



Highwood Primary School

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Promoting Resilience, Achieving Potential

Headteacher Mrs B Rai

Tuesday 19th October 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

The first part of the autumn term has been as busy as ever. We are very disappointed to have to tell you that the increase in numbers of cases of Covid-19 has meant that the Friends of Highwood's disco on Thursday has been cancelled. We know that the children will be very disappointed too. However, the fantastic pumpkin display will be under the sycamore tree from Wednesday after school – please come and have a look in a safe and socially-distanced way! We have been astounded by the creativity on show. From Thursday afternoon, the gate will be left open for you to collect your pumpkin to enjoy at home. Winners of the competition will be announced later this week.

Sadly it also means that our Harvest Assembly has had to be cancelled. We have had a brilliant response to the call for donations as you can see from the picture here. Thank you. We will arrange for the items to reach those in need and hope to hold an assembly after half term to talk to the children about where our food comes from and how lucky we are to live in a country where food is plentiful.



We had a good attendance to our first "Book Look" event on 4th October. Class teachers received numerous encouraging comments from parents. Thank you so much for fostering partnerships. We are looking forward to your attending our next event on Monday 8th November.

GOVERNOR NEWS We have a dedicated governing body team led by our Chairperson Mrs Jo Johnson. I would like to thank them for their continued support and for being able to carry out their volunteer duties remotely during the pandemic. It was pleasing to have our first face to face meeting last month.

We have a few changes taking place by the end of this autumn term, where the term of office ends for a few governors. Lisa Pratchett will be stepping down in November. The school team would like to thank her for the crucial support offered in SEND and safeguarding matters.



We would like to thank the outgoing Chairperson of the Resources Committee. Darren Freeman has carried out a complex job, particularly during the pandemic. He has provided the school financial insight during a time when budgets have been shrinking nationally and there has been much uncertainty with costs rising related to cleaning the premises.

We are delighted to announce that Eddie Tunnah has been voted the Vice Chairperson of the Governing Body and Miss Olivia Gowers has been elected by the school team as our school representative.

We have the following vacancies: 2 Co-opted, 1 Parent, 1 LEA governors.

Prospective governors will be visiting the school this week to find out how ambitious we are for Highwood.

Please consider whether you would like to be a parent governor. Details of the vacancy will be sent out in due course.

E-SAFETY IS EVERYONE'S RESPONSIBILITY

We would like to alert you to some safeguarding guidance around the new TV show Squid Game. Schools around the country are reporting children mimicking the show's content. Just for your information, the show is rated 15+ but it is likely that the content of the show is going to be more widely known because of views of the show on social media platforms. There is some useful information to parents and carers about this here.

<https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>



BLACK HISTORY MONTH originated in the US and first came to the UK in 1987. It aims to highlight and celebrate the stories of prominent black people. In 2020, four red postboxes were painted black and adorned with the stories of famous Brits in honour of Black History Month. Comedian Sir Lenny Henry features on a postbox in Belfast, and nursing pioneer Mary Seacole, who cared for wounded soldiers during the 1853-1856 Crimean War, is pictured on a postbox in Cardiff. A London postbox, in Brixton, features the painting 'Queuing at the RA' by British-Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare whilst the Scottish box, in Glasgow, depicts footballer Walter Tull, who was the first black player signed by the Rangers.

COMPETITION We are inviting children in Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 to suggest who they would celebrate on a postbox in recognition of the achievements of a famous black British icon or global hero! The judging will focus not just upon their creative skills but also on how they have researched and written the main facts about their hero on the letter box. Children

should draw their favourite icon on an A3 paper sheet using either paint, colouring pencils or collage and photos to illustrate their poster. Winners will be chosen from each year group.



The closing date of the competition is Monday 1st November and the current plan is that winners will be announced at our special Black History Month celebration assembly on Wednesday 3rd November.

We would like you to contribute and share your achievements with us too. If you have any suggestions or can make a specific contribution to Black History Month, please let your child’s class teacher know as soon as possible. We look forward to receiving your support throughout the month.

PERSISTANT PUPIL ABSENCES The new education secretary, Nadhim Zahawi has vowed to tackle persistent pupil absences describing it as a key priority. I am grateful to the detailed monitoring carried out by Mrs Faulkner to find out why children are missing their learning. We work closely with yourselves and monitor all unauthorised absences. These can result in a fixed penalty fine. Please work with us to provide your child with the best chances of learning by ensuring they are in school every day and on time.



LATENESS = LOST LEARNING *(Figures below are calculated over a school year)*

| | |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| 5 minutes late each day | 3 days lost! |
| 10 minutes late each day | 6.5 days lost! |
| 15 minutes late each day | 10 days lost! |
| 20 minutes late each day | 13 days lost! |
| 30 minutes late each day | 19 days lost! |

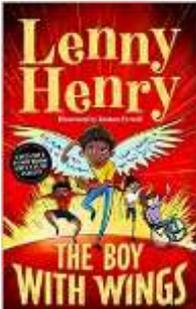
YEAR 6 SECONDARY SCHOOL APPLICATIONS The deadline is 31st October 2021. Please note that the admissions team has recommended applications are made by 22nd October. Applications are to be made via the following link www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions.

Finally, we sadly say goodbye and good luck to Mrs Muncie. She will leave us at the end of this week. She has provided a range of expert support and skills to the school team, families, and children of Highwood. The role of a SENDCo and Inclusion Leader is highly demanding and pressurised. However, Mrs Muncie has demonstrated warmth and understanding to help our children thrive. We wish her continued happiness in her new role at a Special School. Many families have already met her successor, Mrs Fernandes. Please do not hesitate to contact the office team to make an appointment should you wish to discuss SEND and other inclusion matters.

DIARY DATES You'll see from the dates below that there's plenty to look forward to. Please make sure you re-check dates and timings as sometimes changes are made. We will let you know as soon as possible if events have to be cancelled due to the rising numbers in COVID 19. There will be some additions of workshops and class trips. However, a separate letter will always be sent home.

Yours sincerely,

Bindu Rai
Headteacher

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| 20/10/21 | Years 3 to 6 shall be joining schools throughout the country for an online event with actor, comedian, and author Lenny Henry for his only schools' event of the year! Lenny will introduce his brilliantly funny, action-packed middle grade adventure story THE BOY WITH WINGS. He'll take questions from the audience, talk about where all of his ideas come from, his love of comic books and chat with the event host, author and illustrator Nadia Shireen. We'll also see illustrator Keenon Ferrell showing just how he brings Lenny's characters to life. |  |
| 20/10/21 | <u>The Christmas Shoe Box Appeal 2021 Launched by School Council</u> The Shoe box appeal aims to provide children who are less fortunate with a gift to open at Christmas. The appeal is run by the charity 'The Samaritan's Purse' who collect and distribute the shoe boxes to 17 countries from around the world. | |
| 21/10/21 | Vaccination UK in school to administer flu immunisations | |
| 22/10/21 | Pupils break up – normal staggered finish times | |
| HALF TERM Mon 25th October - Fri 29th October | | |
| 03/11/21 | Black History Month Celebration Assembly Poetry Theme – 'Proud to Be' | |
| 04/11/21 | Diwali celebrated by Hindus and Jains, Bandi Chhor Divas celebrated by Sikhs | |
| 05/11/21 | Guy Fawkes Night | |
| 08/11/21 | Year 6 trip to the RAF museum in Hendon Book Look – starts 10 minutes are each year group's finish time | |
| 09/11/21 | Prospective Reception parents talk and tour 2.00pm – please contact the school office to book a space Yr 6 NHS height and weight measurement | |

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| 11/11/20 | Year 3 Stone Age Day (in school) Class Remembrance Assembly & Armistice Day – two minute silence to be held |
| 16/11/21 | Anti-Bullying Fortnight linked with our school values and British values sharing learning Year 6 NHS Emotional well-being programme (The Lancaster Model) |
| 19/11/21 | Year 2 Great Fire of London Day (in school) |
| 23/11/21 | Parent Consultation evening - details to follow – an opportunity to hold a 10-minute meeting with the class teacher regarding your child’s progress |
| 24/11/21 | Parent Consultation evening – as above |
| 25/11/21 | Prospective Reception parents talk and tour 9.30am – please contact the school office to book a space |
| 03/12/21 | Friends of Highwood Mufti Day for tombola prizes - please donate items to school. Details to follow |
| 04/12/21 | Friends of Highwood Christmas Fair |
| 06/12/21 | Book Look – starts 10 minutes after each year group’s finish time |
| 08/12/21 | Prospective Reception parents talk and tour 9.30am – please contact the school office to book a space |
| 10/12/21 | Friends of Highwood’s Secret Shopping Room |
| 14/12/21 | Prospective Reception parents talk and tour 2.00pm – please contact the school office to book a space |
| 15/12/21 | Christmas lunch, Christmas jumper/T-shirt day |
| 21/12/21 | Pupils break up School Ends 1.45-2.00pm (staggered finish times to be notified) |
| CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS Wed 22 nd December 2021 – Tuesday 4 th January 2022 | |
| 05/01/22 | INSET DAY 3 School Closed to Pupils |
| 06/01/22 | Start of spring term - welcome back to pupils |
| 14/07/22 | Secondary transfer day for Year 6 pupils |