowther and the other Lowther scientists your amazing experiment.

All entries will receive a special Science certificate. Professor Lowther will also choose some outstanding experiments for a special science prize. What are you waiting for? It's time to get experimenting!



## Let's be Happy!

As a recent pop song mentioned being "Happy" is really important to your well-being. At Lowther we want your children to strive to be the very best learner they can be. We all genuinely believe that a happy child is a child ready to learn. The whole school family plays a vital part in ensuring that Lowther is a happy, caring and supportive place for your children to learn. Thank you for your support in building an atmosphere that is so welcoming for all. It really makes such a difference to what our school is all about.

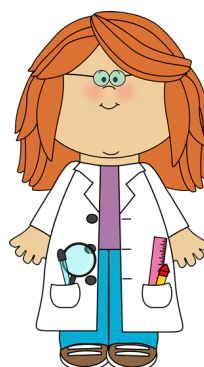
## Inclusivity at Lowther

We are as far as I'm aware the most diverse school in Richmond in terms of the make-up of our school community. The fact that we all get on so well, support each other and have such a real sense of community is something we should all be very proud of. A governor recently challenged me to say what does Lowther really stand out at? For me apart from the children's pure awesomeness it's the inclusive and happy environment that we all contribute to that makes Lowther really unique.

## Our beautiful school grounds

One of the reasons the school's been picked recently for TV work is because of fantastic grounds and facilities. We really are very lucky to have such great grounds and so it is all of our duty to look after them.

We have been getting an increasing amount of litter on the school grounds. It is especially bad around the lunchbox area and the Foundation Stage garden. Please support us by reminding the children about keeping Lowther tidy. We are lucky (and very proud) to have such wonderful grounds. Let's keep them looking fab!



**Grounds afternoon— do come along**

This Friday (6th June 2014) is our annual grounds afternoon. The children are busy preparing different songs and dances to perform. Do come along and watch. The afternoon starts at 1.30pm and finishes at 4pm. This includes our Tea party at the end of the school day.



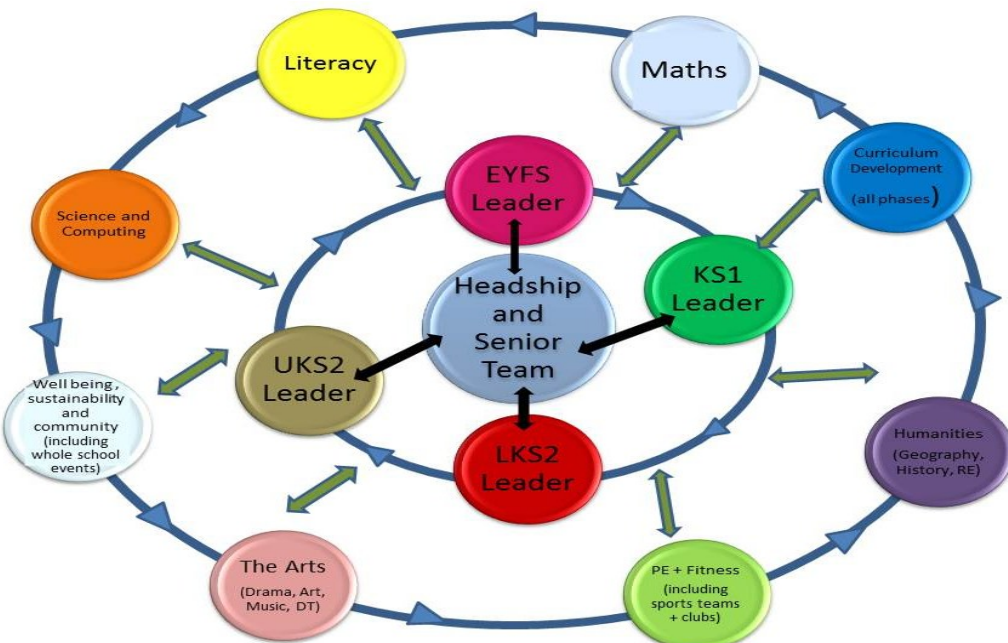
**Skipping craze!**

You may have noticed there's been a lot of skipping going on recently! It's a brilliant work out so I've been delighted to see so many children being active. We do have a skipping squad—the Lowther Skipologists, and they've been invited to perform a routine at Richmond theatre this week. They'll also be performing at Grounds Afternoon too. It may even feature in Skipper's Scoop!



**Changes to the way the school is led in 2014-15**

One of the top 5 school improvement priorities this year has been to review and analyse our senior leadership structure. We have now nearly completed that piece of work and there will be a new leadership structure in place for 2014-2015. There are two main changes. We will continue to have a flat hierarchy but there will now be four distinct phase leaders alongside eight strategic faculty leaders. We believe this will help drive further school improvement. I will explain this in more detail in future newsletters (and a diagram to illustrate the structure is outlined below) but in the meantime if you have any questions please do pop in and see Mrs Colenso or I. The rest of the staffing jigsaw is slowly coming together. This is always a very complicated piece of work and we expect to announce the details to children and parents in the next week or two.



**Year 6 SAT heroes!**

A MASSIVE well done to Mr Pritchard and his team of Year 6 learners. Their mature and focused attitude was a pleasure to see during their SATs assessments. We all look forward to seeing the results that should show children have smashed their personal and class targets. We wish all of Year 6 a very happy last term at Lowther before they graduate to secondary school. I know Mr Pritchard has lots of great things for them to do including the big trip to the Isle of Wight. Look out for their play towards the end of June—I'm sure they'll produce a cracking show.



**Other School news**

**Year 6 Production**

Now they've finished their exams Y6 are about to start rehearsing their play. It promises to be a belter! They've chosen to perform the show Madagascar. It's not a show we've done at Lowther before so do look out for further details in upcoming newsletters.



**Quality of Teaching**

As you may know, ensuring the quality of teaching is as good as possible is the school's top improvement priority this year. We're all working together to drive this improvement. For me great teaching is much more than just how good a lesson is and can't be judged just by observing lessons alone. As a school we expect our teachers to have excellent relationships across the school, get involved in wider school life, have a positive can-do attitude and much much more. However, Ofsted focus on lesson observations and so we do use this to help us make judgements on the overall quality of provision at Lowther. Using the Ofsted criteria so far this year Senior leaders have seen

**Please sign the form**

On the last day of term you will all have received a letter from ITV which if you sign means your child can be filmed by ITV. They're coming in to film on Thursday—the exact details of what they're filming can't be revealed but I will say that'd it'd be a real shame for your child to miss out. Please sign the form and return by Wednesday at the latest.



- 8 Outstanding lessons
- 19 Good lessons
- 0 Lessons that require improvement