

Highwoods Community Primary School Newsletter Autumn 1

Follow us on Twitter @hcpscolchester or our website is <http://highwoodsprimary.co.uk/>

Follow our PTA on Facebook at <https://engb.facebook.com/HighwoodsPTA/>



Highwoods Community Primary School 'Learning for Life'



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the first newsletter of the year. It has been a brilliant start to school and the children have settled wonderfully. We would like to warmly welcome lots of new families whose children have started in Foundation Stage this year- it is great to have you with us and we are so proud that you have chosen us as the school to educate your child. A special mention to all of our little ones in Foundation Stage- they have been a pleasure to have in and have really impressed all of the staff by how quickly they have made friends and learnt the new routines and rules.

While we have returned, we know COVID remains in the thoughts for lots of our parents. As we all know, restrictions have been lifted, and schools are meant to be returning to 'normal'. However, we continue to have some measures in place to make sure school runs smoothly, which include regular hand washing/gel, extra cleaning through the day, limiting numbers in assemblies, regular testing for staff, ventilation wherever possible and ensuring any children or staff with symptoms of COVID get a PCR test (not a LFT). Having worked in schools for over 20 years, I know this term sees children with colds and sniffles- many parents have asked how do they tell the difference between a cold and COVID- the answer is you cannot. We just reiterate that if a child has symptoms (new cough, temperature or loss/change in taste or smell), they get a PCR test.

It has been lovely to see children being able to mix a little more than usual, with friends from different year groups and siblings able to eat together and play together. There has been a period of adjustment for children as they get used to a little more freedom, but they have been brilliant at adapting. As always, we review all the latest guidance which is sent to us weekly, and adjust our practice accordingly to keep everyone as safe as possible.

We have had lots of requests from families to look around our school, with parents keen to see what we offer. Last year saw our highest ever applications for our school, with over 200+ applications and nearly 90 first choice. We will be holding small tours throughout this term but they will be in groups of no more than ten families so that we can continue to manage COVID and also ensure the children in school are not disrupted too much. Dates will be on our website. We are aware that some parents in our Year 1 and Foundation Stage have not been into our school either, so we will be holding special tours just for parents in these year groups, so you can come and see what we do and how amazing the children are. We will write to you regarding this.

Finally, we are aware of some technical issues with Pay360. Please bear with us while we sort these problems, we are working really hard with the team who are responsible for fixing these issues so thank you for your patience and understanding. If you do have any issues with school communication or payments, please email office@highwoodsprimary.com and we will be able to help you.

Mr Disley

Headteacher

Summer Fair

Last week we held our 'Summer Fair'. It was a brilliant event and just amazing to see so many families chatting and having fun. We know the children loved it and it was everything we wanted it to be. A massive thank you to our PTA who organised it, led superbly by Gemma Oliver. We are already planning our next fair for July 2022, with even more inflatables, even bigger and better than this year.



Non pupil dates and Parents Evening.

We can now confirm that parents evening will be held over 3 nights on the 9th, 10th and 11th November. These appointments will be 15 minutes long so parents and teachers will have plenty of time to talk over the start of the school year, plus academic progress, achievement, as well as how your child is emotionally, socially and personally after a challenging 18 months. We did not want these appointments to be rushed, and by having them over 3 nights, school will not feel too crowded, and families will not have long waits due to appointments overrunning. The meetings are face to face, subject to guidance remaining the same for COVID, but any family uncomfortable with this and coming into school, we will make provision for. Appointments will be released in the usual manner through PING.

Friday 12th November is a non-pupil day so school is closed that day, where school staff are undergoing health and safety training and fire marshall training.

January 4th is already confirmed as a non-pupil day and we can also reveal that **January 5th** is going to be a non pupil day too. This means that children return to school on the Thursday the 6th of January 2022.

Mental Health Champion

We are really excited and proud to announce that Ms Djurovich will be our Mental Health Champion. This is a vital role in overseeing and developing our support for pupils and families. Ms Djurovich has had completed the latest training for this role, which is quite comprehensive and challenging. It means that while we know we already offer a huge amount of support for pupils and families, in the form of our own play therapist, child counsellors and family support workers, we are looking to offer even more.

This term we are focusing on developing pupil and family representations in our reading books and supporting positive identity. We will be starting with book corners, the libraries and the books children bring home, making sure that our wonderful school community all have a voice and role models.

HERON!

You might have heard from the children as we spoke about it in assembly, but we have a heron in our school! The mystery of who has been eating our fish in our new pond has been solved as our new 'friend' has been spotted several times tucking in to it's dinner! We have a fake heron on guard duty so we will see if this helps move our real heron!



NO NUTS PLEASE.

Just a friendly reminder that we are a nut free school. We cannot have nuts in any form in school as we have several children with allergies that require epipens. This means that even if the children smell or touch a nut, they can have a reaction.

Thank you in advance.

Parking.

We know that parking is difficult at Highwoods- we encourage families to walk/bike wherever possible or to use Tesco car park which is a 2 minute walk from us. Please avoid using the flats in our school area and the doctors surgery as they are private parking areas. Also note that traffic wardens will be patrolling local schools in our area and they will issue penalty notices if you stop outside a school or park on the yellow zig zag lines which are marked on the road. We stress that the school has no control over the fines and we do not get a penny- it goes to Essex County Council.

Key dates and contact emails:

School office and admin:

office@highwoodsprimary.com

admin@highwoodsprimary.com

Year group emails to contact teachers:

foundation@highwoodsprimary.com

year1@highwoodsprimary.com

year2@highwoodsprimary.com

year3@highwoodsprimary.com

year4@highwoodsprimary.com

year5@highwoodsprimary.com

year6@highwoodsprimary.com

senco@highwoodsprimary.com

November 2nd Immunisation team in school for flu jabs (TBC)

November 5th- PTA event. Bright Jumper/sparkly tops day (50p donation)

November 9th, 10th and 11th Parents evening

November 12th Non pupil day

December 17th- Last day of term

Tuesday 4th and 5th January 2022 Non-pupil days

Tuesday 6th January 2022 Children return to school