

NEWSLETTER

June 2021

Dear Parents and Friends

Welcome back to the start of the last half term of the year – it is hard to believe another year has nearly passed. I can honestly say that it is with great pleasure that I am sharing the Summer 2 Newsletter with you. Due to school only being fully open a short time after the Easter break we were not able to provide you with a Newsletter then. Being able to do this once again reminds us that we are gradually getting some normality back. I have worked at Horton Grange for 12 years now, for the last 7 years as Headteacher, and I have to say it really has been one of the most challenging times. However the staff, children and whole school community have been incredible throughout and shown great resilience.

During the Autumn term we set about our catch up programme and great progress was being made with this. The partial opening of school on the return after Christmas impacted on this, but the provision for home learning was much improved and we were impressed by the children's engagement and support from home. This meant that for many children learning was not lost. On return in March we stepped up the pace once again with catch up and the children have been working incredibly hard. From looking at their books, talking to their teachers and visiting classrooms (whilst adhering to COVID risk assessment) the progress for many children is phenomenal. At Horton Grange our core business is learning and we have all been 100% focused on this. I am so proud of the children and staff and I know this strong work ethic will continue over the remainder of the term.

Unfortunately due to restrictions our Newsletter lacks the usual reference to visits and visitors which usually enhances our curriculum but we still wanted to share the children's learning with you.

SHARING OUR LEARNING

Two Year olds

Two year olds have had a busy first half of the term. They welcomed some new children into the setting, who have been settling into the routine.

There have been lots of opportunities to explore and get messy with a range of sensory activities and some cooking too.

The children have enjoyed lots of imaginative play with each other in their kitchen area, taking on a role and acting out their own experiences. They have also been showing lots of care and concern towards the dolls, washing and dressing them.



There has been lots of outdoor play and we have used this opportunity to promote independence amongst the children, encouraging them to put on and take off their own coats and shoes.

This half term, staff will be re-introducing the lending library for the children to choose a story to enjoy at home.

Nursery

Once Spring had sprung and the environment began to change once more, Nursery immersed themselves in their new topic **Down in The Garden**. The children began by using their topic book Jasper's Beanstalk as an opportunity to explore growing their own beanstalks using broad beans. After mastering the basic needs of plants, Nursery decided to enhance their outdoor area with some new flowery friends. The children are brilliant at looking after their garden additions and have seen their hard work rewarded with some beautiful flowers! Having observed above the soil, the children in Nursery turned their attention below and to the critters and creatures who call the garden their home.

They thoroughly enjoyed exploring minibeasts and replicated their favourites in various forms, from biscuits to painted rocks! The children loved using the poems in Mad About Minibeasts to learn about their features and characteristics whilst also practising some important rhyming skills.

As we embark on our final half term of the year, the Nursery children will begin their topic of **On a Journey Together**. They will be learning about modes of transport and familiar destinations and use them to create their own sequence of events. For lots of the children in Nursery, they are approaching the end of their first step of a long journey ahead as part of Horton Grange. They will be reflecting on this, recapping their favourite memories of the year before preparing for the exciting adventures Reception has to offer.



Reception

Last half term, Reception got their green fingers as they learned all about plants. As well as planting beans and watching them grow, the children learned to label the parts of a plant. In the creative room they used pieces of real plants to make pictures and created flowers out of playdough. They read some very exciting books featuring plants, the children especially loved reading How To Grow A Dinosaur and learning all about Albie's exciting adventures with some very special seeds. Making carrot soup was a delicious opportunity to learn more about cooking and healthy eating, Reception really enjoyed sampling the finished product. There has been some great responses to the writing challenges, with some children now writing extended sentences independently and using some fantastic vocabulary. They have created their own wonderful stories! In maths, Reception explored the concepts of doubling and halving, they have been able to link these ideas together and relate them to knowledge of existing number bonds.



This half term, the children will be delving into the undergrowth as they explore the world of creepy crawlies and minibeasts! They will be learning some scientific vocabulary to name a variety of common minibeasts and also their body parts. They will be focusing on the life cycles, habitats and behaviours of different creatures. Reception will be using scientific equipment such as magnifying glasses and specimen jars to collect and observe any minibeasts that they can find in the school grounds.

In Phonics, they will continue to develop the range of sounds and words that they can speedily read to increase their fluency and confidence. They will be applying their phonic knowledge to write extended pieces such as fact files and their own imaginative stories.

Counting in 2s, 5s and 10s will be a key focus in Maths, developing their understanding of numerical pattern and also focusing on recognising numbers up to 100.

As we approach the end of the school year, they will be beginning their transition to Year 1 by creating their own transition booklets to tell their new teacher all about themselves.

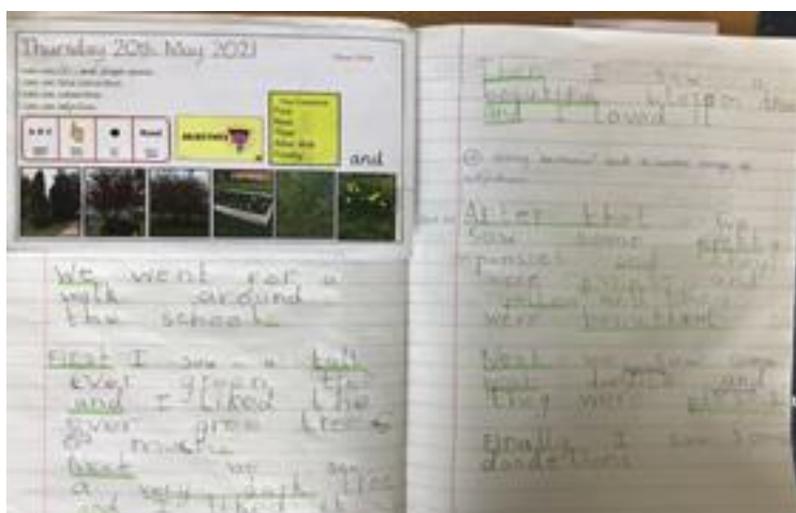
The class text in Reception for this half term will be *My, Oh My, Butterfly* by Dr Seuss. The children will learn about the life cycle and abilities of a butterfly.

Year 1

Last half term Year 1 went back in time to find out how people communicated in the past. They used quills and ink to practise their handwriting skills and sent letters to Mrs McGuire. In a drama lesson the children saddled up their horses and re-enacted how a letter was sent in the past. They also imagined that they were sending parcels to soldiers in the war and thought about what they might have put inside of them. Year 1 were really good at wrapping different 3D shapes and saying what they were. In Literacy the children have loved exploring a variety of texts. First they travelled to Africa to find out about Handa and her lost hen (ask your child if they can remember where the baby chicks were hiding). Then the children were cordially invited to a magical ball when they re-told the story of Cinderella. The children have been working hard to improve their story teller language and have been thinking about lots of interesting and exciting adjectives to make their stories come to life.



In Science Year 1 have been keen gardeners. The children planted their very own garden plants and learned about different plants and trees (make sure to have a look at the planters when you drop off your child)! They went for a walk around the school grounds identifying different plants and then used the Horton Grange Writing Process to write a recount of their experience. Look at the amazing writing the children have produced! Maths lessons covered a range of key skills last term. The children used lots of equipment to double, halve and group different amounts. They enjoyed painting spots on butterflies and then folding them in half to double the amount. They also learned the 2 times table and have been doing really well at practising these at home. Keep it up!

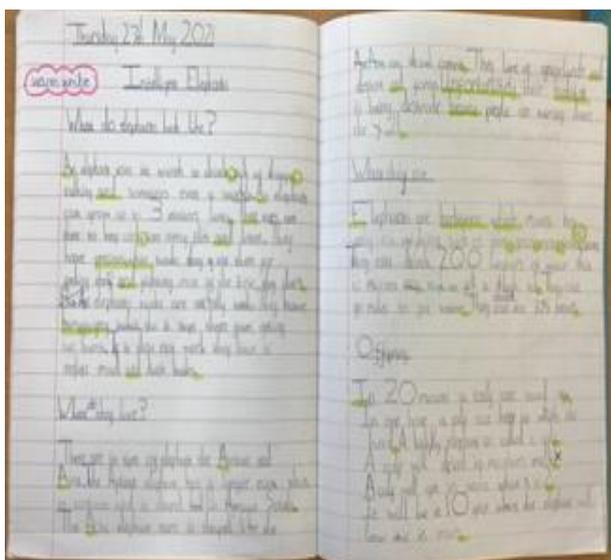


This term Year 1 will be learning about the human body in Science. They will name parts of the body and use their senses to explore some new smells and tastes. The children will be blind tasting different foods to see if they can guess what they are. In Geography the children will be looking at their local environment when comparing two locations; Blyth beach and Horton Grange school. In DT the children will be putting on their chef's hats and will use their knowledge of foods to make a healthy snack. We are planning an exciting week in Maths. The children will be exploring different aspects of measures each day in a series of fun practical lessons. We have our fingers crossed that the sun will be shining on the day the children learn about capacity!

The first Year 1 literacy text this half term is *Funnybones* by Janet and Alan Ahlberg. The children will be finding out about the family of skeletons and their dog that live on a dark dark hill, in a dark dark town.

Year 2

Year 2 had a fantastic half term and went on a metaphorical journey all the way to Africa! In English they read the African inspired story *The Day the Rains Fell* by Anne Faundez. They looked closely at the beautiful story illustrations, the story structure and the wonderful vocabulary. They then used this as inspiration to plan and write their own version of the story, set in Blyth. The children really wowed us and staff could clearly see that they had applied all the teaching elements of our writing process in their own writing. They then went on to write some fantastic acrostic poems all about African animals. Finally they wrote some amazing fact files about African animals, using a title, sub-headings, paragraphs, technical vocabulary and labels. Their fact files were informative, interesting and beautifully presented. A job well done Year 2, you are now all African animal experts.



In Maths the children have developed their understanding of number and the number system through daily counting and looking really closely at the 100 square to find patterns. They continued to develop their understanding of place value and can now partition numbers in lots of different ways. Fractions are always an exciting part of the Maths curriculum and the children loved learning how to find half, quarter and one third of shapes and amounts. More recently we have been learning the skills to solve problems more independently. The children practised reading the word problem, highlighting key information and deciding which operation they would use to solve the problem. We now have some problem solving superstars!



In Science during home learning, the children investigated materials. They found a range of materials and tested which materials they could change the shape of. During our topic on Animals including Humans they developed their knowledge of animal classification (*reptile, amphibian, fish, bird and mammal*) and looked closely at the features of each animal. They looked closely at animal offspring and noticed similarities and differences between the offspring and its parent.

In Science, last half term children in Year 3 learned all about plants. They discovered the different parts of a plant and what the function of each part was and learned all about what makes a plant grow...or not. They even had their own tomato plant in the classroom to keep alive. It was looking a bit touch and go at one point but they have successfully grown a whole single tomato! The children were keen to investigate how water was transported through the plant and had fun investigating this.

In Topic, the children became History detectives to investigate how buildings have changed over time. The children absolutely loved using the book *A Street Through Time* to see the viewpoint of a single street, over multiple time periods. They began their journey through time back in the Stone Age which was a period they had previously studied, then fast-tracked their way through time to the Tudor, Victorian and modern times noting how the buildings' size, materials used and purpose changed. The children also focussed on a local building, Cragside, and its inventive owner and creator William Armstrong. Did you know Cragside was the first house in the world to be powered by hydroelectric power and was the first to have a working light bulb! It is still there today so if you get a chance to visit, go have a look!



This half term in Literacy Year 3 will be reading and writing in the style of contemporary fiction. They will read Roald Dahl's infamous story of *Matilda* and write a diary entry using ambitious vocabulary and subordinating conjunctions to add detail.

In Maths, Year 3 will be looking forward to our unit on time. They will learn to estimate and read time on an analogue clock with increasing accuracy to the nearest minute. Any support with practise of this is greatly appreciated and will be a huge help to your children. The children will be taking part in measures week on 14 June where they will get lots of hands on experience using practical equipment. Of course Year 3 will also be revisiting place value and the 4 operations to ensure they are retaining their knowledge, practising the formal methods of addition, subtraction and multiplication.

In Science, children will be focusing on nutrition. They will learn about what our bodies need to be healthy, different food groups and what the consequences of a bad diet are. They will also look at the nutrition of different animals and how that compares to humans.

In Geography, Year 3 will be learning about the region in which they live...the coast! They will learn about the topographical features of the UK and the different types of beaches we have in the UK. Children will then learn about the impact of not looking after our coastline and the effects of pollution.

The most exciting part of Year 3's Summer term has to be forest school, which will take place towards the end of the School year. The children will get the opportunity to visit the woods, make shelters and learn about the beauty of our natural environment. We will send out more details nearer the time.

To help your child, we encourage them to continue to access Reading plus/ Lexia, TT Rockstars and Spelling Shed to ensure the fundamentals of learning are being revised.

We also encourage you to talk to your children about nutrition and healthy eating habits and about where they live in the world.

This half term we will be reading *Matilda* by Roald Dahl as part of our literacy unit, a story about an extraordinary little girl who overcomes adversity to be proud of who she is....with a little magic thrown in.

Year 3 will be reading *The Boy Who Made Everyone Laugh* by Helen Rutter, a hilarious yet moving story of Billy Plimpton, who is desperate to make it as a stand-up comic - despite the fact that he has a pronounced stammer.

Year 4

Last half term, Year 4 enjoyed writing lots of different text types in both Literacy and Topic. During their literacy writing process, the children read and wrote their own science fiction narratives and fairy tales. The children created short narratives, including setting descriptions using a wide variety of different features such as fronted adverbials, expanded noun phrases and subordinating conjunctions. Year 4 further developed their writing across the curriculum by creating a non-chronological report on the Orbit sculpture designed by Anish Kapoor for the London 2012 Olympic Park. In History, the children also wrote their own persuasive advert to try and convince Romans to visit the local baths. This was linked to Year 4's History topic on sport and leisure through time.

In Science, Year 4 looked at living things and their habitats. The children learned about the different natural and human causes of habitat loss and how this can affect animals. This enabled Year 4 to develop a better understanding on how our environment is ever changing and what the requirements for maintaining or improving it are. In addition, Year 4 looked deeper into the conflicts local councils and governments face when deciding whether to maintain land or use it to build on. The children then assumed the role of the County Council and debated whether or not to preserve a nearby habitat or to use the land to build a new state of the art sports facility.



This half term, Year 4 will focus their learning on the Science topic of the human body.

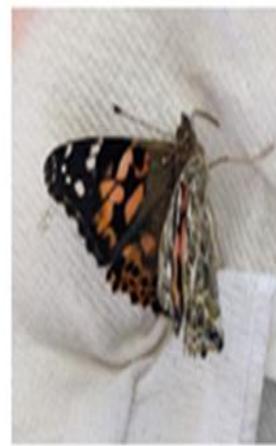
The children will learn about the different types of teeth and their functions and gain knowledge about how the digestive system works. In Geography, the children will learn about the human geography aspect of trade links and how this is connected to their local environment.

Year 4 will be reading *The Demon Dentist* by David Walliams as their class text. This links to the children's Science topic on the human body.

Year 5

Last half term in Literacy, Year 5 enjoyed reading about the epic legend of Beowulf and Grendel, the evil monster. Children were really excited to learn about how this story had been passed from person to person since the Anglo Saxon era and were thoroughly hooked by the adventurous and suspenseful plot. After they got to know the story, they wrote some of their own exciting legends using a variety of sentence structures. In Maths, the children concentrated on learning about fractions. Although this was challenging at times, they remained very resilient and progressed in their understanding as a result.

The children really enjoyed their Science topic of living things and their habitats. They learned all about the life cycles of different animal groups and how plants and animals reproduce. They particularly enjoyed observing changes over time and watching our class caterpillars' metamorphosis into beautiful butterflies.



At the start of last half term, the children learned about the history of different local industries in Blyth, including coal mining and ship building. Later, they focussed on the topic of crime and punishment and compared how harsh laws in the Victorian era were very different to our justice system today.

In Summer 2, children will continue to follow the Horton Grange writing journey through new genres such as mystery. In Maths, children will apply their learning about fractions to decimals and percentages. Additionally, children will be revisiting their learning from Autumn term as we re-examine South America, this time with a focus on the people of the continent. Through environment week, the children will also learn about the various threats to the Amazon rain forest and how this affects climate change globally. In Science, the children will continue with our focus on Biology and living things with a more specific focus on humans and how we develop from birth to old age.

Year 5 class text this half term will be Journey to the River Sea by Eva Ibbotson to link to our learning about South America and the Amazon.

Year 6

Summer 1 has been an exciting term for Year 6 and the children have given staff great feedback on how much they have enjoyed their learning. In English, the children produced some excellent pieces of writing based on ancient Greek myths and then also really exercised their imaginations by writing science fiction narratives. Linking up with their History topic on human rights, the children have also written some superb biographies of the famous local suffragette, Emily Wilding Davison. During that same History topic, the children studied the wider topic of the suffragette movement and also learned about the Triangular Trade of slavery and how this was abolished in the UK helped by campaigners such as William Wilberforce. You can see pupils dressed in a suffragette costume and a brave volunteer in the prison outfit with a force-feeding tube! In Maths, the children learned about fractions, percentages and decimals and how to change these and find equivalents. Classification was the topic in Science and within this subject, Year 6 have learnt about the standard system established by Carl Linnaeus, a Swedish scientist, as well as micro-organisms and how they both help and hinder in our daily lives – many links were made to the corona virus!



This half term, Year 6 will be working on a narrative poem which will reflect their entire time at Horton Grange and is sure to bring back many happy memories, as well as writing their own versions of a legend and a discursive argument. In our Maths lessons we will be learning all about algebra as well as exploring measures including converting measures and looking at imperial and metric measurements. Each week, in Year 6 Science lessons, the children will be finding out all about their circulatory system and looking at how different lifestyle choices affect our bodies. The Year 6 Geography topic will focus on locational knowledge of the world, lines of latitude, longitude and time zones. The children will also be studying their local area by learning about Blyth's natural resources, trade and its history. If you or your families have any stories about the history of Blyth, its shops, harbour, coal mines or shipbuilding, the children would love to hear them! Year 6 will also be making that final push towards their end of year assessments and will also, of course, enjoy some end of year treats as a reward for all their hard work.

Year 6 will be studying Pig Heart Boy by Malorie Blackman which links to our Science topic on the heart, lungs and circulatory system

England Does The Daily Mile.

We all know the importance of leading healthy lifestyles, especially as it is linked to our Horton Values! Last term, the children had a chance to reflect on this by taking part in England Does The Daily Mile which was a nationwide scheme to try getting 1 million children moving on the same day! Everyone was very proud of the enthusiasm shown by the children and we all enjoyed a chance to get moving again after lockdown!



Measures Week

Due to the catch up agenda, schools have had to make adjustments to the curriculum to ensure key fundamental building blocks for learning in each subject are given the utmost priority. School decided to hold a Measures Week to deliver measure key learning. This will take place the week beginning 14 June. During this week, the whole school will be adapting the curriculum to focus on the areas of measurement such as length, mass, capacity, time and money. During this week the children will get lots of hands-on practical experience in all areas of measures including lots of fun contexts to really get their teeth into.

Science – PSQM Gilt Award

We are delighted to announce that our submission for a Round 19 Primary Science Quality Mark Gilt was successful. This has been an incredibly challenging year and the reviewers were extremely impressed by the high quality of our submission. Reviewers said the commitment to leading Science in Horton Grange over the last demanding 18 months has been outstanding. Well done to all involved. I would like to say a big thank you to the Science team lead by Mrs Adams for all their hard work with this.

Sports Update

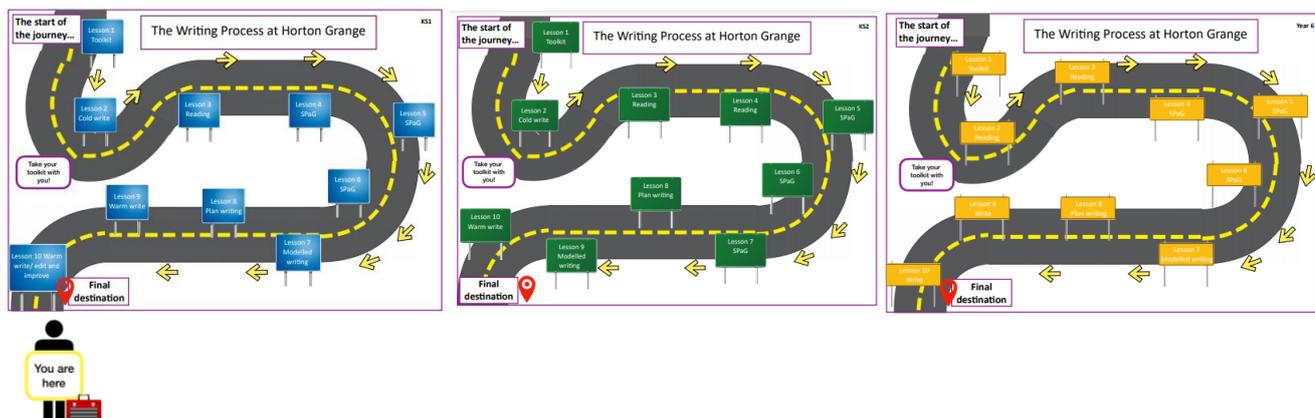
Due to the pandemic sports events have been limited this year. However, last half term, 4AR took part in the Virtual Northumberland School Games Cricket Final against other schools from across the county. They qualified by finishing first in the Blyth and Bedlington area in Autumn term. The children took part in a variety of different activities that tested their cricketing skills. Although 4AR did not win, they thoroughly enjoyed themselves and represented themselves and the school fantastically.



In Summer 2, both Year 6 classes will take part in the Virtual Northumberland School Games Hockey Final. This will be contested against different schools from across Northumberland. Both classes qualified by finishing first and second respectively in the Blyth and Bedlington area competition in Summer 1. The final will take place on Wednesday 23 June.

Writing at Horton Grange

The literacy team has been working with all Year groups from Year 1 to Year 6 to develop our new **Horton Grange Writing Process**. Already we can see children across school are becoming familiar and more confident with their writing using this process. Each 2 week block has a toolkit lesson, SPaG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) lessons, a reading lesson and a cold and warm write. There are posters in the classrooms to help children know what lesson comes next and a friendly character (who always carries his toolkit just like us) moves from sign to sign to remind us where we are on the journey to our final piece of high quality writing.



It is really important that children experience each lesson in the process by attending school each day. Here are some quotes from the children about the Horton Grange Writing Process so far.

“The little man moves so you know what lesson you are on.” - Y2 child

“Every lesson we read the poster and it tells us where we are.” - Y4 child

“In SPAG we learn about speech, adjectives, vocabulary and nouns. We call nouns, verbs etc word classes.”- Y5 child

You may wish to discuss the **Horton Grange Writing Process** with your child at home.

Equalities Week

The final week of Summer 1 gave the children an opportunity to learn all about equality and diversity as part of our Equalities Week. In each year group, the children shared videos and texts that explored how people are all different and how everyone should be treated fairly. Across school, the children engaged in different discussions and activities that promote tolerance and respect for all, as well as allowing children to identify their rights and the rights of others based on The Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The children gave great feedback to the teachers about how much they enjoyed the week.

Sports Day and Active Week

Active week is scheduled for this half term, starting with Sports Day on 21 June (as set out in the yearly calendar). Due to the number of changes and challenges faced this year, we were keen for Sports Day to go ahead. Whilst Sports Day takes place in cohorts rather than year group bubbles, the event is outdoors where risks are lower and children will only be in close contact with their own class / year group for events. Sharing of equipment will be minimised with additional cleaning of any shared equipment.

The current restrictions are as follows:

Outdoor gatherings are limited to 30 people and indoor gatherings are limited to 6 people or 2 households.

Whilst we are expecting a review on 21 June it is not clear that the roadmap will progress on this date or that all restrictions will be removed. Therefore, as outdoor gatherings are limited to 30 people, it is with great disappointment that we are not in a position to allow parents to attend Sports Day this year. We did consider this carefully but feel the measures we have had in place has meant Horton Grange has not been impacted by bubble closures in the way that many schools have and we do not want to fall at the final hurdle. I do sincerely hope that next year we are able to invite you again.

Reports & Parents Evening

End of Year reports will be sent out on Monday 5 July (Year 4 will be sent Friday 2 July due to Dukeshouse Wood visit). Normally our parents evening at the end of the year would be a drop in session. However, this year due to not having a mid year parents evening we will be using an appointment system. Like the Autumn term, these appointments will be telephone appointments as it is not clear whether all restrictions will be lifted on 21 June. For EYFS, KS1 and Year 3 telephone appointments will take place on Wednesday 7 July and for KS2 (Years 4, 5 & 6) on Thursday 8 July. A separate letter will be sent soon. Again we really hope that in the new academic year we can return to our usual face to face format.

Breakfast Club

As a working parent myself I really do understand the challenges of not having a breakfast club this year may have caused. Our reason behind this was to prevent mixing of bubbles and minimise risks of additional bubble closures. We are planning on breakfast club opening again in September (unless restrictions are not lifted). However, we will be operating an online booking system. Sessions will need to be booked and paid for 1 week in advance. In order to cover costs there will also be an increase in the daily charge which will be more in line with other schools and providers. It

will run from 8.00am until the start of the school day (8.50am). Costings: 8.00am until start of school day £2.00 daily to include breakfast. Arrivals after 8.30am will be charged at £1.00 but no breakfast will be provided. Further information will be sent in a separate letter. Children will not be able to attend unless they are pre-booked to allow us to staff the session appropriately.

Attendance Update

As you know attendance at school is a key indicator in ensuring children make progress academically but also to ensure friendships thrive and positive attitudes develop. We appreciate the pandemic has had an impact on attendance. However, it is worth remembering that to have 95% attendance, which is classed as good attendance; a child can only miss 10 days in any school year. Should your child need to be absent due to ill health, parents must notify school by telephone before 9.00am on that day. Holidays will not be authorised in school time, except in exceptional circumstances and a holiday request form must be completed and handed into the office. As attendance is one of our school priorities and Ofsted have told us we must improve this; we appreciate your support in this.

Rewards

The ever popular Asda prize draw will take place towards the end of the summer term and will be linked to attendance. Well done to all those children and families whose attendance remains above 95% despite this really tricky year.

Best wishes

Mrs Nichola Irving

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Please note whilst we endeavour to stick to these dates occasionally amendments have to be made in response to other events in school, which are often out of our control. However, if you are unable to make an event, please contact school and we will discuss how the information can be shared in an alternative way.

Monday 7 June	Y1 Phonics Screening Week
Thursday 10 June	Y6 Fire Service Visit
Monday 14 June	Measures Week
Monday 21 June	Sports Day (no spectators) New to Reception Meeting (RMM)
Tuesday 22 June	Reserve Sports Day New to Reception Meeting (RBH)
Thursday 24 June	New to Reception Meeting (RRH)
Friday 25 June	EYFS Sports Day (no spectators)
Monday 28 June	New to Morning Nursery Meeting
Tuesday 29 June	New to Afternoon Nursery Meeting
Thursday 1 July	New to 30 Hours Nursery Meeting
Friday 2 July	Y4 Reports out
Monday 5 July	Y4 Dukeshouse Wood School Reports out (except Y4)
Tuesday 6 July	Y4 Dukeshouse Wood
Wednesday 7 July	Y4 Dukeshouse Wood Parent Consultations (R, Y1, Y2, Y3) (telephone calls)
Thursday 8 July	Parent Consultations (Y4, Y5, Y6) (telephone calls)
Friday 16 July	School closes