

Dear Parents and Carers,

Another very busy week at West Jesmond has flown by, with Easter now just around the corner. The next two weeks will be no different with our annual Trust Choir City Hall event on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> April as well as **STEM week** for the duration of the final week of term.

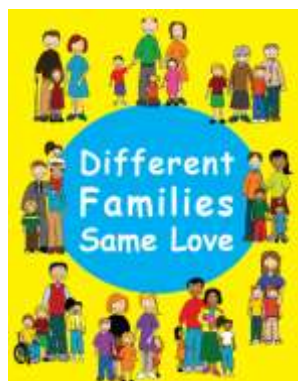
During STEM week the children will focus on answering the big question:

## **Big Question: What does a scientist do?**

As part of their exploration, each year group will have the chance to learn more about the following significant scientists:

- o R: Maria Sibylla Merian (Scientific Illustrator and Entomologist)
- o 1: Joan Beauchamp Procter (Zoologist)
- o 2: Mary Anning (Palaeontologist)
- o 3: Annie Easley (Rocket Scientist)
- o 4: Marie Curie (Physicist and Chemist)
- o 5: Hertha Ayrton (Engineer and Inventor – Electricity)
- o 6: Maria Sibylla Merian (Scientific Illustrator and Entomologist)

Look out for more information within the school mail this week about our annual egg competition **sponsored by our friends at Hays Travel** 'The Great Egg-speriment'



A number of us attended the annual Schools North East dinner last night at the Biscuit Factory. I was invited to attend by colleagues from the North East Leadership Centre at Newcastle University as part of our ongoing work as a nationally designated Teaching School focused on leadership training. The after dinner speech was given by Claire Fox from the Academy of Ideas. She spoke passionately about the value of freedom of speech and how differing ideas and values might co-exist.

I mention this, as we have some thinking and talking to do as a school community, about our ideas and values about family and relationships, as we start to consult and plan for the government's **new proposals for Relationship Education** due to come into effect in 2020 (**direct quotes are in italics**) The new legislation proposes our children will learn *'in an age appropriate way about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships they are likely to encounter.'*

The draft policy document goes on to suggest that *'teachers should talk explicitly about the features of healthy friendships, family relationships and other relationships which young children are likely to encounter... to form a strong early understanding of the features of relationships that are likely to lead to happiness and security.'*

Much of this learning is already in place within our existing curriculum, but in reviewing and revising provision it is important we *'ensure that the needs of all pupils are appropriately met, and that all pupils understand the importance of equality and respect.'* This equality and respect must allow the full range of

views and beliefs that make up our school community to co-exist in a spirit of tolerance and understanding.

It is very clear that *'teaching about families requires sensitive and well-judged teaching based on knowledge of pupils and their circumstances.'* After all, *families of many forms provide a nurturing environment for children. (Families can include for example, single parent families, LGBT parents, families headed by grandparents, adoptive parents, foster parents/carers amongst other structures.)'*

This *'sensitivity and well-judged teaching'* requires us also to work closely with yourselves as families and carers to ensure you understand what will be taught and when; having chance to ask any important and pressing questions. Just to be clear Relationships Education does not include Sex Education which is taught in secondary schools. Primary aged children are only taught about the physical and emotional changes that occur as they become teenagers – this is part of the Science National Curriculum.

To begin to canvass your thoughts and ideas we would appreciate you taking the time to read some of the proposed changes and offering comment. You can read a short summary and comment [here](#) via survey monkey.

If you'd like to read the most up to date draft documentation in full you can do so [here](#) on the Department of Education website.



On a slightly lighter note, a huge thank you to Cerian Brogan (mum of Iestyn in year 3) for donating the compost and plants for our new cycle stand planter. The entrance to school looks more cheerful, and it's providing much needed space for keeping bikes secure.

As you can see, we're looking forward to our first daffodil very soon!

Young Achievers	
Amelie Y2H	Trophy & Certificate for Level 1 Bronze dancing
Joshua Y2H	Stage 3 Swimming Award & Rugby Medal - Northumberland County
James Y10	Rugby Medal
Eleanor R2	Level 1 Learn to Swim Award
Ella Y3F	600m Swimming Award
Jack Y2H	Rugby Medal - Northumberland County
Betsy Y10	15m Swimming Award
Jonah R1	Brilliant writing
Cydney Y1W	Brilliant writing
Samuel Y1W	Brilliant writing
Lottie Y1W	20m Swimming Award
Niharika Y1W	Stage 3 Swimming Award
Jensen Y10	20m Swimming Award
Cecile R2	50m Swimming Award
Malu R1	Fantastic story writing
Felicity R1	Fantastic story writing
Ethan R1	Fantastic English work

With best wishes for the week ahead.

*Dominic*

**Dominic Martin Head of School**