

4<sup>th</sup> March, 2009

Dear Parents,

The teachers recently sent home poems for our Speech Competition/Recitation, the final of which will be on March 26<sup>th</sup>, and will be judged by an independent adjudicator.

As you support your children for this event, here are some ideas for ways to help them:

- Project voices - loud enough to hear without straining
- Connect with what they are saying rather than speaking to a particular 'tune' (Dah-de-dah)
- Drama through their voices rather than with gestures, although the odd relevant hand movement is permissible
- Their faces portraying the relevant emotion i.e. smiling if a funny poem
- Keep bodies still and hands by sides, with eyes ahead rather than looking down
- Keep going if the words desert them!

I hope these points are helpful.

For Years 1 to 6 the class teachers will choose about half the class for the semi-final. These will be children who have learnt the poem, speak in an audible way and have some idea of speaking expressively.

I will then choose about four or five finalists from each class, usually one for each of the poems chosen by that class, so sometimes it is an advantage to choose a poem that is less popular, as fewer children will be performing it! These finalists will then be in the competition on the afternoon of March 26<sup>th</sup> (Years 1/2/3 at 1 p.m. and Years 4/5/6 at 2:15 p.m.) and the external adjudicator will choose a winner from each class and an overall winner for the Years 1-3 and for Years 4-6, giving a brief comment on each child. The parents of finalists will be invited to attend the competition.

The Nursery and Reception also perform their poems (Nursery at 9 a.m. and Reception at 9:45 a.m.) and those who are confident and have large voices will speak their poems alone. If they are less confident they will recite in a group. This is not a competition, and all the parents are invited to this.

The competitive element does result in a very high standard of poetry recitation, and it is a very exciting and wonderful event each year. Although there will be some disappointed children, there are also many magnanimous ones who wish each other well and enjoy each others' success, which is also a lesson for life!

Thank you for your support.

Yours faithfully,

Mrs. Crehan