

Highwoods Community Primary School Newsletter Spring 1

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Highwoods Community Primary School 'Learning for Life'



Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been an incredibly busy January at Highwoods but a brilliant one at that. It was great to welcome a visit from the local authority in January, who commended the school on the behaviour of the pupils, the quality of the learning in class and the positivity around the school. It is always great to get some lovely feedback and reflects a lot of hard work from staff, pupils, parents and governors.

We have the dates for the spring Parents evenings. They are on the 8th, 9th and 10th March. **Friday 11th March is our final non pupil day of the school year.** The parent meetings will be 15 minutes, face to face, as per the autumn term. We had nearly 100% attendance from parents at these meetings, so it proves just how important they are in finding out about how well your child is doing at school and what they need to develop. A ping will be sent to all families to book appointment slots after half term.

On Thursday 10th February, it is our first 'Number Day', which is a joint venture with the NSPCC. Children can wear non uniform and make a 50p donation which will go to the NSPCC. However, if children would like to, they can dress/decorate themselves as a number! While I appreciate that this might sound a little strange, the PING sent out by Mrs Bedford gave full details and examples about what this might look like e.g decorate a jumper with playing cards pinned on or use fabric pens to write numbers onto a t-shirt. Throughout the day, there will be maths challenges and games for pupils, led by our maths ambassadors- lots of photos will be in the next newsletter. Attached below is the link again for NSPCC maths day- it has a great video about why we are doing this and has ideas for dressing up if children want to. We do stress that if children want to just wear non uniform, that is fine, as is children staying in their school uniform.

<https://www.nspcc.org.uk/support-us/events-fundraising/social-special-events/number-day/resources-22>

Thank you in advance for your continued support, and we hope you have a calm and safe half term.

Mr Disley

Headteacher

School clubs.

We have had some parent requests that after school clubs return to 'normal'. I think it is important to understand the context of this request, and why the school is taking a cautious and measured approach. We desperately want to be back to 'normal', with clubs that enrich the experiences for children, but it will take time.

Absence rates in schools across the country are at their highest rates since the pandemic began- it was reported that attendance is below 85% nationally last week. Our school is at 93%, which proves we have got it right so far and how hard everyone is working to keep school open and safe. Despite what aspects of social media and the Government might say, the pandemic is not over- and in schools we are working incredibly hard just to remain open for all pupils.

Staff absence in our school has been the highest this half term since the pandemic began due to Covid. In addition to this, we have staff running tuition sessions and 'catch up' support for children in school and after school, as well as teachers marking and preparing work for the next day. Many staff have already taken on extra duties and responsibilities to make sure the school day continues to be as great as can be.

We are beginning to re-introduce some clubs- last week chess club began in Year 3 and 4, and we aim to bring back Carolyn's school of dance for Years 1-6 after half term (letter from Carolyn coming this week), but we will not see a full return to clubs until we have the capacity and Covid numbers fall. One of my roles as Headteacher is to protect the well-being of my staff, as well as ensure your children are safe- that means taking a cautious approach right now.

We appreciate that for some parents in infants, you have not seen our school without Covid- and that is incredibly sad and frustrating- but there are many years ahead where our school will look and feel like 'normal'.

We are hopeful that the summer term will see full normality return- this includes extra-curricular clubs for all year groups. We will keep you updated with regards to clubs- both private clubs where parents can pay, and school led clubs that are free to everyone and run by staff.

Thank you for your continued support and understanding.

Forest school fun!

Brilliant fun in the forest school for our Year 3s this week! One of the best things we do in our school!



PTA DJ needed.

We are on the lookout for a new DJ that can help the PTA with events such as discos and summer fairs. If anyone in our parent community can recommend someone, we would be really grateful as our previous fabulous DJ has retired.

Please email pta@highwoodsprimary.com if you can help where further details about dates and payment can be answered.

We have received some stunning feedback from touring parents and visitors about our diversity and inclusive reading books- we have thousands so that all of our pupils have representation and positive role models- love this display by our Mental Health Champion, Ms Djurovich, who put this up recently.



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
office@highwoodsprimary.com
admin@highwoodsprimary.com

Dates to note:

Friday 11th February Last day of half term
21st February Children return to school
25th February PTA magic Show
8th, 9th and 10th March Parents Evenings
11th March Non pupil day
25th March PTA Mother's day sale