



## Weekly Newsletter Friday 27 November 2020

*Making learning a lifelong adventure*

Our school value for this half-term is **EMPATHY**

Dear Parents/Carers

This week, a team from Earthsong Music led workshops for children in Year 5 and Reception, with Year 5 exploring Chinese musical traditions as part of their topic on the Sheng Dynasty and Reception going on a tour of Music Around the World (see pictures above)!

I would like to say a big thank you to our House Ambassadors who have created an excellent virtual tour of the school for prospective Reception parents who have been unable to visit the school prior to applying for a place in Reception for next year. Some of our House Ambassadors (pictured right with Bess after the session) also participated in the first of two Zoom Q & A sessions yesterday, along with Mrs Shewbridge and me. Visiting parents always comment on how well our pupils *sell* the school and this came across just as strongly online.



Our all-weather track continues to be enjoyed and well-used by the children on a daily basis and is really proving its worth, as the Winter weather has meant that the field is only usable for a limited amount of PE and cannot be used at breaks or other times. Thank you, once again, to all those parents who contributed to the JustGiving page earlier in the term and to FOHBS who set-up the page for us and have just presented us with a £12,000 cheque that will cover all but £2,000 of the cost. I am delighted to report that I have just learnt that we have had a further generous corporate donation of £2,000 from Henkel, following an application from High Beeches parent Hannah Davis who works for the company. Thank you Ms Davis!

On Monday lunchtime, we were given notice of an OFSTED monitoring visit, which took place on Tuesday morning. This was not a full school inspection and will not result in an OFSTED judgement or full report, but was a focused visit to explore how school leaders are returning pupils to school since the periods of closure. Given the current national lockdown, the visit took place remotely and was led by two inspectors who explored various aspects of curriculum, behaviour, attendance and staffing.

We received positive verbal feedback during the course of the morning about our staff training and preparation for the full reopening of the school, about our approach to the curriculum and assessment and about our progress with remote learning. We have been advised that OFSTED will not be contacting schools until after Christmas with their response which they say will be in the form of a brief letter. However, we look forward to sharing this with parents when it is published.

Many thanks to Mrs Shewbridge and Mrs Hill who joined me throughout the course of the 4 hour session online.

Many parents may have seen, that High Beeches has performed particularly well in the latest *Sunday Times* Top 600 highest-achieving primary and prep schools in England. We are ranked 128<sup>th</sup> nationally out of all primary schools in England (20,832) and an equal 22<sup>nd</sup> over the South East Region. This is based on our KS2 tests and assessments from Year 6 in 2019, as the SATs did not take place in 2020, due to the COVID19 pandemic. Although I would therefore stress that this is only one measure of the school's success and is based on a snapshot in time, it nevertheless reflects the high expectations and hard work of our pupils and staff team, who are to be congratulated on such a significant achievement.

I would like to inform parents that Mrs Liz Rogers, who has worked as a teaching assistant in Key Stage 2 has decided to retire from her post following a period of poor health since the Summer. Formerly a teacher herself, Mrs Rogers has worked at the school since September 2011 and has contributed to the education of well over 300 children in that time. I am sure parents and colleagues would join me in thanking her for the contribution she has made to the life of the school and to wish her, and her husband Steve (also recently retired) every happiness for the future.

I am pleased to be able to report that I have now appointed Mrs Sian Jones to the role of teaching assistant in place of Mrs Rogers and look forward to welcoming her permanently to the staff team.

Yours faithfully

*Jonathan Walker*

**Headteacher**

## Headteacher Awards

Congratulations go to the following children who are taking home a certificate for their achievements this week.

- **Reception Oak Class** Ellis – for making great progress in Phonics  
Liliana – for joining in more with whole class learning
- **Reception Chestnut Class** Yusuf – for always having a positive attitude  
Sienna – for being an amazing conductor during our music workshop
- **Year 1 Elm Class** Daniel – for showing greater empathy towards his peers at playtime  
Daisy – for working hard in Maths and showing empathy to her friends
- **Year 1 Cedar Class** Theo – for excellent Maths work on 3D shapes  
Emmeline – for improved concentration and effort in Phonics and English
- **Year 2 Hazel Class** Leo – for a positive and enthusiastic approach to Science  
Elise – for always being determined and dedicated to learning
- **Year 2 Willow Class** Dillon – for explaining methods for telling the time so well  
Sam – for working hard in his Phonics and reading
- **Year 3 Birch Class** Emily – for producing fantastic story writing, using wonderful descriptive language  
Yusuf – for being keen to use new ways of working in English
- **Year 3 Redwood Class** Alice – for excellent presentation in her English book  
Sophie – for excellent presentation in her Maths book
- **Year 4 Maple Class** Izzy – for working well with her partner and extending her learning in Maths  
Isla – for working hard at understanding Time Maths
- **Year 4 Pine Class** Tim – for being a kind and empathetic friend  
Lucy – for being positive and enthusiastic in her learning
- **Year 5 Ash Class** Jenson – for an enthusiastic and passionate role play in History  
Nathan – for showing empathy to his learning partner
- **Year 5 Hawthorn Class** Callum – for improved focus and presentation  
Bella – for taking her positive attitude everywhere she goes
- **Year 6 Sycamore Class** Noel – for asking fantastic questions to further his understanding in Science  
Beatrix, James and Millie – for speaking with confidence to prospective parents
- **Year 6 Rowan Class** Sami – for working cooperatively and kindly with his Highwayman group and avoiding distractions.  
Marc – for persevering with computing challenges and demonstrating problem-solving skills

### Attendance

Congratulations to Elm, Hazel, Birch, Pine and Ash classes for 100% attendance this week.

## Coronavirus Update

We continue to be fortunate not to have had any positive cases of COVID19 from within the school pupil or staff bodies. However, we are aware of recent cases in two local primary schools, one of which resulted in pupils having to be sent home to self-isolate for 14 days. For this reason, we must all continue to be vigilant and to follow the required safety measures diligently.



## FOHBS News

### Christmas Treasure hunt!

Father Christmas needs your help! He has lost his reindeer around Harpenden and needs you to help find them!

Support FoHBS by Joining us for an exciting hunt that is suitable for all ages and will need you to use your skills in map reading and secret code breaking to find all the reindeer and save Christmas!

To minimise contact we will be asking for donations via [JustGiving](https://www.justgiving.com) (suggested £5) and asking you to email: [contact.fohbs@gmail.com](mailto:contact.fohbs@gmail.com) to be added to the mailing list. You can either print the hunt at home or have it on a phone/tablet and complete on paper. Hunts will again be self-led with a reward at the end! We are also holding a secret word prize draw this time! The reward will be available 5th December - 20th December (9am-4pm)

Entries to the secret word competition need to be in by 4pm on 20th December.

### ECO TEAM UPDATE - Christmas Jumper Pre-loved Swaps

In readiness for the forthcoming Christmas Jumper Day, the Eco Team would love to save us all some pennies, and do our bit for the environment too. So...let's have a Christmas jumper donate and swap week next week!

There will be boxes and signs out under the bike shelter to the left of school. Come drop your jumpers in, and have a look through for another. Day 1 (Monday) will be donations only, and Tuesday onwards people can still pop them in but all jumpers are good to go. Any donations will go to the charity pot for the 9th December, with a suggested donation of between 50p and £4 - you decide! For safety, please try not to gather around the boxes. The signs will suggest where to leave donations.

## Further Information and Reminders

### School Uniform Suppliers

Please see separate flyer regarding Stevensons opening in December and going forward from January.

### COVID-safe Christmas Card Giving

Unfortunately, given the obligation on us to keep the movement of materials to and from home to a minimum, we will not be able to allow the children to bring multiple Christmas cards into school this year to give out to their friends. We would encourage you to get your child to write a single Christmas card to the whole class which can be read by the teacher and displayed in class. Parents who feel they want to do something with the money they would have spent on a full set of cards, would be welcome to purchase a book for the class library as a kind of Christmas present to the class or to visit the class's FOHBS Amazon wish list.

### Parking in Staff Car Park

Reminder that there should be no parking in the staff car park between the hours of 8.20am and 4.30pm every day. Please always use our park and stride car park in Waldegrave Park. Thank you.

### Christmas Lunch and Christmas Jumpers

As parents will know, this year we will be having our Christmas Lunch on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> December. If your child usually has packed lunch on a Wednesday and would like the Christmas lunch, please pay on school gateway by the end of today (Friday 20<sup>th</sup> November) at the very latest. Please also comment if your child would like the vegetarian option. As mentioned earlier, children are invited to wear a Christmas jumper this day in place of their normal school jumper/cardigan, for a minimum donation of £1 for the L & D Christmas Appeal.

## Diary Dates

Tuesday 8 December	Flu vaccinations – catch up for absentees
Wednesday 9 December	Christmas lunch and Christmas Jumper Day
14 to 16 December	Christmas Panto Dance Workshops in School
Friday 18 December	School closes 1.30pm to 2.00pm (staggered) for Christmas break
Monday 4 January	School closed for staff training
Tuesday 5 January	School opens for Spring Term 1

# PLEASE JOIN US FOR



# CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY



9<sup>th</sup> December 2020  
(Wednesday)

£1

Please bring £1 for the L & D Hospital.

Poster design by Rhea, Willow Class