



**Highwood Primary School**  
**Mead Way, Bushey, Watford, Hertfordshire, WD23 2AW**  
Tel: 01923 256210 E-mail: admin@highwood.herts.sch.uk  
**Promoting Resilience, Achieving Potential**  
Headteacher Mrs B Rai

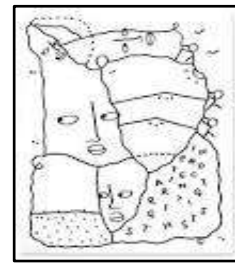
Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Happy New Year and Welcome Back to 2024 - A New Year of Growth and Learning by Promoting Resilience and Achieving Every Child's Potential!**

We hope this message finds you and your families in good health. As we embark on another exciting spring term at Highwood, we extend a warm welcome back to all our staff, parents, and pupils. On behalf of the school team, thank you so much for your Christmas cards and gifts. They are truly appreciated.

We start the year by immersing ourselves in creativity. Miss Gowers, our Art Subject Leader has organised each year group to focus on an artist's representations of portraits. Children will study artists such as Paul Klee, Yoyoi Kusama, Toyin Ojih Odutola, Frida Kalo, Keith Haring, and Shantell Martin to name a few. They will produce their portraits using a variety of media and once finished, will be displayed across the school to demonstrate the diverse and inclusive representation of our community. The learning will support modern British values and empower the children to respect and appreciate what makes them different and unique.



**NO  
OUT  
SIDERS**  
**'All different, All welcome'**

**Governor and Staff News** I would like to share the following.

I want to thank Jo Johnson who, after 8 years of dedication through Highwood's turbulent times, as a parent governor and chairperson, has decided the time is right for her to step down. She has always been down-to-earth, approachable, and deeply caring about the Highwood Community.



Over the last few years, Jo has taken a significant role in leading Health and Safety, Safeguarding, Curriculum, and Resources overview. She has driven standards of improvement particularly when meeting the ever-changing needs through the Covid-19 regulations. She has supported and challenged me when working alongside our improvement advisors and through the Herts commissioned reviews.

Secondly, William Brooks will also be stepping down as his term of office ends. He has been associated with Highwood for over 15 years. He has also brought useful insight to the Governing Body as a parent governor and later as a co-opted governor. During my time as headteacher, his role as a maths governor has strengthened our practice through his questioning and observations. He has helped to bring ease and a sense of proportion as we have made significant changes to how we teach maths and other aspects of school life.

Thank you to Jo and William for the tremendous number of hours given voluntarily, not only as governors but also through the Friends of Highwood PTA.

We are grateful that Ravi Patel has been appointed to the position of Parent Governor. He has three children attending Highwood, in Reception, Year 2 and Year 4. We look forward to his expertise in finances and accounting to support the school during the current challenging climate.

In addition, Innes Gray will be joining as a Co-opted Governor. He has over 30 years within the housebuilding, construction, and design sector. He has already undertaken a tour of the school site and has discussed the various problems such as the leaking roof and drainage with Mr Matyskiewicz. We welcome their support and challenge as critical friends.

I am pleased that Eddie Tunnah, Vice Chair, has stepped up to become Chairperson. Here is a message from him:

*Firstly, I'd like to sincerely thank Jo Johnson for being Chair of the Governing Body over the last few years. She led us through several big challenges, the Covid-19 pandemic, changes of head and deputy head teachers, and through a successful Ofsted inspection.*

*I joined the governing body in spring 2019, having been asked by friends with children at the school if I would consider doing so. I visited the school and liked what I saw, so I decided to give it a go. I am a Co-opted governor. I am from the local community and I have*

*lived with my partner Sarah in central Watford since 2007. Though we do not have children, I work at the Open University in its careers service and am passionate about education, and think primary schools are key in giving people the best possible start to their lives. I am looking forward to stepping up to the challenge of being Chair of Governors at Highwood, where I'll be leading a talented team. Following the recent Ofsted inspection, the school is in a great position to move forward and further develop the excellence all our children deserve.*



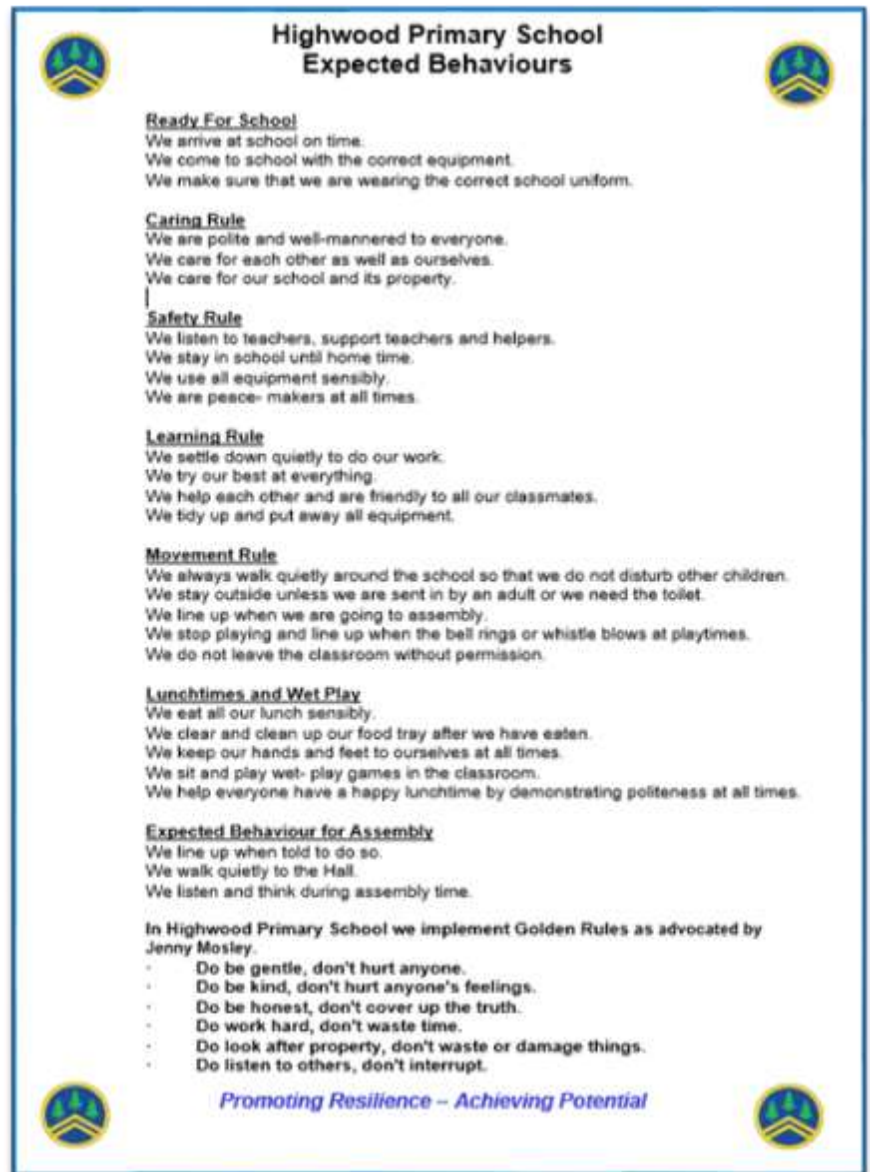
Regarding staffing news, we warmly welcome Greta Woodward who will be teaching part-time across different year groups. We are also delighted to share the wonderful news about Miss May expecting a baby in April. She will work until the end of the spring term. We wish Miss May a continued smooth and healthy pregnancy. We are underway with the recruitment of a class teacher in Poplar for the summer term.

With a renewed sense of energy and wellness after our break, we will be talking to the children about their resolutions or goals for 2024 and reminding them of our Golden Rules so that they can enjoy and develop good characteristics.

2024 promises to be a year filled with new opportunities and memorable experiences for our pupils. We look forward to continuing our journey together toward academic excellence and personal development.

Yours sincerely,




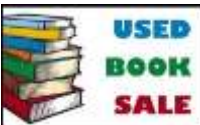
Bindu Rai  
Headteacher



### Diary Dates for the Spring term

04/01/24	Welcome back - Art Project across the school commences
11/01/24	<b>Year 1</b> local walking trip to Fishers Field School tour for prospective parents – 2:00pm
18/01/24	<b>Year 6</b> Trip to Hendon RAF Museum
22/01/24	National Handwriting Week - In today's society, technology is everywhere. However, handwriting is still part of our daily lives. We will promote the



	importance of writing
23/01/24	<b>Year 3</b> trip to Tring Museum
	Big Garden Birdwatch begins 26/01/23 Big Garden Birdwatch is the world's largest garden wildlife survey. How many types of birds can you spot visiting your garden? Sign up <a href="#">here</a> online!
26/01/24	<b>Sycamore 6 Class Assembly</b> 9:10am
27/01/24	Holocaust Memorial Day
01/02/24	<b>Beech 2</b> class sharing and KS1 Celebration Assembly 2:50pm
02/02/24	<b>NSPCC Number Day – separate letter to be sent</b> We are delighted to announce we will be joining many schools across the country to support the NSPCC's work in safeguarding children's wellbeing and mental health. To support the vital work of the NSPCC, which includes the free phone <b>CHILDLINE</b> service, we will be asking for a donation of £1 (suggested but more if you wish to). Donations to be made on School Gateway nearer the time please. We invite your child to dress up as a number or mathematical symbol – this can be an all-out dressing up outfit or simply creating any number or mathematical symbol and attaching it to your school sweatshirt. All children will have time on the morning of Number Day to create a small wearable item, such as a headband or sellotaped badge.
05/02/24	<b>February Book Look 3:25pm – 4:15pm</b> - parents invited into school after pick up to look through their children's books and learning. It's a good time to spend 10 – 15 minutes talking to your child about their learning. Can they remember what they have learned? Can they explain mathematical methods to you? Can they read their work to you? What learning have they found inspirational?
06/02/24	Safer Internet Day
09/02/24	Poplar 5 class Assembly 9:10am
10/02/24	<b>Happy Lunar New Year. Year of the Dragon 2024</b> 
<b>Thursday</b> 15/02/24	Break up for half term – school ends at 3:25pm
<b>Friday</b> 16/02/24	<b>INSET Day – school closed to pupils. Staff training day.</b>
<b>Monday 19<sup>th</sup> – Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February HALF TERM</b>	
26/02/24	Back to school
w/c 26/02/24 	<b>Friends of Highwood will be holding a World Book Day costume sale and pre-loved Book Sale on Friday 1<sup>st</sup> March.</b> This week, please donate any books or costumes that you no longer need. Enjoy giving and sharing with others! 



01/03/24	 <b>Friends of Highwood</b> – Tuck Shop and preloved Costume and Book sale in preparation for World Book day 2024 Further details will be sent out nearer the time.
March and April	<p>Waste Week led by Eco Committee and School Council – details will be shared nearer the time. It's a great way to get the whole school working together, behind an environmental caring project.</p> <p><b>We will be discussing and checking the food waste created at snack time and lunchtime.</b></p> <p><b>We will be involved in getting our school grounds tidy and litter-free.</b></p> 
07/03/24	World Book Day
08/03/24	<b>Elm 1</b> class sharing Assembly 2:50pm
10/03/24	It is expected that Ramadan will begin on the evening of Sunday 10th March. Warm wishes to those marking this special occasion.
11/03/24	<b>Year 5</b> Bikeability course – details to follow
14/03/24	<b>Year 2</b> trip to Florence Nightingale Museum – To be confirmed
15/03/24	<b>Year 1</b> Trip to Windsor Castle
15/03/24	<b>Hazel 4</b> class sharing Assembly 9:10am
17/03/24	St Patrick's Day
19/03/24	Parent Consultation Meetings
20/03/24	Parent Consultation Meetings
<b>Thursday</b> 28/03/24	END OF TERM - school ends at <b>2:00pm</b>