



## HARTLEY PRIMARY ACADEMY NEWSLETTER 1



New Academic Year –  
**September 2014 - 2015**

Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to our new school year!

It has been a very busy holiday; all of the teachers have spent huge amounts of time in school preparing for the new year and the new curriculum. It is more rigorous and more challenging, particularly with regard to Grammar and Spelling and in Maths. The learning of multiplication tables has never been more important and your children need your help in this. They cannot learn tables on their own. Similarly your children need you to supervise and share their reading on a regular basis. Your support in their learning is essential.

### **Hellos**

As well as welcoming 60 new children to Foundation Stage, and a number of children new to the school in other year groups, we also welcome Mr Goldsmith to year 5, Miss Grundy to year 4 and Miss Turk to year 1. We have a new cook working with us this term Mrs Holkham who we welcome. Mr Allsop is now a permanent member of the Trust staff, working with us as Finance Manager and we share him with York Road.

### **Curriculum and Assessment 2014**

Information with regard to the curriculum is on the school website.

Year 2 and Year 6 will be sitting National Tests in May 2015 based on the **old** curriculum.

Children in Year 1 and Year 5 currently will be the first cohort of children to be assessed on the new curriculum. This will include, new for Year 2 in 2016, a test on English Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling. An interesting 'Youtube' video featuring Tim Oates – one of the key stakeholders in designing the new curriculum and assessment is available via the hyperlink below. He explains the aim of the new curriculum, securing for children deep learning at their own pace, 'fewer things in greater depth' and the reasons behind abandoning 'levels' and looking at different ways of assessment.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-q5vrBXFpm0>

### **Academic Standards**

In the last academic year our children's end of key stage progress was very pleasing. Foundation Stage once again did very well - the second year of the new Early Years curriculum. Year 2 and Year 6 received a considerable amount of support and tried their hardest; we are proud of their achievements, although they are not as high as in previous years. We have always performed well against National results, however these National results are rising and we will have to maintain an upward trend if we are to maintain our margins. In Ofsted terms, **expected** progress is not good enough – we are now to **exceed** expected progress to be considered a Good school rather than one Requiring Improvement. Whilst there is a view held by a minority of parents that 'results are not important' and 'only for the school and their league tables', this is not the case. Every school is working incredibly hard and if our children do not keep up then they will be disadvantaged when they move to their

secondary schools alongside other children. We celebrate children's success at every level, but we cannot pretend that standards and results do not matter.

### **Improvements to the Building**

I am trying to persuade Mr Goldsmith to have at least a weekend off! He has had no time off this summer because of the work which is still ongoing to replace our oil-fired boilers with new, state-of-the-art gas fired boilers. This has not been easy in part because of the need to safely remove asbestos and link a gas connection underground for the school. There are still problems in connecting us with gas and I suspect the workmen will be with us for a little while longer. It is possible that there will be some disruption to the path near the main entrance as a result.

Redwood and Chestnut classes have had additional bespoke storage installed, Cherry, Apple and Oak have been re-painted. Lighting in the lower end of the building has been replaced.

### **Meet the Teacher**

On Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September we hold the first of our meetings with parents. We will begin with the 'Meet the Headteacher' session in order that parents can be introduced to our new teachers and we will share with parents the priorities for the year. This first session will be short: from 6.30pm until 6.45pm, at which point parents are welcome to go to their children's classrooms to meet the teachers who will deliver informal presentations about routines, areas of study, expectations and so forth. The classroom sessions will be repeated at 7.10pm. Our PTA Annual General Meeting will follow at 7.45pm in the Hall. We are incredibly lucky to have such a busy and dedicated PTA, which continues to plan a programme of varied events which raise huge amounts of money – all of which goes directly back to the children.

### **Clubs**

After-school clubs run by teachers will begin shortly (week commencing 29<sup>th</sup> September). Every year we ask if there are parents who would like to either run a club or help run a club and we have had very little response. We could offer more clubs if more adults were to get involved. Clubs offer different activities beyond the usual curriculum and usually require a higher pupil to adult ratio. We would particularly welcome parents who have skills in Gardening. We do expect our children to come enthusiastic to our clubs – School Clubs are not a childminding facility.

### **Externally Run Clubs**

Boom Academy starts on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September after school. Karate Club runs on Wednesdays after school (**start time of 3.45pm**). Dance with Miss Hannah runs on a Friday alongside Brazilian Kickers Football - both after school. There is an additional cost involved in these clubs but if your child would like to become involved, please contact the School Office and we can put you in touch with the relevant provider.

Whilst these providers use our facilities they are run entirely separately to our own clubs. The leaders of the Karate and Brazilian Football clubs expect parents to collect their children from the teacher after school and supervise their child in changing and while the club is operating.

### **Universal Free School Meals for Infants – and qualification for Free School Meals**

How confusing these are nowadays!

Every child in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 is entitled to a Free School Meal. However, in order for our catering provider, TCS to be able to cope with ordering the correct quantities of food, we require notice of one week if a child is going to change their lunchtime arrangements and either opt in or opt out of a school meal. There has been an increase in the number of children having school meals as a result and we hope we will be able to cope

during the lunch time. If your child qualifies i.e. they are in Years R through to Year 2 you do not need to register online. **Registers will be taken in school – no action is required on your part.**

However, parents who qualify for Free School Meals must still register and apply for these – the numbers of children in any year group, who qualify for Free School Meals are used to calculate funding for the school. It is really important that if you have qualified in the past or if your circumstances have changed and you are in receipt of benefits such as Income Support, Job Seekers Allowance, Child Tax Credit or similar, you may be entitled to Free School Meals.

### **Holidays in School Time**

Thank you – there has been a significant reduction in parents requesting to take their children out of school during term time. Our hands are tied – there are now strict guidelines with regard to the circumstances where an in-year holiday can be granted.

### **Harvest Assembly**

This year our Harvest Assembly will be led by Mrs Adams and will be on Friday 3rd October. We will be working with the Darent Valley Lions who have links with the local community.

### **Macmillan Coffee Morning**

Mrs Skinner usually organises this for staff, but having visited another local school last year on the day of the Macmillan Coffee Morning, I was impressed by the fact that this was being run by parents for parents and was a lovely catch-up session in the early part of the term. The date is Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September and if you would like to help Mrs Skinner, support this worthwhile charity and spend some time having dropped off your children, having coffee and a chat please fill in the slip and if there is sufficient support, Mrs Skinner will coordinate the event.

### **Calendar**

Mrs Orchard has issued a calendar of events covering the entire year. We try not to deviate from published dates, but unfortunately there are times when this cannot be avoided. Since we are preparing the calendar almost a year in advance, there will be some amendments throughout the year. In any case we will publish key events on our website, via letters/email and on the school's noticeboards.

### **Parking and Driving at Speed Locally**

Last year we received more complaints than ever from neighbours and from parents about aggressive and dangerous driving and parking. Please can we avoid this! Perhaps this can be the year when we send out newsletters without the dreaded 'parking nag' paragraph!

### **Trust News**

The Leigh Academies UTC has opened its doors this term. A number of our 'ex-Hartley' students have chosen to move to the UTC in Year 10. There is also an intake in Year 12. The Stationers' Crown Woods Academy will be officially opened as part of the Trust in October (next month) and York Road Junior Academy will amalgamate shortly with St Albans Infants in Dartford to become a through Primary school, albeit at this point on a split site.

### **Parents' Consultation Evenings**

We look forward to seeing parents on either 4<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> November. Please be aware that we cannot make double appointments for children whose parents no longer live together. Please make arrangements between yourselves in these circumstances.

We do maintain an 'Open Door' approach at Hartley, but this does not mean that teachers are available for long discussions outside of Consultation Evenings. Teachers have a huge amount of marking, assessment, preparation and administration, not to mention meetings and clubs after school and will not be able to make arrangements to see parents outside of these evenings or the Monday afternoon pop-in sessions.

**Opening Mornings**

Please tell friends and family! We are holding 3 morning events on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup>, Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November, with tours starting at 9.30am and 10.45am. If you know of anyone who would like to take a look around our school in preparation for making Reception applications for September 2015, they can contact the School Office to book themselves on a tour.

**Parent Contact Details**

At this time of the year, we tend to have a number of parents informing us of changes in contact details – mobile numbers, emails and addresses. Please let the school office know if there are any changes we need to be aware of. Thank you.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Hollingworth  
**Principal**

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**Macmillan Coffee Morning – Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2014**

Yes, I would like to help assist Mrs Skinner in coordinating the Macmillan Coffee Morning.

I am happy to be contacted on:

Tel. No. ....

**Name:** .....

**Child's Name and Class:** .....

**Please return to the School Office asap.** Thank you!