

Highworth Combined School

Dear all

It's been an eventful week! My sincere apologies to all those experiencing considerable disruption following the closure of some Year group 'bubbles'. It is not what any of us would want to happen, but to keep everyone safe, I have to follow the instructions of the Department for Education and Public Health England. We have sent communication about Remote Learning to all year groups involved. All staff will continue to work at home or on site so please let us know if you need support during this difficult time.

Thank you to all who took the time to attend Parent's Evening appointments this week; your involvement and support is much appreciated. At school, we found the video call system worked well, but I would love to know your views on how successful (or otherwise) it was. Please feel free to catch up with me on the playground at the beginning or end of the day with any feedback that you have.

Over the course of the last 2 weeks, Clare Dimishky, Deputy Head Teacher, and I have met with each Class Teacher to hold our termly Attainment Review Meetings. We look in detail at the progress of the class and each pupil in order to agree next steps for effective teaching and learning. We have been pleased to find that, contrary to the doom and gloom about the impact of lockdown on children's learning often portrayed in the media, the vast majority of our pupils are making pleasing progress with most back on track. This is due to a lot of hard work from a lot of people: all of you who supported your children during lockdown with home learning; your children who have returned to school with such enthusiasm, and the dedication and skill of all the adults working in classes.

Some exciting news! Hot lunches are back on the menu at Highworth Combined School. Thanks to the persistence of our school cook, Sue Croft, Chartwells have come up with a new menu, including a hot meal, which can be provided safely to children within their bubble. We have sent the new menu and information about how to order by Eschools and also put paper copies in book bags to come home today. Our ability to continue to offer these hot meals is dependent on how many meals are ordered. If possible, please do take advantage of this new menu so that we can get back to serving well over 200 meals each day.

New Inset Days for this academic year and the start of the next have been agreed by the Governors. They are as follows:

Tuesday 5th January 2021 (this follows another Inset day, previously advised, on Monday 4th January) with children returning to school for the Spring Term on Wednesday 6th January

Thursday 1st April 2021 (this is just before the Easter Holiday) with the Spring Term now ending for children on Wednesday 31st March

Thursday 2nd and Friday 3rd September 2021 (these follow an Inset day, previously advised, on Monday 1st September) with children returning to school for the Autumn Term on Monday 6th September 2021

All of these dates are shown on the calendar on the schools website.

Please find below some exciting news about a Young Carers award achieved by the school and an Early Years newsletter.

As ever, my very best wishes to you and your families for a happy weekend.

Clare Pankhania



We are very pleased to announce that we have been awarded with the Young Carers Gold Award for the work that we do in school with our Young Carers. Before school closure in March, we ran a club on a regular basis for children across the school who are Young Carers. We look forward to starting this club up again when Covid-19 restrictions are lifted. If you'd like to find out more information about Young Carers, please have a look at their website <http://www.youngcarersbucks.org/> or phone the school to speak to Mrs Day (Inclusion Deputy Headteacher).



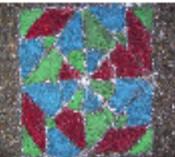
Buckinghamshire Family Learning



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Keeping in Touch with Family Learning- Early Years Edition

Hello! As the evenings are drawing in, it makes us think about the sky and the difference between day and night. In this edition we will look at some activities which you can do with your children to support their understanding of the world.

<p>Share a Book</p> 		<p>Night Monkey Day Monkey is a super story by Julia Donaldson exploring the differences between daytime and night time. Snuggle up and read this wonderful story at different times of day. Explore what sounds you can hear at different times of the day – how does a frog sound? Or an excitable monkey? Another lovely story about nocturnal animals is Owl Babies – getting ready for an adventure.</p>	
<p>Busy Fingers</p> 	<p>Diwali is being celebrated on 14th November, Diwali is the festival of light. Rangoli patterns are traditionally drawn with chalks, rice or flour to welcome visitors to homes. Encourage your child to draw a pattern using chalk on the floor outside. You could extend by getting their fingers busy filling the pattern with rice (which you can colour with food colouring). Great for hand and eye coordination!</p>		
<p>Explore</p> 	<p>Go on a light and dark hunt!</p> <p>What can you find around your home or outside that makes light shine and helps us see in the dark? Once you have found objects, extend their play – what can you do with a torch? What safety do they need to know about candles? What is reflective? Why do we need reflective clothes in the dark? New words to think about ...reflective, glow, bright, safe.</p>		
<p>Get active</p> 	<p>At night time, when the night is drawing in, look out of the window and star gaze. You may see stars twinkling in the sky – can your child make a shape like a star or the moon. How can you make their body into the shape of a half moon, full moon or crescent moon shape? Encourage words which support maths for shapes – circle, half, full. Your child may want to go on a mission to a planet – can they zoom up in a rocket, standing tall getting ready for take off? Sing songs as you watch the stars. Twinkle twinkle little star, Zoom, zoom, zoom we're going to the moon, 5 little men in a flying saucer.</p>		

[Useful Websites of the Week](#)

Stargazing with [Cheebies](#) has great information and songs!

For many people Covid, and the changes it has brought to our lives, make this a difficult time. The [Every Mind Matters](#) website has simple advice to help parents and carers support the well-being of themselves and their children.

Thank you to a reader of our last Keeping in Touch who shared making bread following reading "The Little Red Hen" – it looks delicious! Please continue to share what activities you have been up to.