

Highworth Combined School

JANUARY 2018 NEWSLETTER

Dear Parent,

I'm pleased to say that the new term has gone well here, with a calm and ordered atmosphere conducive to great learning. This newsletter will bring you up to date with all current issues, as well as providing you with a list of important dates.

Staffing Update

There have been no changes to our staff, however, following her wedding during the Christmas Holidays, Miss Moody is now Mrs Lawrence.

Emergency Closure Procedure

Although we have had a recent emergency closure, 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 one 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 is not working for you, then now would be a good time to resolve the issue. Please contact Karen Bennett 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.

On the first day of closure, a decision will usually be made by 8.00am, however in response to feedback from parents we have agreed that any decision to close for a second or subsequent day will normally be made before pupils have gone to bed so that both pupils and parents can plan for what will happen the following morning. Should it be necessary to close once the school day has started then the same procedures will be implemented.

New Governor

I am delighted to announce that Rachael Small has been appointed as a Local Education Authority governor for our school. Rachael has a background in primary education and, I know, will be a great asset to our governing body.

Crossing Patroller

Lots of you will have met our new team of crossing patrollers, Robin and Linda. I know that children and parents will be safer now that they are here to help each day and I'm sure you will support their efforts. Worryingly, I have had a report of a parent being exceptionally rude and obstructive towards Robin. This will not be tolerated and a report has been made to the police regarding this incident. Any further incidents will be dealt with in the same way.

Parking

I met with one of our neighbours recently about the inconvenience experienced at drop off and collection times. It is so important that we respect the local residents and their need to have access to and from their properties at all times. Please think carefully before deciding where to park and, if possible, allow extra time so that you can park further away and walk some of the way to drop off and collect your child. I have asked the local Police Community Support Officer to visit as soon as possible to ensure that parking restrictions are adhered to and enforced.

PTA Quiz Night

The recent quiz night was a huge success. Not only did the PTA raise in the region of £700, but a lot of fun was had by all (even those not on the winning team!). This was thanks, first of all, to the hard work of Miss Keep and her team of helpers, Mrs Lawrence and Mrs Johnson, and also to the quirky and original quiz devised by ex-pupil, Tom Ferguson. A huge thank you to all involved. Please can we have another one next year?

PTA volunteers

Our PTA is amazing! They raise thousands of pounds for our school each year, and with funding for schools being the huge issue that it is right now, this makes a significant difference to the experience that your children have at school. Just since I became Head, they have contributed to the following: Accelerated Reader programme; mats for PE; furniture, toys and games for our new Nurture Room; repair of the adventure playground; support for extra-curricular musical events and the recent pantomime put on by M and M Productions. However; there is a problem: it is becoming increasingly difficult to put on events because of a lack of volunteers. Jen Peers and Charmaine Clayton, joint Chairs of the PTA, wrote to you recently asking if you would join a register of parents prepared to help at events. Joining the register does mean that you are committing yourself to help at every event or to attend meetings of the PTA. It simply means that you are prepared for us to contact you, prior to an event, so that you can consider when and how you might be free to help. Please consider joining the register; we cannot continue to rely upon the same small group of individuals to keep this vital function going.

Young Voices

Children from Year 4 were lucky enough to attend the Young Voices event at the O2 arena this week. They were part of a 7,981 strong choir of children from all over the South East of England singing a range of songs supported by professional musicians. The sound that was produced was quite something and I know those parents who came along were mightily impressed. It was an amazing opportunity for all involved and, as with most things musical at our school, was thanks to the dedication and commitment of Mrs Martin, ably assisted by Mrs Lipinski and Miss Keep. The children made us all very proud with their extensive repertoire of both singing and dance moves. The photo opposite gives you a flavour of the event and there are many more on the website; take a look!



Diary Dates

This is the last newsletter that will contain diary dates. From now on, we would ask you to go to our new website where you will find live and updated information about all important forthcoming events.

February 2018

Thur	8 th	PTA disco
Fri	9 th	Mufti Day for Sign to Sing School closes 3.20pm
Mon	19 th	School re-opens 8.45am
Fri	23 rd	Reception at Sports Hub competition
Tue	27 th	Energize rehearsal for choir Y5 and Y6 basketball competition Y5 Parents' Meeting for Residential trip in Y6 2018-2019

March 2018

Thur	1 st	World Book Day National Offer Day – Secondary Schools
Fri	2 nd	2M class assembly 10.10am
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
Mon	12 th	Science Week
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 Usborne Book Fair
Thur	22 nd	Parents' Evening 3.30-6.00pm Usborne Book Fair
Fri	23 rd	Y3 at basketball competition
Tue	27 th	Netball Tournament at Highworth
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>
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