

Highwoods Community Primary School Newsletter Autumn 3

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Highwoods Community Primary School 'Learning for Life'



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the final newsletter of the term.

It has been such a fabulous few weeks in school- a huge well done to the Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2 children for their brilliant Christmas performances. We are so proud of how confident the children were and the singing was truly amazing. My thanks to our incredible staff in infants, whose patience, care and encouragement allowed the children to flourish. The extra workload on staff to produce separate performances for each year group is greatly appreciated and allowed us to follow COVID measures- thank you also to parents for following guidelines and making this possible. The feedback for these performances has been amazing.

As usual, there is a lot in the press and on social media about COVID and the new strain of the variant. I know from talking to lots of parents that it can be a little overwhelming and hard to keep calm. The last couple of years have been tough on everyone- we often talk about how the children are coping and what we can do for them- it is also important to think of the adults too. I encourage our community to keep an eye out for each other, to think of others and check in on friends. While Christmas time is a wonderful time for many, it can also be difficult for families, for many different reasons. As my mum used to say, 'You never know what goes on behind closed doors'. Be kind to others and please take care of each other.

The school will continue to keep parents up to date with the latest guidance and advice from the Government and Essex County Council- we know that last December saw quite a bit of national panic and outcry prior to schools returning in January- we hope for a calmer start to the new year this time. As of typing this letter, the number of cases in the school remains low (less than ten), which provides some reassurance. We know that many families have had to make tough decisions this week regarding school and attendance, due to either having holidays booked or seeing loved ones over the break. While the standard quote from the Department for Education is that attendance is compulsory, we appreciate that some families have isolated this week, or part of the week, to ensure the festive plans can proceed and to keep loved ones safe- we are taking a sensible and supportive view of this, and will continue to work with families in our usual manner. We are incredibly proud of how the school has maintained a high level of education for all children this term, despite the many challenges faced due to COVID. I feel it is right to say that a key reason for this is due to the incredible team work within the staff. The willingness of the school staff to be flexible, adjust hours, support each other has allowed the school to feel safe and keep moving forward- it has been incredibly humbling to see and makes me a very proud Headteacher. I know this is recognised by our parent community- I have the pleasure of seeing the emails and hearing the kind words. Please know that these comments do make a huge difference to us- to the point where we know have a large display in the parent's room/office area where many of them are displayed.

Stay safe over the festive period, have a great Christmas break and we all wish you a Happy New Year.

Mr Disley

Headteacher

Maths Ambassadors

Following hot on the heels of reading ambassadors, we now have our Maths ambassadors too. These children will have a pivotal role in supporting the school in promoting a love of maths- look out for maths challenges across the school, inspirational maths days and competitions.



Well done Rosie!

A huge well done to Rosie in Year 2 who is the latest superstar to raise money for the Little Princess Trust by cutting her hair and donating it to the charity. At the last count, Rosie had raised over £700!



Festive jumpers and accessories!

Children will be able to wear festive/sparkly jumpers and tops for the last 4 days of school, from Tuesday 14th to Friday 17th December. A donation is not needed for this- it is just for positive festive spirit and coincides with Christmas lunches being served in school.

Just to clarify, children do still wear the rest of their uniform- it is just the top that changes.

If children do not want to change their top, that is fine- we always have some children who prefer to stay in uniform. Some children have asked if they can wear festive accessories-hair pieces etc- this is fine too.

A massive well done and thank you to Gemma Oliver, our PTA chair, who ran the Para Ten to raise over £500 for our school. This charity event is a 10 mile run across woodlands, road and through rivers- not for the faint hearted. We are so proud of you Gemma- you are an inspiration!

School Photos.

In the spring term (February), Kittle photography will be coming to school to take individual photos of the children. These will then be available for parents to buy if they would like to. There will also be a chance for siblings to have their photo taken together.

As usual, Kittle Photography will take class photos in the summer term.

Forest school fun!

A new addition to play times has been our 'free play' forest school. This is an area that has tyres, planks, crates and pallets- children build and play using imagination and creativity. Here are a few examples of what they have built over the last few weeks, including a see-saw, a den, balance ramps and even a car!



As well as free play, we continue to have Forest schools running across the whole school- here are Year 3 down at the country park, having a break with hot chocolate, after a countryside walk!

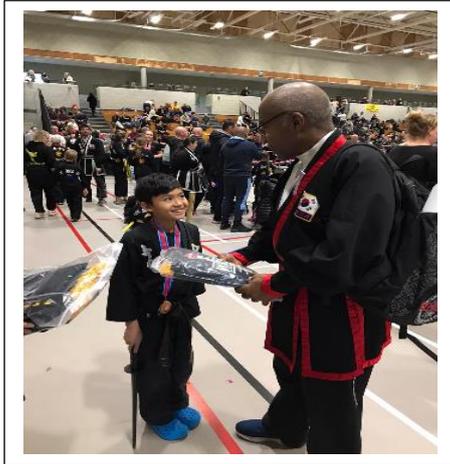


Record breaker Alex!

Kuk Sool Won of Colchester

On Saturday the 20th Nov 2021 Alex K, in Year 4, gained his first degree black belt at Kuk Sool Won of Colchester. In achieving this **he became one of the youngest black belts in the UK at the age of 9.** Alex started training at the age of 5. During the weekend, he also took part in the Kuk Sool Won European Tournament in Norwich, where, he competed with over 500 competitors from England, Scotland, Denmark, Ireland and the USA. At this event, he won bronze medal in Staff. This is a fantastic achievement- such a talent and we are so proud of him!

Alex (shown below) receiving his black belt uniform from Orville Lewis PKN 5th Degree Master and lead instructor at Colchester Kuk Sool Won.



Alex receiving his Bronze medal at the Kuk Sool Won European Tournament (Alex to the left of pic)

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

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

Thursday 6th January 2022 - Children return to school