



HARTLEY PRIMARY ACADEMY  
**NEWSLETTER 6 - FEBRUARY**



**Academic Year – 2013-2014**

**Dear Parents and Carers,**

Oh dear!

I love January, but this year has not started well! We had, as you know, very sad news in January and a number of staff and Hartley families have been touched by tragedy also. Coupled with this appalling weather, we have had a rather gloomy Term 3.

So, we must reflect upon the brighter events!

**Frank Green CBE**



The children enjoyed a visit from Frank Green who showed us his CBE medal during assembly. Since it was our Celebration Assembly we asked him to present to the children the certificates for the week. Not many children can say their skills and talents have been acknowledged by the holder of such an honour! Some children were lucky enough to 'borrow' the award for a few moments!

**Dates for the Diary**

- Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February – Training Day for staff. School closed to children
- Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February – Term 4 begins – No after school clubs this week
- Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February – Forest Schools – Reception Classes
- Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February – Parents' Consultation 5.00 – 8.00pm
- Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February – Parents' Consultation 3.30 – 6.00pm

**Please be aware that we are only able to accommodate one appointment per child, per teacher. If you are not able to attend either of these evenings, please do not assume that the teacher will be able to arrange a separate appointment at an alternative time.**

- Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> March - Forest Schools – Reception Classes
- Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> – Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> March – West End in Schools – Whole school event
- Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> March – Year 1 visit to Leeds Castle
- Friday 21<sup>st</sup> March – Year 5 Science Fair

**Sickness**

Please can we remind parents that children who are unwell and have the sickness bug must be clear of symptoms for at least 24 hours. A number of children have picked up the vomiting bug and we are trying to contain the spread of germs as much as we can. Thank you.

**Road Safety**

A letter has gone home to all parents this week, following on from a serious incident on a road near school. Please drive with care and attention around our school at all times. Thank you.

## Focus on Reading!

We spend a great deal of time analysing pupil progress at Hartley and although progression in Maths within school is pleasing, as is writing, the picture for reading is less strong. The fact of the matter is that children are not reading enough at home! Mrs Cashmore has introduced the online reading challenge and we will be more than happy to provide reading lists for parents. Whether it is a non-fiction book, a children's newspaper, an instruction manual or a work of fiction – it is essential that our children read more regularly. We are aware that the richness of vocabulary which arises from reading quality material is diminishing as the rival activity of games-playing become more and more compulsive. I cannot emphasise enough the vital importance of reading in your child's education. As the global competition becomes more and more skilled we must ensure that the next generation of job-seekers are as well educated as their counterparts in other countries who will be their competitors in employment. Reading is vital - **please, please** encourage your child to read at home and when possible read with them and discuss what they are reading.



## Winter updates...

We are more likely at the present time to float away than we are to be buried under a foot of snow - however our weather is notoriously fickle! Our website will continue to keep parents abreast of school closures. Information about road gritting and other KCC closures can be found at [www.kent.gov.uk/winter](http://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 and parents may like to consider signing up for text message alerts via [www.kentclosures.co.uk](http://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.

## Weather Damage

We have had a small amount of damage as a result of the wind and rain. Mr Goldsmith is already working on having repairs done as swiftly as possible. The Reception Outdoor Area is looking a little storm-battered - we are working on it!

## Total Catering Solutions – Menu Change Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February

Owing to half term being next week and our caterer's first delivery being Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February, the kitchen will be swapping Monday's menu with the following Monday's. Menus for Tuesday through to Friday will remain as published. We apologise for any inconvenience – it will be lasagne on our first day back and the sausages will return on the Monday after!

## Total Catering Solutions – Payments Outstanding

Reminders will be coming home with children today – we have quite a large number of payments still owing for this week and would appreciate it if parents could settle up for this term by bringing payments in on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> February. Thank you.

## Keeping Your Child Safe on the Internet

Trying to stem the tide of social media is not possible. There are guidelines which suggest children should not be using social media sites such as 'Facebook', 'Snapchat' and 'Instagram' – to name

but a few until they are thirteen. We know, because our children tell us, that a significant number of children under thirteen are using such sites.

BBC WebWise ([www.bbc.co.uk/webwise](http://www.bbc.co.uk/webwise)) and [www.Thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.Thinkuknow.co.uk) are just two websites designed for parents to provide help and information. Current advice to parents includes registering yourselves on the same sites as your child to ensure you know how the site works. Set up your child's pages so they are linked to your own will enable you to monitor their use and ensure that the correct privacy settings are applied.

Children are very trusting, they still need adults to ensure their online behaviour is safe and is appropriate; they will write things online which they would never dream of saying to someone's face. Children online are making themselves more vulnerable to bullying and need your protection to keep them safe. It is not just social media sites – children are communicating and linking online via their 'X-Box' and other devices.

Social networking can cause problems in school where unkindness, rudeness and bullying can overspill and affect work and relationships, undermining a child's confidence and ability to concentrate. There is very little we can do in these circumstances, except attempt to mediate.

Occasionally (in fact just recently) we have had our attention drawn to inappropriate language used by our children to others online. Please be aware of the protection offered by sites where abuse can be reported. Bullying, including Racism and homophobic bullying online is as serious as it is face-to-face and must not be tolerated. Children develop a significant number of 'friends', many of whom have other friends in other schools. These extended friends are often older – and older siblings and their friends are often inadvertently linked. Your child might well be sending photos and their comments to potentially hundreds of people. Again, inadvertently your child may give away too much personal information and be at risk from the predatory behavior of other users.

It is important that we do not demonise the Internet – it is a wonderful and valuable tool and part of our lives. However, as parents and carers it is essential to stay one step ahead of the children and have a relationship with them where you are able to monitor their communications to keep them safe. Your child must always know that if they are alarmed by something that happens to them on a website that they can talk to you and share their worries.

**Any evidence of children being rude, abusive or insulting about staff online will be taken most seriously and may result in exclusion from school. Children are not allowed to bring their own devices such as phones, iPods or iPads into school.**

## **Clubs**

We have had a very positive response to clubs this year and as a consequence, not all the children who applied have been able to have their first choice. We are grateful to parents for offering to help run clubs. Clearly this helps us to offer more variety and any parents who are interested in supporting or running a club would be most welcome. Please let us know via the School Office.

There will be no after school clubs week commencing Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February due to Parent Consultation Evenings being held on Tuesday and Thursday evening. External clubs will continue as normal (PowerHoops will move to the Wednesday evening). Clubs will continue until week commencing Monday 24<sup>th</sup> March.

## **Maths Workshop Afternoon**

We try to hold one of these events on an annual basis and we are pleased to invite you to a Maths Workshop afternoon on **Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March at 2.00pm**. Mrs Lambourne will be on hand with

children from different year groups to demonstrate methods and answer any questions you might have. Letters will be coming home shortly providing more details.

## **Curriculum 2014**

There are some differences ahead! Curriculum 2014, due to be introduced in September of this year introduces some new elements, removes existing elements and introduces some elements earlier in a child's life. To see the new curriculum in its entirety go to [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) and enter National Curriculum, Key Stages 1 and 2 into the search box. We are working on how we will change our existing planning to incorporate this. We will still be planning for English, Maths, Science and R.E. as we do currently and we expect to maintain cross-curricular teaching of other subjects, albeit with some changes of content. Additionally, a Foreign Language is now compulsory at Key Stage 2. Children have been learning French here for a number of years, so this is not something entirely new to us. We are considering introducing Spanish in September. Do we have any parents who speak Spanish? We would love to hear from you, if so!

## **Assessing using Levels**

For many years now we have been assessing children's attainment using National Curriculum levels - in Primary school these levels are 1 – 5+. These levels are communicated to parents three times each year and we are at the point where children and parents are now very familiar with this system, how it works and what it means.

However, from September 2014 there are changes in the way children's achievements will be recorded. We cannot tell you how this will look, because at this point there is no recommended system. We feed a number of Secondary schools so it is important we adopt a system which is also being adopted by other Primary schools and Secondary schools. We hope this will become clearer as groups of schools, Local Authorities and other bodies develop alternative arrangements.

## **Free School Meals for Reception and Key Stage 1**

In September it is intended to offer all children in Reception and Years 1 and 2 a free school meal. We will be sending out a survey to parents in order that we can gauge the response to this initiative. At present we are looking at how we will implement this in the most effective and least disruptive way. Obviously having some idea of prospective numbers is one of the first things we need to find out about.

So.... lots of new initiatives to deliver later in this school year. We cannot complain that life is boring – and we will endeavour to keep you informed as arrangements progress.

Yours sincerely



Mrs Hollingworth  
**Principal**