



**Honesty, Respect,
Kindness, Perseverance**

Lower Halstow School

Newsletter

April 2023

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Update from Mrs Deevooy and Miss Crowe

The building has been very busy this Easter with Willow Class finally saying goodbye to their purple walls and blue skirting boards and Acorn class getting a fancy new floor ready for the classroom redesign and new furniture. They also bid a happy farewell to the purple gloss work and doors!

After months spent pleading, complaining and finally threatening we now have a new (working) boiler system in the main school. We had to leave it on during the holidays to 'bed in' so the poor workman were quite toasty. The sports hall heating continues to be waiting KCC approval. In addition to the internal upgrades, including more LED lighting, the canteen got a full steam clean and will hopefully stay sparkly if the worst of the wet weather is behind us.

Along with the outdoor installations, the tree surgeons were at work taking down more trees and branches following the stormy weather. This was also done in preparation for the 'big plant' where the forest school hedgerow will be going in and additional planting along the fence line by Y2 to screen the classroom from the new houses. The big news is that the installation of a trim trail courtesy of our wonderful PTA is scheduled for Term 6 just in time for the warmer weather.

Following feedback regarding school photographs, we have commissioned a new company 'Carmel Jane photography'. They offer the option to mix and match different photos in the same order and a 'value' sheet of sibling and individual photos printed in sizes of your choice on a single sheet, which you can then cut out at home. Mounts are now optional to manage costs. All this is offered alongside the traditional ordering options and everything is ordered online with photos sent directly to you to stop deadline issues causing upset.

With the warmer sunnier weather, comes statutory testing. Please ensure your child gets enough sleep when they are due to sit tests in school. We are fairly relaxed in school as tests are simply a snapshot, but seeing a child struggle to focus on tasks they usually find straightforward due to a lack of sleep is very disheartening for everyone involved and does them no favours.

A few reminders

Please send your child to school appropriately dressed. Our active uniform is now in full swing so plain black sports/cycling shorts are perfectly fine alongside the old style grey ones. We've noticed a few navy joggers and shorts creeping in and these look equally smart so if you can't find black then plain navy joggers or shorts are fine. We are updating our uniform policy this term so will reflect this popular choice. Summer dresses are still permitted but please consider their suitability for active play and do not wear them to school on PE days.

We are a sun safe school so please apply sunscreen before school and remember to bring a hat. As the weather heats up water bottles are also really important, so please don't forget them!

Best wishes

Mrs Deevooy and Miss Crowe

Comic Relief

Thank you to everyone who made a donation towards Comic Relief this year by wearing red to school, it was strange to see a sea of red instead of blue when we went into any of the classrooms. We raised an impressive £133.17 for this very worthwhile charity, thank you for your generosity.



School Attendance

Unfortunately Chicken Pox appeared during February break which impacted on our attendance this term and we are down slightly from Term 3. Term 4 attendance stands at **94.0%** which is higher than at this point last year, but we still need to work together to get in line with the national expectation of 96.5%. Balancing keeping germs to yourself and coming in is difficult, but some non-attendance is not related to illness and this is what we are aiming to address.

Term	2021-2022	2022-2023
1	94.4%	94.2%
2	88.0%	92.9%
3	92.9%	95.2%
4	91.4%	93.1%

Pancake Races

The whole school enjoyed the annual pancake races that took place on Shrove Tuesday. The children competed against one another in their House Teams, gradually mastering flipping and running simultaneously! A few pancakes were lost on the way, however Hever House were crowned winners at the end of the afternoon having won the most races.



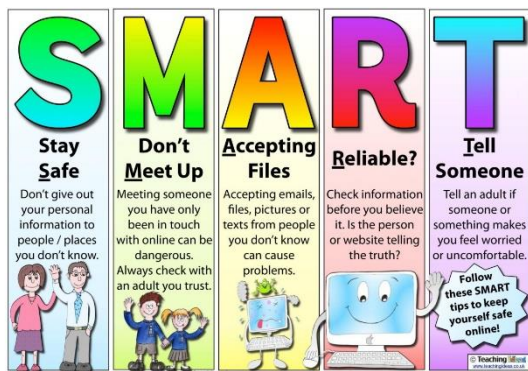
Book Week

There are few weeks in the school calendar that are more exciting than book week. The children enjoyed taking part in a bingo book quiz at home, bringing in a book from home to swap with other children and dressing up as a character for World Book Day. The week ended with a whole school book quiz in which representatives from each house went head to head to be the speediest at answering questions about texts that they had studied in class. We had some brilliant costumes on World Book Day which included Mary Poppins, several Harry Potters and a great Gangster Granny to name just a few.



Online Safety

Thank you to everyone who submitted a suggestion for our online safety work. We have looked at the responses and grouped them into three main categories. At the start of Term 5 the children will be completing a range of work based around the suggested areas. Look out for an invitation to come in and see the Year 5 and 6 presentations as well as poster artwork by Year 3 and 4. Key Stage 1 pupils will also be completing age appropriate work in class based on the suggested themes. We will also be sending out a leaflet with key online safety tips to help you and your family at home.



Golden Tickets

The PTA joined in with the book week theme and sold chocolate bars to raise funds. Some of the chocolate bars contained golden tickets which entitled the winner to have a play session with Georgie the Cockerpoo. For those of you who haven't heard, Georgie is Teddy's adopted sister; she has been busy at 'dog school' gaining all of her obedience certificates. The children have been kept up to date with her progress and the prize winners were delighted to have a session in which they could ask questions about her, feed her treats, dress her up and most importantly, snuggle in for a cuddle with her.



Year 4 Kent Life Trip

Hawthorn Class spent a fantastic day at Kent Life; enjoying a Viking Experience, where they participated in a day of workshops focused on the Viking way of life. They visited a Viking market and made a lucet cord. They also discovered how the Vikings fared in their life at sea, and what they got up to as fearsome raiders!



Year 1 and 2 Art Day

Rowan and Willow Classes had a visit from a local arts group associated with the Raybel Barge. They learnt about the barge and worked together to create this amazing piece of artwork in the shape of a sail.



Science Week

We celebrated National Science week by focusing on science in the world around us, with the children participating in experiments involving sweets in water, how sound travels, changing milk into butter and the effect of bacteria on bread to name but a few.



Living Eggs

One of the end of term highlights was the arrival of 9 eggs in an incubator. The children enjoyed keeping watch and seeing the eggs hatch. They all had a chance to hold a chick before they were returned to their farm ready to explore the big wide world. From our office we enjoyed listening to the conversations between the children as they visited the chicks, hearing comments such as, 'I think they are on newspaper to keep their feet warm', 'next week will they fly out of the box & around the room?' 'I wish I was a chick!' The chicks certainly put a smile on everyone's face, young and old.



Easter Eggs

Not wanting to be outdone by his sister or these feathered chicks, Teddy donned one of his annual Easter outfits and became an Easter chick for the morning, helping to give out the chocolate Easter eggs from the PTA. Every child went home with a chocolate egg to enjoyTeddy is still searching for his!



Easter Service

Unfortunately the weather wasn't kind to us and the torrential rain put paid to us heading to St Margaret's church for the Easter Service. John Guest kindly agreed to come to the school and led the service there. The children enjoyed seeing his magic tricks which helped to tell the story of Jesus rising from the dead. The singing of 'Spring Chicken' was also a highlight!



Dates for your diary

Date	Event
17.4.23	Term 5 begins
19.4.23	Year 5 trip to Leeds Castle
Wk beg – 24.4.23	Year 5 Bikeability (<i>don't forget to check your bike is road worthy</i>)
25.4.23	Year 3 trip to Horton Kirby River
26.4.23	Book Fair to begin (1 week)
May 2023	Year 2 SATS testing & assessment window
1.5.23	Bank Holiday
4.5.23	Year 3 trip to Living Land Detling
8.5.23	Bank Holiday – King's Coronation
9 - 12.5.23	Year 6 SATs testing week
9.5.23 & 10.5.23	Year 5 CAT testing
12.5.23 pm	Coronation Street Party in the playground – details to follow
15.5.23	Year R trip to Curly's Farm
16.5.23 pm	Year 6 trip to Safety in Action – details to follow
18.5.23	Class Photos
18.5.23	Teddy Bears' picnic day – details to follow
22.5.23	Bach to the Future Music Show
24.5.23 3.15 - 4.00	Open Classrooms (not Oak)
25.5.23 3.15 – 4.00	Oak Open Classroom
26.5.23	Term 5 ends

Date	Event
5.6.23	Term 6 begins
June	Year 4 times table statutory national screening check
12 - 16.6.23	Year 1 phonics statutory national screening check week
14 – 16.6.23	Year 6 Kingswood Residential
19.6.23	Year 6 money workshop
20.6.23 at 9.15	Year 5 Beech Class Assembly
21.6.23 pm	Sports Day
22.6.23	Year 1 trip to Wingham Wildlife – details to follow
23.6.23	Staff Development Day (Children do not attend)
28.6.23 pm	Reserve Sports Day
3.7.23	Staff Development Day (Children do not attend)
7.7.23 am	First Aid training for Year 6
7.7.23 pm	Race for Life – details to follow
14.7.23 4.30 – 6.00	PTA Disco
21.7.23 2.00pm	Year 6 Leavers' Service
21.7.23	End of term 6

