

Highworth Combined School

December 2017 NEWSLETTER

Dear Parent,

It would be fair to say that this has been a busy few weeks! Please read on to find out about just some of what we've been up to and some important news about the new term in 2018!



Staffing Update

I hope that you have received the letter, sent by eSchools, informing you of the changes to our leadership team. Just in case you haven't, please note the following:

I am delighted to be able to tell you that Clare Dimishky returned from Maternity Leave on Wednesday this week. I know that you will join me in warmly welcoming her back; she has been much missed. Clare will work for 3 days each week, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. She will have a slightly different title: Deputy Head Teacher, with responsibility for Teaching and Learning. Clare's responsibilities will be similar to those that she had before her Maternity Leave and to those that Caroline Day has so capably fulfilled in her absence.

I am equally delighted to tell you that Caroline Day has been appointed to a new position as Deputy Head Teacher, with responsibility for Inclusion. Caroline will also work for 3 days, on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Caroline's role will be to lead the provision for different groups of learners within the school. This will include those with additional needs (including children within the Hearing Impaired Department), those who speak English as an additional language, those who receive the pupil premium and gifted and talented learners.

Both Deputy Head Teachers will continue to have a role in the pastoral care of our pupils and in implementation of our behaviour management procedures.

Staff Training Days

The training days for this academic year and for the start of the next academic year were published earlier this term. As a reminder, please add the following to your diaries:

Wednesday 3rd January 2018 (Set by Bucks CC)

Monday 4th June 2018

Wednesday 5th September 2018

Thursday 6th September 2018

Friday 7th September 2018

January 2nd 2019 (Set by Bucks CC)

April 23rd 2019 (Set by Bucks CC)

Emergency Closure Procedure

Having had a couple of emergency closure days already this winter, it would seem prudent to remind you of what will happen should bad weather, or any other emergency, require the school to close. If it is deemed necessary to close the school a text message/email will automatically be sent to the main, designated contact which is on file for each child using eSchools. The system will only send one message to families with more than once child at our school. For the system to work:

- *The emergency telephone number and email address which we have on file for you must be correct! If you got a new phone for Christmas ensure that you have updated our contact details.

- *Your mobile phone must be switched on and have service.

- *Your phone must be capable of receiving text messages or emails. Not every family has provided us with a mobile phone number and the text service will not routinely work with land lines.

We have been using eSchools for some time now and most parents report that it works effectively. If it did not work for you this week then now would be a good time to resolve the issue. Please contact Karen Bennet in our office if you require help with your password or setup.

In addition to sending an eSchools message, we are also required to inform Bucks County Council of any closure. They publish the information on the COUNTY website at www.buckscc.gov.uk.

Where possible, we will make decisions about closure as early as possible in order to give you all as much notice as we can. Feedback about the recent closures was that this was appreciated by parents and staff. Should it be necessary to close once the school day has started then the same procedures will be implemented. This happened 7 years ago and most pupils were collected relatively quickly.

Hot Meals – special menu

Although ALL pupils in Reception, Yr1 and Yr 2 classes are entitled to a FREE hot meal each day, the school is actually charged for each of these meals. However the government provide the school with a grant which is designed to offset this cost. The grant is based on how many pupils actually eat a meal on one particular day each term. The count day next term is on **Thursday 18th January**. We want to encourage as many pupils as possible to eat a FREE hot meal on this day, so our grant is as large as possible! To encourage this, our cooks will be preparing a special menu which includes some of our pupils' favourite foods. If your child is in Reception, Yr1 or Yr2, please help us to maximise our grant by ordering a FREE meal for your child on this day. The deadline for ordering this meal is THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY.

Christmas Events

We started our celebrations with the PTA Christmas Bazaar. Although not as well attended as similar events in the past, I am delighted to be able to tell you that in the region of £1800 was raised. As usual, Santa was helped by an enthusiastic group of Elves shown in all their glory below.



The next event was our Lower School performance of 'Super Star'. Thanks to Mrs Marshall and her fabulous lower school team, the show was a resounding success enjoyed by all who attended and performed.

The snow meant that our youngest pupils had to wait a little longer than expected to show off their performance skills. As usual, they astounded us with their growing confidence and did themselves and Mrs Ward's team of Early Years staff proud.



Also later than planned, Mrs Martin was responsible for our fabulous Carol Concert when the array of musical prowess amongst our pupils was clear for all to see. The range of musical opportunities available for Highworth Pupils is wide and varied and the credit for most of this must go to Mrs Martin, ably assisted by her team of recorder and choir teachers; Miss Barr, Mrs Makohon, Mrs Phillips, Mrs Lenehan and Mrs Lipinski. Thank you all on behalf of both children and parents.



School Crossing Patrol

We have not yet been successful in recruiting a new school crossing patroller (or patrollers) so I am asking once again for your help. Do you know anyone who might be interested in taking up this position? Buckinghamshire County Council is prepared to make the position as flexible as possible with up to 3 people sharing the role. There is also the possibility for one person to work in the morning and one in the afternoon. Please spread the word to anyone you know who might be interested and pass on the following details.

School Crossing Patroller needed for Highworth Combined School & Nursery

Buckinghamshire County Council are looking for someone reliable who enjoys working with children to help them with their journeys to and from school (job share considered)

If you are interested in this role or know someone who would be, please contact the School Crossing Patrol Supervisor on 01494 586639 to find out more about the role



Admissions for Next Year

Parents with children who will join a Reception class in September 2018 need to formally apply for a place at their chosen school before 3pm on **15th January 2018**. This applies to ALL children who were born between 1.09.2013 and 31.08.2014 and will include EVERY child who attends our Nursery. Most of these children will currently be only three years old and it is very important that if you know anyone with a child of this age you let them know of the January deadline. Applying for a Reception class place is a totally separate process than applying for a Nursery place because children in Nurseries have no automatic right to transfer into Reception classes - even if they are located at the same school. The whole procedure is explained on the county's web site at www.buckscc.gov.uk/admissions

Nursery Spaces

We currently still have a few spaces in our Nursery for up to 30 hours per week. In September 2017 the government doubled the amount of FREE nursery provision from 15 hours per week to 30 hours per week. If you know of a family who are looking for either 15 hours of nursery provision in January, or who need up to 30 hours per week (this could be extended even more by making use of Highworth's Breakfast club and /or After school club) please ask them to contact us.

And Finally

A reminder that school closes at 2.15pm on Tuesday 19th December. May I wish you a peaceful and enjoyable 2 weeks with your families. We will look forward to seeing you again in 2018 on Thursday, 4th January!

Diary Dates

Fri	15 th	Christmas Jumper Day
Mon	18 th	Mr Marvel and Christmas parties
Tues	19 th	End of Term Assembly 10.00am School closes 2.15pm

January 2018

Thur	4 th	School re-opens at 8.45am
Fri	12 th	Class 3MP assembly 10.00am
Mon	15 th	M&M Productions
Thur	18 th	4K visiting RGS 9.30am
Fri	19 th	Class 3JP assembly 10.10am
Fri	26 th	PTA quiz night
Wed	31 st	Dental Health Talk to parents 9.00am and 2.30pm

February 2018

Mon	5 th	Energize rehearsal for choir Children's Mental Health Week
Tues	6 th	Young Voices
Thur	8 th	PTA disco
Fri	9 th	School closes 3.20pm
Mon	19 th	School re-opens 8.45am
	23 rd	Reception at Sports Hub competition
	27 th	Energize rehearsal for choir

March 2018

Thur	1 st	World Book Day
Fri	2 nd	2M class assembly 10.00am
Tue	6 th	Y5 local area walk
Wed	7 th	Y5 local area walk
Fri	9 th	2B class assembly 10.10am Y4 tag rugby competition
Tues	13 th	Y3 trip to Natural History Museum, Oxford
Wed	14 th	Y4 trip to Natural History Museum, London
Thur	15 th	Energize rehearsal for choir Energize performance 7.00pm
Fri	16 th	Energize performance 7.00pm
Sat	17 th	Energize performance 7.00pm
Mon	19 th	Mock SATS week

Tues	20 th	Parents' Evening 5.30-8.00pm
Thur	22 nd	Parents' Evening 3.30-6.00pm
Fri	23 rd	Y3 at basketball competition
Wed	28 th	PTA Easter Fair 3.30pm
Thur	29 th	School closes for Easter 2.15pm

2017/2018 Academic Year

	<u>School opens</u>	<u>School closes</u>
Autumn Term 2017	30 th October	19 th December
Spring Term 2018	4 th January 19 th February	9 th February 29 th March
Summer Term 2018	16 th April 5 th June	25 th May 24 th July

2018/2019 Academic Year

	<u>School opens</u>	<u>School closes</u>
Autumn Term 2018	10 th September 29 th October	19 th October 19 th December
Spring Term 2019	3 rd January 25 th February	15 th February 5 th April
Summer Term 2019	24 th April 3 rd June	24 th May 24 th July