

Friday 20th September 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

Welcome Newsletter

I'm sure that you, like us, are already wondering how we can already have been back for so long! It has been a very busy start as I'm sure you can imagine. There are lots of notices and reminders; they are as follows:

New Intake

We welcomed our new Reception pupils to the school and they are all settling in really well and joined the rest of the school for playtime after only four sessions. Please welcome and help any new parents on the playground; it is always difficult to get to know the routines and ways of a school!

We also welcome Miss Anderson and Mr Johnson onto the staff along with Mrs Johnson (no relation) as a permanent member of the team. We shall also be welcoming Mrs Rumgay back part-time from next Friday.

Congratulations

I know it seems early in the term for a congratulations but for the first time in all of my years at Halstead, the Horticultural Society Autumn Show fell after we started back at school. This allowed us to enter some of the children's categories. We had a second, third and a highly commended in the 'Painted Stone' category and a first place in the wonky fruit or vegetable category. The prize money was given out at Celebration Assembly last week and you can see these entries on the school website.

New topics

The classes have all started their topics for the freshly designed curriculum – most by using the Virtual Reality headsets that Mrs Swansborough arranged for us to borrow from Sevenoaks School. They were so good that she has asked if we can borrow them again later in the year!

I should like to add a brief word about the POWer projects. The Parent Survey last academic year had a mixed response to this new style of homework but the children were so overwhelmingly positive about the projects that we are keeping them for the time being.

If you have any other questions regarding the curriculum your class will be following, do come to the class curriculum information meetings next Tuesday.

Recycling

We have always collected used batteries at the school and there is always a collection of old stamps in the main office. However, together with Nursery, this year we are going bigger! In addition to the stamps and batteries, we shall be asking for a whole host of different things, eg. crisp packets and tin foil. A full list will come to you once the collection bins have all been set up. Tracey has asked the new Care Home if they would like to sponsor them and we are currently awaiting their response.

Aldi stickers

We have had a massive envelope arrive at school with everything we need in order to collect the Aldi stickers that you may have seen advertised on television. Finding a space large enough to display it will be my next challenge but if you have any of the stickers from your shopping, we would love to take them off your hands!

Job opportunity

The Cock Inn are recruiting new staff and have asked us to let our parents know. Do go and speak to the team there if you are interested.

They are also looking at ways to do some fundraising activities for the school so as soon as we know what they are, we shall pass the information on to you.

Scrapstore

The company that were going to provide the training for this new lunchtime activity has closed down and new trainers are being sought so that we can enable a group of Willow pupils to run it. However, in the meantime, if any of you have spare tyres, tarpaulins, boards (without nails in or splintered edges) or old sheets/curtains, we would appreciate donations so that there is a large range of materials available to the children when it starts.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Once again, we are proud to be hosting the MacMillan Coffee Morning at the school. The event is taking place on Saturday 5th October. Keep an eye out for posters around the village for more information and we hope to see lots of you there.

Pick-Up

My annual reminder at the start of the year that Reception and Key Stage 1 children **MUST** be collected from the playground; staff will not release them to walk along the pavement to meet you outside of the school. Also, if you have a regular arrangement with another parent around collection at the end of the day, or, for Y6, to say your child can walk home on their own, please let the school know **in writing**.

Ear-rings

May I remind everyone that only simple stud ear-rings are allowed in school. For PE, ear-rings must be removed or taped up. The child must be able to remove them themselves as staff are not allowed to do it for them and tape **must** come from home.

Forthcoming dates

These will be sent out separately and are in the process of being added to the calendar on the website.

Best wishes,

Leslie Hawkins