



HARTLEY PRIMARY ACADEMY
NEWSLETTER 5



Academic Year – 2015 – 2016
January

Dear Parents and Carers,

Happy New Year!

Once again, I would like to begin with a huge thank you for the amazing kindness with regard to Christmas gifts and cards, both personally and on behalf of all of the staff.

The final total of the donations at Year 3 and 4, KS1 and Foundation Stage Christmas productions was a massive **£568.86** which we have sent to 'Porchlight'. Thank you to the generosity of all who attended.

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Latest News:

PTA Movie Night

Mrs Maisey has taken over the task of coordinating these movie nights (a very big thank you to Mrs Gandhi for managing the events in previous years). Thank you also to the willing helpers who come into school to assist with the refreshments and the supervision of the children. Movie Night generates significant funds for the school and we are very grateful for the time both the PTA and staff put into helping make sure the events run smoothly.

Year 3 – Rocking Around Britain

A popular visit, once again from Andrew Berry who made what could be a slightly 'dull' topic – Rocks and Soils – come to life. The children had a wonderful time making fossils and identifying families of rocks with real samples.

Year 4/5 – VolleySlide Festival – Wednesday 13th January & Year 5/6 and Indoor Athletics – Wednesday 27th January

As part of our partnership with 'Take Pride' we are introducing children to Volleyball – which although is not a new sport, it is one that we do not play very often. Mr Dutton and Mr Goldsmith are attending to support the children and perhaps this is something we will see more of in P.E. lessons and perhaps at playtime. Following this, we have a day of Indoor Athletics.

Year 6 – Solutions for the Planet – Monday 18th January

We have been invited by Longfield Academy to participate with some of our Year 6 children on a day's activity on sustainable and environmental solutions to some of the problems facing us. This is an initiative run by STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths).

Information Notices

Coats, boots, hair and nail varnish!

We are in the middle of winter and children are expected to have coats in school **every day**. The weather can change dramatically during the day and children need to be protected. For girls, boots may be worn on very cold, wet or snowy days but they must be waterproof and plain, not furry or glitzy.

Nail varnish is great fun – for weekends – but please remove it for school days and please avoid 'tramlines', 'Mohican' type hair styles and 'skinhead' type shaven hair – save them for the holidays along with sparkly hair bands and clips.

Earrings

Should your child have pierced ears please ensure they have in their P.E. bags their own roll of micropore tape to secure earrings if they cannot remove them by themselves.

Our School Prospectus states:

"Children should not be wearing jewellery in school. If children are wearing a watch it remains the child's responsibility throughout the day. Small 'stud' earrings are acceptable for children who have newly-pierced ears. Jewellery must be removed or earrings covered with micropore tape (each child must bring their own supply) for P.E.

We have no means of storing items securely, therefore we strongly recommend that jewellery is left at home on P.E. days. We are not allowed to remove or assist with replacing stud earrings."

Clubs

Clubs begin week commencing Monday 25th January. Thank you to Mrs King for collating the clubs across the school which is a huge undertaking. I am grateful also to the staff for giving up their time to offer such a varied programme. Thank you to one of our parents, Miss Salisbury who is running Storytelling Club this term and up to Easter. If any other parents could help by taking a club or supporting a teacher we would be really grateful to hear from you. Our school garden has had a complete makeover with raised beds just waiting for this year's planting. Do we have any keen gardening parents who could help us maintain our garden and help us grow our own produce? Perhaps this year we might even look at growing flowers?

Before School

Please remember that children are your responsibility on the playgrounds until the teacher comes out to collect them at **8.45**. Scooters and bikes should not be ridden beyond the school gate and ball games and chase games – such as 'It' are forbidden. There are too many little (and larger) people on the playgrounds – accidents are likely. We are delighted that so many children are riding bikes and scooters to school but I need to remind you that we cannot be

responsible for the security of these items. Please provide a padlock to secure your equipment. The Top playground 'pods' are becoming overcrowded – please could children in years R, 1 and 2 use the 'pods' near the staffroom. They have to walk past these both on their way to class and on their way out of school in the evening.

Speaking to Teachers

Please do not knock on the classroom fire doors in order to speak to teachers before school; if you have urgent matters which you need to convey to the teacher the time to tell them is when they come out to collect the class. For Reception and Year 1 classes, please appreciate that teachers need to supervise their class promptly at 8.45. Teachers in these classes are especially aware that they need to be ready to lead the class as soon as the children enter the building. Our School Office is here to help – please pop round and the team will relay messages to your child's class and you can arrange a Monday Pop-In from here too.

Road Safety

Just before Christmas one of our recently-left children had a road accident – fortunately although injuries have been sustained the youngster is making a good recovery. However, just last week a parent felt that they came uncomfortably close to knocking over a group of youngsters crossing the road at the end of the school day. Please could drivers modify their speed in the adjacent roads – clearly at busy times the 30mph limit is inappropriate. It is good that our older children are gaining more independence by walking home alone or in groups of friends, but please remind them of basic rules of road safety. The light at the end of the day is still very poor; safety in the mornings is also paramount – children being dropped off by parents must look carefully before crossing roads.

Questionnaires

We are entering 'Phase 3' of our Parent and Pupil questionnaires. Each round is analysed and we consider how we can address issues raised. Homework is always an area of dispute. So many parents have so many different views. Some feel there is too much, some feel there is too little and there are many issues in between. Teachers work incredibly hard to prepare their daily lessons – and equally as hard with homework. It will always be an area of compromise and 'best-fit'. Thank you to those parents who support their children in completing homework and making sure it is back in school on the right day.

Another area is communication with regard to what is being taught and pupil progress. We are looking at how we can improve our website to give you more information with the former. Assessment and Pupil Progress is something we are spending a great deal of time on. As you are aware the Department for Education has decided that we will no longer be using Levels to assess pupil progress. They have given schools the freedom to determine their own systems. This sounds like a good idea, however, we have to be sure that we are 'measuring' our children across a range of results or a scale which is meaningful and standardised. We are doing a great deal of research, consulting with Trust and local Primary colleagues in order to adopt the best system. In the meantime we are still working in Levels at the moment until we are absolutely sure what our new assessment scheme will look like. Our **Assessment Information Evening** will be held on Wednesday 10th February.

Whilst parents have mixed views on homework there is no question that parental support is vital in helping children learn their multiplication tables. The new curriculum requires children to know their tables fluently up to 12 X 12 by the end of Year 4. Listening to your children read on a daily basis and helping children learn their spellings are both equally as important and children cannot do these things on their own.

Pupil Census – January 2016

At this time of year, we are preparing our Pupil Census which we are required to submit to the Department for Education – the figures we report back will directly impact our level of funding for 2016-17 so it is imperative that our data is accurate. The number of children who take up Free School Meals will be weighted accordingly in our overall funding allocation. Although all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled currently to the Universal Free School Meals programme, additional funding is allocated to schools on the basis of parents receiving any of the following benefits are entitled to apply to KCC for Free School Meals:

- Income Support;
- Income-based Job Seekers Allowance;
- Income related Employment and Support Allowance;
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999;
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit;
- Child tax credit with an annual gross income into the household that is no more than £16,190 - provided you are not entitled to working tax credit. If you are entitled to any part of working tax credit there is no eligibility with the exception of working tax run-on as shown below;
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit.

Currently, Free School Meals funding on the basis of the above continues in children's junior years and into secondary school. ***If you think you may be eligible please contact the School Office, in confidence, for further advice and they will be able to make an application on your behalf.*** With budgets being squeezed, every application counts!

Vacancy for Midday Supervisor

We currently have a vacancy for the above position. Please visit our website www.hartleyprimary.org.uk/contact-us where you will find the vacancy advertised and a direct link through to make an online application.

Reminders:

Dinner Money

Please can parents ensure payment for the week ahead is paid every **Monday** - either via cheque or cash (in sealed envelopes please). A large proportion of our parents kindly pay in advance – weekly or termly but the number of parents who do not pay in a timely manner and/or pay the incorrect amount is on the increase. The cost per day is £2.20 – £11.00 for the week. Cheques should be made payable to **TCS Independent Ltd.**

You can also pay online via <http://www.eschoolmeals.com/TotalCateringSolutions>.

Payments online must be processed at the latest **by Sunday evening** for payment to count for the following week. We know the website states online payments can be processed until 8.30am Monday morning, but in reality, the payments will not go through in time if you make a payment on a Monday for the coming week.

Winter updates...

Hopefully the further we get into January and February the shorter the winter becomes and the less likely we are to have severe weather. However, in the event of snow, we will follow our usual procedures for communicating what is happening. You can visit www.kent.gov.uk/winter for latest updates and 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 and parents may like to consider signing up for text message alerts via www.kentclosures.co.uk. Please be aware there is a charge of 20p plus the standard network charge. KCC 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 and although we are no longer a KCC school this seems to be good advice if there is any prolonged closure. We now have gas-fired boilers so we are no longer dependent on oil deliveries. Mr Goldsmith's snow moving machine is ready for action (if) we need help clearing paths and areas of access.

'Call of Duty'

A number of our children have told their teachers that they play this game at home. This gives us cause for concern for a number of reasons. First, it is our understanding that this is rated 18 and the content therefore is considered by the censors unsuitable for children of primary school age. Secondly, we are told that the language associated with the game – and which children might use (and in some cases are using) when communicating and playing together – is not acceptable either. We understand the 'peer-pressure' issues but request that parents respect the recommended age-rating and ask you to support the school in presenting a consistent approach to E-Safety.

Forthcoming Events:

Hello and welcome back...

To Mrs Cashmore who will be joining us from the beginning of February. She will not be attached to a class at present, but will have a role supporting in different year groups. We are looking forward to her return and her expertise will be much appreciated.

Maths Information Evening

Will be held on Wednesday 27th January. We hold a maths information evening every year. As children move into different year groups parents like to find out about calculation methods and the expectations for different year groups. We hope you will be able to join us.

Additional INSET Staff Training Day

In addition to Friday 12th February, Thursday 11th February has been added to our schedule. Term 3 will end on Wednesday 10th February and we will return to school on Monday 22nd February. Staff will be spending further time on assessment – ensuring accurate judgements on children's progress and areas for further development. We are managing three very significant educational changes, a new curriculum which is more demanding, assessing without levels and recording formative and summative assessments on a new program using different statements of attainment.

Parent Consultation Evenings

These will run on Tuesday 23rd and Thursday 25th February this year. Appointment letters will be coming home shortly.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Hollingworth
Principal