



19 OCT 2017

# Halstead Community Primary School

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Head Teacher: Leslie Hawkins Email: headteacher@halstead.kent.sch.uk

Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Dear Parents/Carers,

## October Newsletter

What a busy term this has been! Class trips and the residential as well as sporting and artistic events have kept us all on our toes. I have had lots of positive feedback from the Saplings visit to Hever and cannot fault the behaviour of the Willow children who came with us to Swanage last week. It makes you very proud to be a part of this school. Here are the October notices:

### Staffing

We are assured that the sports apprentice will be starting in Term 2 and we shall give you further details when we know more.

I should also like to thank Mrs Foster for her hard work at the school during her time as a teaching assistant; it was greatly appreciated by the staff and children she worked with.

### Attendance

As a school, we have a target of 95% attendance as a minimum. Analysis this week shows that of the 89 pupils on roll, 82 have already dipped below this threshold, with some considerably lower. The Local Authority have now become involved and we shall be making changes to the processes and procedures.

If your child(ren) have been persistently low attenders over the last year or two, we shall be contacting you directly as a handwritten note or email to explain absences may no longer be acceptable when your child returns.

Also, although we have the discretion to authorise an absence for exceptional circumstances, from Term 2, we shall require additional evidence to prove the exceptional circumstances; for example, some paperwork to prove that a wedding is taking place overseas.

### Sickness

We still have a considerable number of unauthorised absences because we do not have a letter to explain the reason your child(ren) did not attend school. Mrs Cater has contacted everyone this applies to by text. May I remind everyone that more than 10 unauthorised absences (5 days) in any 100 session period (10 weeks) may result in a penalty notice being issued.

### PE Kit/Uniform

We are still seeing a number of children not wearing correct uniform, in particular PE kits. A football top is not PE kit even if it is the correct team colour. Also, it may be worth returning PE bags as soon as the PE kit is washed as there are increasing amounts of children without PE kits on their class day.

As a reminder, Monday is Oak, Tuesday is Willow, Wednesday is Buds and Thursday is Saplings.

### Free School Meals

Just a reminder to all that even if your child is in Buds or Saplings and will be provided with a free school meal via the Government scheme, it is still worth applying to see if you are eligible for them. This can be done by following this link: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>. If your application is approved, you are under no obligation to take up a school meal if you would prefer to provide a healthy packed lunch but it will generate additional funding for the school and, ultimately, your child(ren).

**H**armony; **C**reating & **P**reparing for **S**uccess



### Cross-Country

For those that haven't seen our tweet, our cross country team had their most successful day ever at the Sevenoaks Sports Partnership event yesterday. Congratulations to all of the runners! Plus a special thank you to Mr Collier for training them and supporting them at the event until I could get there.

### Sevenoaks Choral Day

Seven of our Willow children took part in a choral day with children from many of the Sevenoaks primary schools yesterday. They were extremely excited about it when they returned and we shall try to get a video of them on the website over the half term.

### Children at the end of the day

Just a polite reminder that once the class teachers have dismissed the children, they are the responsibility of the person collecting them. We have had a number of complaints recently from parents about the behaviour of children in the playground after we have dismissed them. Please try to keep a close eye on what your children are doing.

### Adults in the building

Again, another polite reminder that parents and carers should not be entering the buildings at the start or end of the day without permission from the school office. Staff have told me about parents/carers coming into their classes after they have collected their class from the playground. Please, if you do need to have a brief word with the class teacher, do so before the line has left the playground OR leave a message with Mrs Cater.

### Tissues

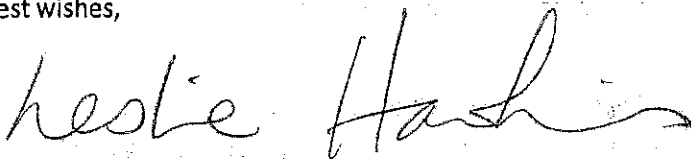
Children are going through our boxes of tissues at an alarming rate. We would be extremely grateful if you could donate a box of tissues to your child's class. We are sorry to ask but our budget will find it hard to support tissue supply at the current rate.

### Forthcoming dates

30/10/17	NHS height and weight for year 6.
09/11/17	PAFA own clothes day.
14/11/17	Van Cols individual photos.
14/11/17	Open afternoon for prospective parents at 1.30pm.
17/11/17	Into Film Festival at the Stag Theatre Sevenoaks.
22/11/17	Open books
23/11/17	NHS flu vaccination for reception, yr1, yr2, yr3 & yr4.
w/c 27/11/17	Saplings assessment week.
30/11/17	PAFA own clothes day.

Please enjoy your half term!

Best wishes,



Leslie Hawkins