

Newsletter September 2015

Dear Parents and Friends

Welcome back to the start of another school year. Having worked alongside Mrs Chevaugon, as Deputy Headteacher, for the past 6 years as the school embarked on the journey to becoming a 'good' school, I now feel extremely privileged to be taking on the role of Headteacher.



Mrs Irving: Headteacher

For me Horton Grange is a fantastic place to work and we know there are lots of things that work very well so we don't intend to change what isn't broken. However, Horton Grange became the school it is by a constant drive to look at how we can be even better and we are confident this will continue. The team of staff pupils and parents at Horton Grange are second to none; we are all proud to be part of 'Team Horton'.



The end of last year was as poignant as ever with our Year 6 children sharing their dreams and aspirations and moving onto secondary school. **Bugsy Malone** was their production and they excelled with a full house for three performances. I suspect the singing could be heard in Asda, but probably the best thing of all is how much they discover about themselves when challenged to do something different. This production was a special performance for Mrs Chevaugon being her last one and I know she was incredibly proud of all the children. Our **Annual Prom** which is becoming a real community event, brought sunshine and smiles – and didn't they look amazing! The leavers' year book is available in school – pop in to have a look.

Enjoy the photos -



Didn't they look grand!



Staffing

As you know, we have new staff joining the team this year. I'm delighted to welcome **Mrs Caroline Ash** to the Senior Leadership Team as Deputy Headteacher and Head of Lower School. She has a wealth of experience in a range of schools and settings and is looking forward to meeting parents. She will be around in the school yard most mornings so please take the opportunity to have a chat with her.



Mr Harker, who has worked as part of the senior team for the last 6 years will take on the role of Head of Upper School.



We also have several other new members of staff joining us. I'm sure you'll meet them around school soon.

Nursery: Miss Robinson



Year 1: Miss Osborne



Year 4: Miss Dixon



Year 5: Mr Murphy



Miss Boyle: Administrative assistant



Curriculum

Last year a new **National Curriculum** was introduced. We spent the previous academic year reviewing our curriculum provision and from September 2015 we will provide a **creative curriculum** based around the **Cornerstones Curriculum**. We will retain our emphasis on basic skills and English and Maths will continue to be taught discretely as well as across the curriculum. Most other subjects are taught through an Imaginative Learning Project (ILP) using the Cornerstones Curriculum approach. Each ILP has a theme and a specific subject as a main focus. The staff are all extremely excited about delivering the new curriculum and I am sure you will hear the children talking about their new topics at home soon. You will find further information on our website in the coming weeks or visit <http://www.cornerstoneseducation.co.uk/Learning-Philosophy.aspx>. In some year groups our curriculum works on a two year rolling programme, so whilst topics are the same across two year groups the level of challenge will be different.

Topics for the Autumn Term 1 are:

Nursery	How do I look after me?
Reception	How do I look after me?
Year 1	Memory box (History focus)
Year 2	Street detectives (History focus)
Year 3	Predator (Science focus)
Year 4	Predator (Science focus)

Year 5	Peasants, Princes and Pestilence
Year 6	Peasants, Princes and Pestilence

Further details of these topics will be posted on the school website.

In **English** we will continue to use **Read, Write Inc** phonics and then follow up with **Get Writing** and **Literacy and Language**. There is a national focus on the importance of children not just being able to read, but on them reading lots of different kinds of books. We are always keen to have volunteer reading supporters in school – **please contact Mr Fields** – who will train you for the role.

Look at - <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>

In **maths** we will continue to use **Numicon**, **Every Child a Counter** and **Broadbent Maths** (google each for more info.) There has been a real shift in expectation in that all children are now expected to know all the times tables up to 12 x 12 by the end of Y4. This year we will be increasing the amount of time in the timetable given to maths and will be introducing CLIC maths – a programme focused on daily basic skills. Year groups will be continuing the **Tables Challenge** so practise, practise, practise!

http://www.transum.org/Tables/Times_Tables.asp.

Maths is a big focus for us in school this year and we will be holding an open day in the Autumn term on **Thursday 15th October**. Further details will follow.

Our long term curriculum plan showing topics for the year will be available on the website soon. We are however in the process of designing a new website, so please be patient while we get it underway. I'm hoping it will be up this half term but I'll keep you posted. In the meantime we will of course continue to use our Facebook page and text messages to keep you up to speed. Please let us know if you think something isn't working then we can try to put it right.

Meeting your child's new class teacher

This time last year we held transition meetings for Years 1 – 6 and you told us that they helped you understand year group expectations. This is an opportunity for you to meet with the teachers and for them to tell you about the class and the learning. Last year we held them in October but as you didn't get to meet your child's new teacher at the end of term we have brought them forward. We've planned them for this year as follows:

Y1	Monday 14th September 9.30 am
Y2	Monday 14th September 2.30pm
Y3	Tuesday 15 th September 9.30pm
Y4	Tuesday 15 th September 2.30pm
Y5	Wednesday 16 th September 2.30pm
Y6	Thursday 17 th September 2.30pm

Lower school meetings (Y1 and Y2) will be held in lower school hall so please enter via KS1 library entrance. For Upper school meetings (Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6) please enter via main reception.

Communication with parents

Our texting services is an efficient way of keeping you up to date so please ensure we have your current contact details. Our aim is to reduce the number of paper copies we send to you, so please keep us up to date with your contact details and let us know if you don't have access to either Facebook or the website.

Individual Parent / Child Assertive mentoring meetings are planned for **Tuesday 24th November** – details to follow.

Breakfast Club is running once again in the dining room from 8.00am to start of school. This costs 50p per day and is run by Mrs Jennings. We use the door half way along the drive at the back of the main school hall – ring the bell! The plan is to include some physical activity in these sessions in the future as we recognise the importance of an active healthy lifestyle.

At Horton Grange we are committed to providing a range of opportunities for children and we know how much the children enjoy clubs. We are working hard to increase clubs available at school.

Autumn term clubs

KS1 Clubs	Y3&4 clubs	Y5&6 clubs
Cooking	Futsal	Rugby
Board games	Construction	Homework club
Crafts		
Multi-skills (Lunch time)		

Further details of days and times will follow soon. We have received feedback that you would like more clubs to be offered so we will be working with 'Premier Sports' to arrange this in the near future. However, for externally arranged clubs a small charge is payable.

Horton Heroes

Parents and children tell us that they enjoy Horton Heroes and so we plan to continue this as a way of celebrating children's achievements. However, this year there will be an added twist. We have a trained Forest School leader in school and so when children receive a Horton Hero award they will also receive a ticket to allow them entry to our new 'Forest School Friday' sessions. The children will find out more about this in the next few weeks. We welcome parents and younger siblings to our Horton Heroes Assemblies but please remember it can be difficult for pre-school children to sit quietly throughout so please feel free to pop out of the hall for a short period of time until they settle.

Parent Governor

We have a vacancy for a parent Governor this year. If you are interested please look out for the letter coming soon.

That's all for now – but don't forget to let us know if you have any worries or concerns. All it takes is a phone call to the office and someone will get back to you.

Best wishes to all

Nichola Irving

KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

(Other dates, which you will be notified about by letter, may be added at a later date)

Thursday, 3 September	Return to school - R, Y1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
Monday, 7 September	Return to school - Nursery
Wednesday, 9 September	Tour of Britain Bike Event
Monday, 14 September	Y1 Transition Meeting - 9.30 Y2 Transition Meeting - 2.30 Y3/4- Animal Antics Multi-skills (lunch time)
Tuesday, 15 September	Y3 Transition Meeting - 9.30 Y4 Transition Meeting - 2.30
Wednesday, 16 September	Y5 Transition Meeting - 2.30
Thursday, 17 September	Y6 Transition Meeting - 2.30
Tuesday, 22 September	NSPCC Assemblies
Thursday, 24 September	Reception Settling in Meeting for Parents
Wednesday, 30 September	NSPCC Workshops - Y5 & 6
Thursday, 1 October	Multi Skills @ Blyth Sports Centre - Y2 NSPCC Workshops - Y5 & 6
Week commencing 5 October	Nursery Reviews - staggered throughout week
Thursday, 15 October	Maths Open Day for Parents
Friday, 16 - Sunday 18 October	Hawes End Residential
Wednesday, 21 October	Halloween Disco
Thursday, 22 October	Harvest Festival/Halloween Stay & Play EYFS
Friday, 23 October	School Closed for Training Day
Week commencing 26 October	School Closed for Half Term
Monday 2 November	School re-opens
Tuesday, 3 November	Y5 Swimming Starts
Week commencing 23 November	Road Safety Week
Tuesday, 24 November	Parent Interviews
Wednesday, 16 December	School Christmas Lunch
Friday, 18 December	Whole School Panto School Closes for Christmas Holiday
Monday, 4 January	School re-opens for Spring Term