



Weekly Newsletter

12 February 2021

Making learning a lifelong adventure

Our school value for this half-term is kindness

Dear Parents/Carers

As we come to the end of a challenging half-term, I would like to thank the staff team at High Beeches for their sterling efforts over the last six weeks. For the staff, the challenge of managing remote learning for the majority of pupils, whilst working in school with the keyworker and vulnerable children's group has been immense and I am proud of all they have achieved and the way in which we have been able to develop our remote learning offer in response to pupil needs and parental feedback.

Equally, we know that life at home for our pupils and parents has also been challenging and that supporting pupils in their remote learning, often whilst juggling work and other family commitments, is no mean feat. So thank you for everything you have been doing at home! For this reason, it feels like we all need the half-term break more than ever and I do hope families and staff will be able to find ways of regrouping and resetting ready for the second half of term.

On behalf of the staff, I would like to thank the parents who have provided treats in the staffroom over the last two weeks and the anonymous contributor who sent boxes of biscuits via Amazon yesterday! It is lovely to work in a school where we feel so well supported.

At this stage, we do not know when the school closure will come to an end, or indeed if it will be a full return from the start. However, the government have stated that 8 March (2 weeks after half-term) is the first point at which the school might reopen, so we do hope that we are through the bulk of it now, one way or another. We will, of course, confirm arrangements as soon as we have the necessary information.

I hope you enjoy the attractive window display created by pupils in our Year 2 Bubble this week (some of whom are pictured by the window). The text below the rainbows and hearts reads *keep smiling High Beeches*.

Some of our year groups had a music lesson with a difference yesterday. Arranged by Hertfordshire Music Service, the *Electric Umbrella* live session on Zoom and Youtube was entitled *Feeling Good* and provided opportunities for singing, exercising, breathing, thinking and many funny yoga positions like a *washing machine* and *the colour yellow*!



Also this week, pupils in Year 4 have really enjoyed linking up with the *Jorvik Children's Week*. This has involved Live sessions with Vikings, videos showing and explaining different artefacts, a virtual tour of Viking life and lots of storytelling from famous authors.

Don't forget that this year's governors' cup was launched last week and those wishing to enter must submit their entries by the first day back after half-term (22 February). Children are encouraged to do as many of the mental health and wellbeing activities from the bingo card as they can and to find creative ways of recording them. More information is available on Tapestry and Seesaw, including how to submit.

Remember, this challenge is about wellbeing and mental health, so pick enjoyable ones to do and avoid getting stressed about it! You never know, it might have a positive effect on the whole family.

Today also sees the launch of the *House Ambassadors' Bakeathon!* To maintain that feeling of High Beeches team spirit, the children are invited to bake something in their house team colours between now and the end of lockdown. The House ambassadors have made a promotional video, which has been posted on Tapestry and Seesaw today.

Staff News

Congratulations to both Hazel class teacher Miss Annie Norman, who became engaged to her partner Chris earlier this term and to Hazel teaching assistant Miss Jody Kiff, who said yes to her partner Daren who also popped the question towards the end of the Autumn term. There must be something in the water!

Also, I would like to thank Mrs Catherine Homer-Brine, who left the team at High Beeches earlier this term, having worked at the school for almost 17 years. Catherine worked as a teaching assistant in Key Stage 2 and as school librarian and was instrumental in setting up our library in its own new building in 2018/19. I am sure staff and parents would like to join me in thanking her for her dedication and service to the school community.

Yours faithfully

Jonathan Walker Headteacher

Headteacher Awards

Congratulations to the following children for their achievements that were celebrated in our online year group assemblies this week.

- **Reception Chestnut Class** Angus – for always putting lots of effort into his home learning and creating a fantastic story map
Liliana – for working hard and showing great progress, especially in Maths
- **Reception Oak Class** Chloe - for always completing her remote learning to a high standard and taking on extra challenges
Charlie - for participating enthusiastically in all of his learning activities whether it's PE, Music, Phonics or Math
- **Year 1 Cedar Class** Oscar – for giving maximum effort to all of his work this week
Teddy – for a great effort in all of his home learning this week
- **Year 1 Elm Class** Ibi – for excellent descriptive writing
Thomas - for great progress with English this week
- **Year 2 Hazel Class** Dylan – for a brilliant effort across all of his home learning activities
Billy – for his creative approach to home learning tasks
- **Year 2 Willow Class** Dillon – working hard and aiming high
Isla – completing work to a high standard
- **Year 3 Birch Class** Arran D - for spot on punctuation of dialogue and generally submitting work of a high standard
Ted G - for taking on, and acting upon, advice given to him on Seesaw
- **Year 3 Redwood Class** Amelie - for showing empathy both through her writing and in her everyday life this week
Ho - for some great writing about swimming with dolphins and explaining how he built his pyramid model
- **Year 4 Maple Class** Max - for concentrating hard and producing some excellent work in his remote learning.
Naomi - for always making the adults smile with her entertaining videos and for showing enthusiasm for her learning
- **Year 4 Pine Class** Rose - for a wonderful Viking myth
Jackson - for always working hard with his remote learning
- **Year 5 Ash Class** Emily – for bringing a positive attitude to her remote learning and always trying her best
Anish - for developing his confidence and wanting to try maths challenges independently
- **Year 5 Hawthorn Class** Lottie - for making significant effort with completing her remote learning activities
Chloe - for producing high quality outcomes for both her creative writing and science investigations
- **Year 6 Rowan Class** Sam - for a fantastic chicken sketch taking on board all the learning from the lesson
Abby – for presenting her work creatively, completing all work set and for reflecting on her learning
- **Year 6 Sycamore Class** Jessica – for her positive attitude, high quality work and making her teachers proud of her
Keira – for her positive attitude to her home learning and responding to feedback

Staying Safe, Wellbeing and Mental Health

Pupil Photograph and Video Uploads

Safer Internet Day took place this week and online safety continues to be a really important focus, especially as the lockdown continues. Specific information and advice can be found on the [government's keeping children safe online during the Coronavirus pandemic](#) web page.

Please help your children to develop safe online habits and a strong sense of what is appropriate online, by continuing to follow our Zoom Code of Conduct for our live sessions and any other sessions they may have with Cubs, Brownies or other community groups. Children should apply the same standards to any videos or photographs submitted on Tapestry or Seesaw, filming or photographing in shared family spaces and avoiding capturing any personal or inappropriate items in shot. Please help your child to do this by checking what they are submitting first.

Online Courses

Please see separate flyers sent out by Bounce Forward and the Ollie Foundation regarding forthcoming courses on wellbeing and resilience.

Community Matters

Winter Walking and Photography

Why not take your daily exercise around Rothamstead Walking Trail at some point during the half-term. See image below for information on the Rothamstead Winter Photography Competition.

Harpenden Lockdown Tapestry Project

Katherine Hall, Harpenden resident, embroidery artist and crafter is making a tapestry that shows what the experience of Lockdown has been like for us as a local community. You don't even have to sew - but this is a chance to learn if you would like.

Embroidery and textiles have been used throughout millennia to record historical events (like the Bayeux Tapestry), to protest (like the banners used by the suffragettes) and to reclaim identity (like enslaved people in the USA). It seems right that Lockdown(s) should get embroidery's attention.

You are invited to make two six inch squares (with an additional one inch border for joining) on fabric. One square is about your experience of Lockdown (good or bad) and one square about hope. It can be anything: a drawing, a word, colour. You can sew it or use fabric paints. There are tutorials on how to embroider on the website. Details of how to take part can be found [here](#).

Participants can use their own materials or can buy a kit (embroidery or no-sew fabric paints from the website. These are at cost price and, if there is any profit, it will be donated to an NHS charity or a bereavement charity.

In a time of forced isolation, this is a way of uniting our experiences in a creative way. Crafting has been shown to be beneficial for mental health and stitching in particular is a mindful task.

When it is complete Katherine is hoping to display it in a local venue. Over 100 people have signed up so far. It would be wonderful if we could keep that number growing. Please spread the word to neighbours, colleagues and loved ones.

FiveDinners.com

Some parents will know High Beeches parent and local chef, Theo Michaels. Mr and Mrs Michaels have asked us to draw parents' attention to their latest enterprise which you are invited to consider supporting and which, although as a school we are not endorsing it specifically, appears to promote the benefits of healthy eating and the pleasure of cooking from scratch.

The subscription service provides members with recipes and shopping lists for 5 meals each week and they are offering school parents 6 weeks' free access. Just head to [their website](#) click **Join** then use the code *HBparent* for the monthly membership plan. If you cancel before the 6 weeks is up, it doesn't cost you a penny.

Further information on the scheme can be found on [their website](#) with reviews of existing users on [trustpilot.com](https://www.trustpilot.com).

The Hygiene Bank Harpenden – Helping Home Learning in Luton

Will you be having a clear out over half term? Have you got a pile of books that you've been meaning to take to the charity shop but haven't got round to taking or unused birthday or Christmas presents?

After the success of our coat campaign before Christmas, we are now on a mission to help Level Trust collect good quality or new learning resources for children age 5-18 in need in Luton.

All items donated will stock a shop in Luton which families that have been referred to, can go to and get the things they need (for free) to bolster their children's learning at home.

They are collecting:

- ✓ GOOD QUALITY OR NEW educational games and toys such as board games, puzzles or small world toys
- ✓ GOOD QUALITY OR NEW fiction and non-fiction books including up-to-date revision guides
- ✓ GOOD QUALITY OR NEW school learning equipment including scientific calculators and math sets
- ✓ NEW stationary including lines A4 paper pads, scissors, glue sticks, pens, felt tips, paint sets etc.

Items can be left in the black storage box outside 83 Chesterton Avenue and the campaign will initially run until Sunday 21 February. Families can also help this initiative by donating via [JustGiving](#) () or via their [amazon wishlist](#).

Further Information and Reminders

Cancelled Clubs

We are very sorry to announce that due to the uncertainty about when after school clubs will be able to operate again, we have taken the decision to cancel the Y5 and Y6 after school Football and Netball clubs. If you had booked, and paid, for your child to participate in one of these clubs you will shortly receive a "refund form" to complete and return to school. Please do make sure these are returned by the required date and no later so we can close our accounts for the financial year end.

Refunds for Year 1 Dinoland and the Lego workshop should all have been applied for now. This will now be closed off and refunds should be in your bank accounts within the week. Thank you to those parents who have donated the funds, it is much appreciated.

**'ROTHAMSTED IN WINTER'
PHOTOGRAPHY COMPETITION**

CELEBRATE THE BEAUTY OF ROTHAMSTED
DURING THIS WINTER'S LOCKDOWN

Download free self-guided walk
Park free of charge
Get snap-happy with your camera
Grab a takeaway at our pop-up cafe
Submit your best pics by 21 February
Open to kids and grown-ups

WIN FREE HOT DRINK FOR
EVERY WEEK OF THIS YEAR!

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