



HARTLEY PRIMARY ACADEMY
NEWSLETTER 3 - NOVEMBER

Academic Year – 2014-2015



Dear Parents/Carers

Welcome back after a stunning half-term! Is it too much to ask that we have a gentle winter? I know the children love the snow but my heart sinks when I watch it falling in the night and know that a tricky decision is waiting for us in the morning! Maybe we will be lucky and the snow will begin on December 19th at 4.00pm! (But not too much for those of you who have to travel a distance to see family.)

Children in Need

We are hard at work organising events and activities for the children for this Friday's annual extravaganza. A reminder, that for a £1.00 contribution, children in KS1 or KS2 can come dressed either as a Superhero or an animal if they prefer.



Events and Visitors

Our Year 5's enjoyed the Lego Challenge at the end of last term whilst our Year 4's looked splendid as Pharaohs and Cleopatras as part of Egyptian Day. We had a visit from Freshwater Theatre, engaging our children as archaeologists, helping them learn more about Ancient Egypt in a creative way.

This week our focus is on Remembrance Day – we held our Memorial Service (yesterday) Tuesday 11th November, with Year 5 and 6 reciting 'In Flanders Fields' by John McCrae. After this, we spent some time with our thoughts and reflections as we listened to the Last Post and finally we planted the poppies we had made, in our own tribute to the poppies in the moat at the Tower of London. Today the Juniors will experience a drama led by Quantum Theatre based on the theme of World War 1.

Our Year 5 and Year 6 classes enjoyed an IT Networking course led by our own Mr Goldsmith (our Site Manager not our Year 5 Class Teacher!) who knows more than the rest of us put together!

We have further visits planned this term, with Year 5 visiting the Royal Greenwich Observatory on Monday 17th November and our Year 2's visiting Dickens World on Tuesday 25th November.

Mrs Fowler, the School Choir and our school musicians have been busy practising and rehearsing for our 'Rockin' Rhythms!' concert which will be held tomorrow - Thursday 13th November. The School Choir will also be performing to the Longfield Board of Governors who are holding their meeting at Hartley Primary Academy on Thursday 20th November. On this morning the governors will be parking on the upper playground. As you know, parking is just one of our problems!

This is a busy time for the Choir; after performing for governors next week they will be at Bluewater on Thursday 27th November at 6.00pm – do come and join us!

Site Update

Our new boiler is fully operational and the heating is on! Contractors have patched up the roof so the toilets in Year 4 are now at less risk from leaks and new lights have been fitted which will be less susceptible to future leaks. We cannot rule these out given that our roof is well beyond its 'sell by date' and in urgent need of replacement.

Homophobic Bullying

You would not expect us to ignore racism or bullying linked to any form of disability – I am sure you would not expect us to ignore Homophobic bullying.

What does it look like?

- Homophobic bullying/name calling occurs when bullying is motivated by a prejudice against lesbians, gay or bisexual people.
- It can include spreading rumours that someone is gay, suggesting that something or someone is inferior and so they are "gay" – for example, "You're such a gay boy" or "That's gay".
- Even when pupils may not know what the words mean, but use homophobic language against others, it is still a form of bullying/name calling.

We do not view homophobic name calling as "harmless banter". We recognise that if it is not challenged at primary school it is harder to address at secondary school. If a pupil is not explicitly told that homophobic bullying is wrong they may think it is OK to do this.

Responding to an Incident

Incidents of this nature are fairly rare, but if we hear a child using homophobic language we will address it, guided by our knowledge of the individual pupil's maturity and personal circumstances. If a child persistently uses Homophobic language to bully another child, parents will be informed and there is an expectation that parents will support the school.

School Dinners

Our kitchen is looking to recruit more staff to cater for the increasing numbers of children who take school meals. If you are interested in becoming a catering assistant (working 10 hours per week, Monday to Friday and term-time only) please contact the School Office and we will put you in touch with the right person!

PTA

Thank you to the PTA for providing, once again, a welcome and refreshments for parents who are currently visiting us during Open Mornings as they make decisions about which primary school to send their children to for September 2015.

This is a busy time for the PTA with the Bag2Schools project also 'on the go'. Children will have received sacks in school last week – and we have a limited number of spare sacks if you need them. Sacks are to be returned on **Tuesday 25th November** and left under the canopy on the top playground. Please ensure the sacks are dropped off in the morning – Bags2Schools will collect them all before lunchtime. Regrettably we don't have the means to store sacks in school before this date.

The PTA's next project is the Christmas Fair on **Saturday 29th November** - with the School Choir to open the event. On **Friday 28th November** we have our annual Christmas Funky Hat Day where children bring in with them sweets or a bottle for the Christmas Fair tombola in exchange for wearing their latest festive headgear.

The PTA will run the Christmas Discos on **Thursday 18th December** and just when we feel the PTA have earned the right to have a brief respite, we begin Term 3 with the PTA Movie Night on **Friday 9th January 2015!** Clearly some of these events are fund-raisers but also they are opportunities for families and children to meet socially. The PTA committee is always most keen to spend the funds raised on equipment or facilities which improve the children's school experience. The latest project is continuing to improve the lower playground by extending the use of artificial grass to the area adjacent to Roundash Pre-School.

Christmas Productions

Please put these dates in your diaries!

- Foundation Stage – performance to parents on Wednesday 10th December at 9.30am.
- Year 1 and Year 2 – performance to parents on Tuesday 9th December and Wednesday 10th December at 2.00pm.
- Year 3 and Year 4 – performances to parents on Tuesday 16th December at 2.00pm and 6.30pm – ticket only system in operation for KS2 performances due to anticipated demand...

After School Clubs

Our last week of clubs will be Monday 1st December.

Academy News

When we joined the Leigh Academy Trust the only other Junior school was York Road in Dartford. St Albans Infant School then followed and became part of the Trust and finally these two separate schools have been joined to become Dartford Primary Academy.

Winter Approaches.....

Every winter brings the possibility of snow and ice. Extreme bad weather can cause widespread problems as we know from recent years! Our aim is to ensure the school remains open as far as possible. However, as you are aware, gritting Round Ash Way and other minor roads is not a Highways department priority – obviously main roads and emergency facilities must come first.

This year, parents can go online to check if the school is closed, obtain information about road gritting and other KCC closures (www.kent.gov.uk/winter). You can also tune in or visit the sites of KMFM, BBC Radio Kent and Heart FM for updates and closures. We will continue to use Home Connect as we did last year and many parents felt this worked well. If you have not yet signed up for Home Connect and you would like to, please let the School Office have your email address. KCC suggests parents might like to sign up for text message alerts on www.kentclosures.co.uk. Please be aware there is a charge of 20p plus the standard network charge. KCC also recommends parents should visit the BBC or direct.gov.uk websites for home learning resources to support children's learning while the school is closed!

Monday Pop-Ins

The purpose of the Monday Pop-In session is to enable parents who are following up a concern with the teacher to have a **brief update** – not longer than 5 minutes. We have scheduled Staff Meetings every Monday which begin at 3.50pm.

Parents Consultations

The dates for these meetings are published in advance. Thank you to the majority of parents for securing appointments and for attending last week. It is something that children look forward to and these information evenings are essential. However, an increasing number of parents are requesting to have consultations with their child's teacher at different times which is putting a lot of additional strain on teacher time. After school, teachers have meetings, run clubs and work collaboratively with colleagues - in addition to putting up displays, marking and preparing resources and lessons.

HARTLEY PRIMARY ACADEMY GROUNDS MUST BE KEPT CLEAN FOR OUR YOUNGSTERS



We have been told that from time to time our younger children use the woodland area as a toilet. More recently parents were quite shocked to see a little person relieving themselves behind one of the target boards on the top playground. Please ensure your child does not do this. We have plenty of toilet facilities indoors.

Pupil Attendance

Further to several enquiries from parents - where a class is not open due to staff strike action, a pupil's attendance record will not be affected. However it should be noted that Hartley Primary Academy staff have opted in recent disputes not to strike. Parents will be penalised if a class is open and the child does not attend school.

Pupil Progress

You will have had your child's latest attainment information at Parents' Consultation Evenings. We are still using the National Curriculum levels at the moment - you understand them, the children understand them and we understand them. As the year progresses we will be reporting progress using levels as before but we also intend to implement our new system and run both methods of reporting side by side. We will keep you informed as systems develop.

Pupil Roll

We are very close to being completely full in most year groups across the school. In the majority of our year groups we now have a waiting list in operation.

Parent Questionnaire

Thank you to parents who returned their completed questionnaires in Phase 1 of the annual programme, these are being analysed - with help from Todd Cook - Mrs Cook's son who has designed a super-efficient spreadsheet for us to enter the data. We do take notice of the responses and implement, where we can, improved procedures. We will shortly be issuing questionnaires to 'Phase 2' recipients.

P.A.L.S. Pets As Learning Support

We have a new PAL: Ella the rescue poodle-puppy has joined the team. She enjoys cuddles and strokes whilst listening to our children's soothing voices as they read to her. A little small just yet for an 'official' working jacket she has a very smart Hartley-red woollen coat.

P.E. Funding

Last year, we spent the PE funding on specialist teaching, particularly Gymnastics but also Dance, Tennis and Orienteering. In addition we purchased the Table Tennis equipment for the top playground. This year, the specialist teacher will continue to work with teachers, coaching and mentoring their skills as they deliver the PE teaching. We will once again ask Mrs Reski to provide some Orienteering activities and we hope to look at World Dance, Petanque, Archery and Tennis.

And finally, we are continuing to host **Open Mornings** on Wednesday 19th and Thursday 27th November – if you know of any prospective parents for September 2015 admissions, please ask them to call the School Office (01474 702742) to book a space!

Year 6 act as Tour Guides and Hosts for these visits and I must congratulate them on their confidence and amazing politeness. Our visitors remarked upon it – as did many parents about the hosts for Parents' Consultation Evenings.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Hollingworth
Principal

Forthcoming Events

| NOVEMBER | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Wednesday 12th November | Quantum Theatre (WW1) for KS2 at 2.00pm. |
| Monday 17th November | Year 5 Visit to Royal Greenwich Observatory |
| Tuesday 18th November | School Nurse - Drop in morning |
| Wednesday 19th November | New Reception September 2015 Parent Meeting and Tour 9:30am and 10.45am |
| Thursday 20th November | Longfield Board of Governors meeting at school - Choir to perform at 7.45am. |
| Monday 24th November | 'The Hobbit' for KS1 @ 10.15am. |
| Tuesday 25th November | Bags to Schools Collection – by 9.00am. Year 2 Visit to Dickens World. |
| Thursday 27th November | New Reception September 2015 Parent Meeting and Tour 9.30am and 10.45am |
| Friday 28th November | Funky Head Wear (please bring in bottles/sweets for Tombola) |
| Saturday 29th November | PTA Christmas Fair |
| DECEMBER | |
| Monday 1st December | Last Week of Clubs. |
| Tuesday 2nd December | Forest Schools – Last Session (6) for Apple/Cherry Classes |
| Thursday 4th December | Year 6 Carol Service @ Milestone, 10.00am. |
| Friday 5th December | FS Dress Rehearsal – am. First payment for Year 4 Suffolk Trip due. Last session for Hannah May and Brazilian Kickers. |
| Monday 8th December | Key Stage 1 Dress Rehearsal – pm. Last session for Boom Academy |
| Tuesday 9th December | Year 1 & 2 Christmas Performance to Parents (2.00pm) |
| Wednesday 10th December | Foundation Stage Christmas Performance to Parents (9.30am) |
| | Year 1 & 2 Christmas Performance to Parents (2.00pm) |
| Thursday 11th December | Christingle Assembly, Year 2 |
| Monday 15th December | Year 3 and 4 Dress Rehearsal 1.45pm |
| Tuesday 16th December | Year 3 and 4 Performances to Parents: 2.00pm & 6.30pm |
| Wednesday 17th December | Christmas Lunch for school dinners children only. Christmas Lunchbox for all other children. |
| Thursday 18th December | PTA Christmas Disco |
| Friday 19th December | Whole School - Panto Bus 1.45pm. |
| Friday 19th December | End of Term 2 |
| Monday 22nd December - | Term Break |
| Friday 2nd January | |
| JANUARY | |
| Monday 5th January | Term 3 begins. |
| Friday 9th January | PTA Movie Night |
| Thursday 15th January | Closing date for 2015 Reception applications |
| Monday 26th January | Clubs start this week |