



HOW WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ESTABLISHED 1968

Head Teacher: Mrs C Rowe
Newsletter 1

7th September 2018

Dear Parents,

Welcome back! I hope that you have all had a lovely summer and your children are looking forward to the new school year. I would like to extend a big welcome to all the children joining Nursery & Reception class and to new families joining in other year groups – a special and warm hello to you all.

New staff

We welcome Mr Carter who will be teaching Year 6 and Mrs Loftus who is Year 5's new teacher, job-sharing with Mrs Goodfellow.

Start of academic year – Parent Teacher Meetings

Please find the date and time of the Parent Teacher Meetings below. The meetings will run from **9.05-9.55am approximately, on the following days and will be held in your child's new classroom.**

Monday 17th September – Year 6

Tuesday 18th September – Year 4

Wednesday 19th September – Year 5

Thursday 20th September – Year 3

Friday 21st September – Year 2

Thursday 27th September – Year 1

At the meeting teachers will provide information about topics to be covered this academic year, give general class-organisation arrangements and share other relevant information for individual classes. This information has already been shared with Reception and Nursery parents.

It is important that all parents attend if possible so that they can find out about the year ahead.

Office Changes

Mrs Gooch has changed her hours and the office has been restructured. The school office is now open from 8.15am to 3.30pm. Please do not call into the office outside of these hours. The school's answer machine is always switched on and it is possible for parents to leave a message outside these times. Your support is appreciated.

Voluntary Contributions to the School Fund

It is with a sad heart that I have felt the need to ask for support from our parents, however the reality of continued cuts to funding have forced this situation upon the school. Thank you to parents who have already made a voluntary contribution to our School Fund.

General reminders

Attendance

The Department for Education has made it clear that **'Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances'**. Head Teachers do not have the discretion to allow up to 10 days in a school year for a family holiday or to agree extended leave for parents to visit their country of origin.

You will no doubt understand that as the Head Teacher I have a duty, along with the school Governors, to promote the highest attendance levels possible. The school is set very high attendance targets by the Government; and our attendance data is regularly scrutinised by the Local Authority and Ofsted and is one of the factors by which they measure the success of the school. The academic progress of a child, whatever his/her level of academic ability, will be adversely affected if they miss school. If a child is unwell then they should not come to school, but if, in addition, they have other time off school, then this will definitely have a detrimental effect on their progress. ***Please take this into consideration when planning trips in the future***

If you believe your circumstances may be exceptional, then please discuss your request with me before making final plans. I will review each request for absence carefully, consulting with the Local Authority's Attendance Improvement Officer where and if necessary, and give you an answer as soon as possible. If you need to make a request for leave, then please download a holiday request form from the school website or school office. We ask that all requests are put in writing using the form at least two weeks prior to any leave.

The overall attendance record of the vast majority of our pupils is very good and I very much appreciate your support in respecting and supporting the school's policy on attendance. ***The policy can be found on the school's website. Part of our new policy outlines the requirement for all parents to provide a written note or letter explaining their child's absence. Staff will actively be requesting letters and it would be most helpful if parents could send this letter in with their child when they return to school.***

May we also remind you that if you need to collect your child from school for any reason, they must be signed out and signed in if returning to school on the same day.

I have included a reminder of school dates for the coming year; please keep these dates in mind when making any arrangements for holidays. Term dates for 2019-20 will be shared in January 2019.

Absence and illness

If your child has been physically sick, he/she should be kept at home for a period of **48 hours**, to prevent the spreading of infections. We will endeavour to contact parents of any pupils who are away from school (unless we have been previously informed). Please let the office staff know of any absence before 9 am to save Mrs Gooch or Mrs Clarke from having to make a call. As part of our new Attendance Policy all pupil absences must be followed up by a written note or letter.

Parent / Teacher Consultations

Parent/teacher consultation sessions will be held in the week before the October and February half-term holidays. This term the consultation sessions will be on Tuesday 23rd October 3.30-6pm and Wednesday 24th October 5-8pm. Dates for February 2018 consultations will be sent out at a later date.

Parents will have a third opportunity to meet formally with the teachers, if they wish, at the end of the academic year, to discuss the annual written report. Parents of children who have additional needs are invited to Child Review Meetings which are held termly. During these, we discuss what is working well for your child and formulate a plan for next steps which involve the school and the family.

You will be aware that we encourage an open door policy at the school, so if you have any queries or concerns, do speak to class teachers or myself. It is always preferable to meet with teachers after school, rather than before school. Alternatively, you can call the school office to make an appointment.

Punctuality

It is important that all children attend school regularly and on time each day. Please ensure that your child is in the playground before the whistle is blown at 8.50am, (8.45am for Nursery children) allowing sufficient time for your journey to school, so that a prompt start can be made. However, as the playground is not supervised before 8.40 am, I would ask that children **do not arrive** at school before this time. If your child arrives at school after 8.50am they should report to the school office, so that the register is accurate. We finish at 3.15pm each day; it is helpful if you are here to collect your child promptly at 3.15pm. Older children who are walking home by themselves should leave promptly.

End of the day arrangements

Children in Year R to Year 2 must be collected by an adult from the infant playground. Children in Year 3 & Year 4 must also be collected from outside their classroom.

Children in Years 5 and 6 are dismissed from their classrooms at the end of the day. Please ensure your child knows what arrangements have been made.

Coming into and leaving school

It is extremely important that all children and parents use the pathway and not the driveway to come into and leave school. I do appreciate this is quite a narrow pathway, however the driveway must not be used as pedestrian access. It can give mixed messages when parents use the driveway rather than the pathway at the end of the day when leaving the school. Please can all parents help keep our children safe by staying on the pathway.

Children who ride scooters and bikes should dismount by the school gate and walk their bikes and scooters down the pathway. ***It is also important that pre-school children who come into school do not use scooters or bikes in the school car park or along the path up to the office.***

The entrance to the school should not under any circumstances be used for turning cars round or dropping children off. I would like to remind all parents not to use the yellow zig zag area for parking in the interests of keeping all our children safe.

Important Notice to all Parents about the School Car Park

A reminder that parents are not permitted to use the car park at any time of the day. This includes picking up or dropping off children from clubs including the Time Out Club.

Resources

Please provide children with the following resources:

- Pencils
- Coloured pencils
- A Pritt stick/glue stick
- Water bottle

Thank you.

Snacks

A reminder that if the junior children bring in a mid-morning snack it should be a healthy one and consist of a **piece of fruit**. Crisps, chocolate biscuits and sweets are not acceptable. The infant children will continue to receive a 'free' piece of fruit or vegetable at break time each morning. **As there are some children across the school with nut allergies we ask all parents not to send in nut based products.**

Photographs and filming

Please remember that any photographs taken of children in school productions, assemblies, sports days and other events are solely for your own personal use. As a school community, we must always put the safety of all children first. With this in mind I would like to clarify;

- Any filming/photographs that parents take will be for personal use only.
- Images must not be uploaded onto any public Internet sites, such as Facebook, You Tube etc.

Payment of any money

All payments are to be made via the School Gateway – link on website. Cheque payments continue to be then at the school office.

Reward and Certificate system

Weekly Rewards

Each week your child's class teacher will be issuing three special certificates which will be given out in our Celebration Assembly on Thursday mornings. The certificates are:

Star of the Week- linked to behaviour

Learner of the Week- linked to work

Worker of the Week- linked to effort

Head Teacher's Certificates

Throughout the school all children will work towards gaining merits for learning, effort and behaviour which will be awarded by class teachers. Once a child gains ten merits they will receive a Head Teacher Certificate, which will be presented in our Celebration Assembly. The first Head Teacher's Certificate will be Bronze, followed by Silver and then Gold. Children achieving 40 merits will receive a Platinum certificate and for 50 merits – diamond!

All children are aware of our merit system which provides a consistent and shared approach for rewarding learning, effort and behaviour. I look forward to giving out the first Head Teacher's Certificate of the new academic year later on in the term.

Praise Post Cards

In addition to Head Teacher's Certificates for achieving merits, children who are sent to me by their teacher for excellent learning will receive a Praise Postcard in the post. This is always a lovely surprise as the children are not aware that they will receive this reward until it arrives by post.

Head Teacher Award

My Head Teacher Award is given to children who have achieved over and above what is expected. Children are presented with a medal and a certificate in our Celebration Assembly.

Special Recognition Award

How Wood School Special Recognition Award is awarded at the end of the academic year in the final assembly of the summer term. Parents of the children are invited and their child's achievement is shared with the whole school in this very special assembly. Two children from each class - Reception to Year 6 – are chosen by their teacher and me for outstanding progress in an area of their learning. They are presented with a classic book and certificate and their name and personal achievement is written in a special book that is displayed in our reception area.

Clubs

We will be running a number of clubs for children both during the school day and after school. Please look out for letters in your child's school bag.

Key dates for the term

I have included a list of key dates for the term. Further information about the various forthcoming events will be sent out to relevant classes. ***It is important that all parents read newsletters regularly so that they are aware of all events and any changes that may take place.***

Autumn Term 2018

Half-term – Monday 29th October to Friday 2nd November

Children back to school – Monday 5th November to Friday 21st December 2018

Spring Term 2019

Monday 7th January – INSET Day

Children back to school – Tuesday 8th January to Friday 15th February 2019

Half-term – Monday 18th February to Friday 22nd February 2019

Children back to school – Monday 25th February to Friday 5th April 2019

Summer Term 2018

Children back to school – Tuesday 23rd April to Friday 24th May 2019

May Bank Holiday – Monday 6th May

Half-term – Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May 2019

Children back to school – Monday 3rd June to Friday 19th July 2019

Monday 22nd July – INSET

Tuesday 23rd July – INSET

Wednesday 24th July – Occasional Day

Please keep handy for future reference- additional dates and changes will be shared on future newsletters. Please ensure you read all newsletters carefully.

Key Dates for the Autumn Term 2018

Date	Event
Tuesday 25 th September	Drama for All – ‘The Circus’ workshops for EYFS, Year 1/2/3
Monday 8 th October	Year 4 trip to the British Museum
Wednesday 10 th October 10.30am	Harvest assembly (All parents welcome-subject to space in the hall)
Tuesday 23 rd October 3.30-6pm	Parent Consultations
Wednesday 24 th October 5-8pm	Parent Consultations
Thursday 25 th October	Curriculum Enrichment Day – details to follow
Friday 26 th October	Curriculum Enrichment Day – details to follow

Monday 29th - Friday 2nd November	Half Term
Thursday 8 th November	School Photos
Friday 9 th November	Year 6 Peace Event at St Albans Cathedral
Friday 16 th November	Children in Need & Anti-Bullying Day
Monday 10 th December	M&M Production present Beauty & the Beast Pantomime
Tuesday 11 th December 9.30am	Foundation Stage Dress Rehearsal
Wednesday 12 th December 6pm	Foundation Stage Evening Production
Week beginning Monday 17 th December	Christmas class parties – details to follow
Tuesday 18 th December 9.30am	Key Stage 1 Dress Rehearsal
Wednesday 19 th December 6pm	Key Stage 1 Evening Production
Thursday 20 th December	Christmas lunch
Friday 21 st December	Christingle assembly (Y3 parents invited)
Friday 21 st December - Finish at 1.30pm	Last day of term

Assemblies

Parents are invited to their child's class assembly at 9am. Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will not be sharing an assembly as they will be performing an end of year Christmas production.

Date	Class	
Friday 5 th October	Year 6	Parent Assembly
Friday 12 th October	Year 5	Parent Assembly
Friday 23 rd November	Year 4	Parent Assembly
Friday 7 th December	Year 3	Parent Assembly