



Weekly Newsletter

Friday 18 December 2020

Making learning a lifelong adventure

Dear Parents/Carers

So we reach the end of the Autumn term pretty much still in one piece and grateful that the vast majority of the school community have remained safe and well. The children have been super in the run up to Christmas, continuing to cope brilliantly with the various constraints of COVID- safe schooling, and the staff team have worked their socks off! Congratulations and thank you all of you.

Many schools locally have had to switch to remote learning for many of their classes at some point during the course of this term and many nationally have had to, to an even greater extent. We have been fortunate not to have needed to do so before now and I was very sorry to have to ask the Reception year group to stay at home this week. Although it has made the start of the Christmas holidays something of an anti-climax for those in Reception, I hope the impact on their learning will be minimal, given that it was so close to the end of term. I would like to thank the staff who have been providing remote learning for them this week and understand from parents that this has been received positively. One parent commented yesterday that it has been really encouraging to be able to join her child in his learning this week and to see, first hand, his attitude to learning and how much progress he has made.

Continuing on the Reception theme, it is such a shame not to have been able to say a proper goodbye to Mrs Kelly Stedman, teaching assistant to Oak Class who leaves us today to take up a post closer to her home in January. I'm sure parents will want to join me in thanking her for her contribution to the Early Years at High Beeches. I am pleased to be able to confirm that I have appointed her successor, Mrs Faye Stockley, who joins us from Crabtree Infant School in January.

This week every class has enjoyed an excellent panto' drama and dance workshop led by a professional performer (and pictured). This included Chestnut and Oak classes who, despite being in self-isolation, were able to dial into the workshop over Zoom. This had the added benefit of being able to involve a parent and, in some cases, siblings too which seemed like a really positive experience for all!



Also this week, parent Anita White, very kindly led a digital wellbeing workshop (via Zoom), which was attended and very well received by a small number of parents. Mrs Shewbridge and I attended the majority of it too and I can certainly say how useful I found it, both as a teacher and a parent. We hope to run it again in the new year and I would encourage parents to join. In the meantime, parents can find the slides from the workshop on the *Online Safety Resources* area of our [Staying Safe page](#).

I hope you enjoyed the various year group Christmas video presentations which went out on Wednesday. The links will only be available for the next 10 days. Please adhere to our usual safeguarding expectations by not sharing the link beyond your own family. The children enjoyed watching the videos from other year groups this morning, after the whole school came together virtually for a Christmas assembly, reflecting on Christmas traditions and particularly, Christmas lights. In the assembly I challenged the children to think about how they could be a light to someone this Christmas (see image on page 4).

I would like to thank all of our parents and families too for their support and positivity throughout the course of the term. Thank you also for the many cards and gifts we have received in school. These are never expected or taken for granted, but always appreciated. I would like to wish you all, parents, children and staff, a safe and peaceful Christmas.

Jonathan Walker **Headteacher**

Coronavirus Update

The main symptoms of Coronavirus are:

- a high temperature or fever – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to take your temperature)
- a new continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually/often have cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change of your sense of smell or taste – this means you have noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal



[More information can be found here.](#) Should your child develop any of the 3 main symptoms within 48 hours of leaving school today and subsequently test positive, parents are required to notify the school via the office email, in order that any close contacts can be identified and notified.

Please mark the email *URGENT COVID+* and include a copy of the positive test confirmation email together with the following information:

- Pupil's name and surname
- Pupil's Date of Birth
- Pupil's year group and class
- Date pupil was last in school
- Confirmation that they and the rest of the household are self-isolating
- Whether or not they attended Jousters Childcare on Thursday or Friday

Hertfordshire County Council has asked us to share the following important information with you following a significant increase in coronavirus infections:

Thank you for everything you and your family are doing to play your part in the fight against coronavirus. Our schools and other education settings have worked extremely hard this term to help keep everyone safe. However, as we move into the Christmas holidays, it is of utmost importance that we continue to stay safe.

We have seen a significant increase in the number of coronavirus infections in 12-16 year olds and would therefore urge you to have a conversation with your child, whatever their age, to make sure they understand, and are following, the Government regulations to help prevent the spread of coronavirus.

The actions you and your family can take to play your part are:

- *Wash your hands regularly, for at least 20 seconds, with soap and warm water or use an antibacterial hand sanitiser if soap and water isn't available*
- *Stay at least 2 metres (or 1 metre with other measures, such as a face-covering) away from those not in your immediate household*
- *Wear a face-covering where required and when it is difficult to socially distance*
- *Self-isolate and get tested if you develop symptoms*
- *Do not socialise indoors with anyone who isn't in your immediate household and only meet in groups of up to 6 people outdoors*

All areas of Hertfordshire move to Tier 3 on Saturday 19 December (Broxbourne, Three Rivers, Watford and Hertsmere). Residents are requested to familiarise themselves with, and adhere to, [Tier 3 restrictions](#).

Please remember that while your child is in school, they are in a 'bubble', which is carefully managed by the school. However outside of school hours, they should continue to follow the most up to date Government guidelines, and we encourage you to explain this to your child.

If you choose to socialise in a bubble of up to three separate households during 23-27 December, which is the period the Government proposes to relax guidelines, please enjoy this time but please also remember to do so safely by continuing to follow good hand hygiene and socially distance where possible. Coronavirus is known to linger in enclosed spaces, so keeping windows open can also reduce risk.

We wish you all a safe and peaceful Christmas from Hertfordshire County Council

Message from the Governing Body

On behalf of all the governors, I would like to thank all the support staff, office staff, kitchen staff, volunteers and teachers at High Beeches during what has proved to be an unprecedented academic year. We have been in close (virtual) contact with Mr Walker and Mrs Shewbridge throughout the government updates, the lockdowns, the phased returns, the remote times and the times where the safety, and well-being, of your children were their foremost priority. I am sure you will agree, they have endeavoured to make the 'learning an adventure' and have, during such challenges, continued to foster that family feeling that High Beeches prides itself in.

We would also like to thank you, the school community for your continued support too and we wish you all a very safe and happy Christmas- here's to a much more positive 2021!

Anita White
(Chair)

FOHBS News

Firstly we want to say a massive thank you to all of you for supporting FoHBS this year!

It's been such a shame that we haven't been able to have the usual Christmas fayre and other activities this year but we hope you have enjoyed what has been possible! As always we welcome new ideas and if you want to get involved please get in touch. Things are so different at the minute but we really do appreciate every offer of help!

Secondly we want to say a huge thank you to all the staff of High Beeches. This year has thrown so many challenges your way but your dedication to each child shines through.

Finally, thank you to everyone who has given their time to FoHBS over the year. Committee members, volunteers, anyone who has contributed to our meetings, the list goes on! We honestly couldn't do any of this without you and we are so grateful for your continued dedication.

Final Messages of the Year!

The Christmas Reindeer Trail ends on Sunday. Please make a suggested £5 per child donation on [JustGiving](#) or via [PayPal](#) and drop us an email at contact.fohbs@gmail.com and we will send you the hunt. Don't forget to get prize draw entries in by 4pm on Sunday!

Recycling

Just a reminder that there is a bin outside reception which is collecting CAREX hand soap pumps and refill pouches. From January we will also be collecting ANY BRAND of dishwasher tablet, dishwasher salt and some other cleaning products flexible packaging in the same bin. FoHBS will receive cash donations for sending these waste streams to be recycled so please ask family and friends to collect their waste for us too (in a COVID secure manner!).

All that remains is to wish you all a very Happy and Healthy Christmas and let's all embrace 2021 and whatever it may bring!

Laura and Kim

Further Information and Reminders

Payments

We still have outstanding payments for the Pantomime Dance Workshop. Please can we ask that these are paid on School Gateway or an email is sent to the admin address explaining if there is a problem with payment. Thank you.

Diary Dates

Monday 4 January	School closed for staff training
Tuesday 5 January	School opens for Spring Term 1 – same staggered start times as Autumn
Monday 18 January	Year 2 Fire of London Workshop - Hazel
Friday 22 January	Year 2 Fire of London Workshop - Willow
Monday 25 January	Nurse for Reception Screening Tests
Monday 25 January	Year 4 Viking Workshop - Maple
Tuesday 26 January	Nurse for Reception Screening Tests
Tuesday 26 January	Year 4 Viking Workshop - Pine
Wednesday 27 January	School Nurse - Lancaster form for Y6
Monday 1 February	Year 1 Castle Workshop - Elm
Friday 5 February	Year 1 Castle Workshop - Cedar
Wednesday 10 February	Year 3 Egyptian Workshop - Birch
Thursday 11 February	Year 3 Egyptian Workshop - Redwood
Friday 12 th February	School closes for half term at normal time

Think and reflect



How could you bring light to someone this Christmas?

Who could you show love and kindness, be they with you in your Christmas bubble or further away?

