



**Honesty, Respect,
Kindness, Perseverance**

[Lower Halstow School](#)

[Newsletter](#)

January 2024

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Update from Mrs Deevoy and Miss Crowe

Happy New Year!

We hope you all had a restful Christmas and that the New Year has got off to a good start for you all.

As you will hopefully have read in the class newsletters, the staff have planned lots of exciting learning, activities and trips for your children this year. We can't believe that we are already one third of the way through the academic year, time really has flown by!

Some exciting news that we are pleased to share with you is that our governors have approved for us to have a 'lodge' built in our school grounds. This will be similar to the one that Newington CEP School have and will give us extra rooms and capacity for break out spaces and interventions. The lodge will be placed beside the canteen where our old PE shed currently stands (we will be purchasing a new PE shed). Although we haven't got a start date yet, work should begin very soon.

A few reminders

Uniform – no hooped earrings, studs only and please remove or tape these on PE days.

All pupils are able to wear black/navy jogging bottoms or black/navy leggings on any day (dark grey is also fine). These should be PLAIN – no nike swoosh, white piping or similar. Likewise trainers on non PE days should be PLAIN black and velcro if your child can't tie their own shoelaces. We will be moving towards black trainers everyday, so if you replace school trainers at any point, please buy black ones. Feedback on the activewear uniform option continues to be positive (particularly for the younger ones).

Reading – please remember to read regularly at home right up to Y6! Reading miles are how children develop prosody (the easy reading rhythm and fluency that 'good' readers have). This in turn helps comprehension and how the children access materials in school. We will teach them to read, they just need time to practise in order to read quickly enough to develop this. Our army of volunteer readers provide additional help and we are very grateful to them, but nothing can replace daily reading at home for securing fluency.

Parking – please be mindful of our neighbours when you are parking your vehicles. Please don't use the driveway to drop off and pick up your children and be careful that you are not blocking local residents driveways or the footpath itself.

Best wishes

Mrs Deevoy and Miss Crowe

Fundraising

Thank you to everyone who has contributed to the various fundraising events that have taken place so far this year. We know times are hard for families which is why we appreciate any contributions made.

Children in Need - The School Council helped have the final vote on what we would do for Children in Need this year; we had a 'bring your bear in' day. A variety of furry friends, small and large, old and new, spent the day with the children in return for a donation towards the worthwhile charity - as a school we managed to raise £244.84 for Children in Need!



Poppy Appeal - After our poppy parcel getting lost in the post last year, we really made up for it this year as we managed to raise a massive £210.65 for the Royal British Legion!



Santa Fun Run – The Santa Fun Run is now an annual event at Lower Halstow School. Each year the whole school takes part in a sponsored Santa Run. This year the weather was kind to us and the sun shone (this was especially wonderful as it had rained on all of the other days that week!), the children donned their Santa hats (provided by the PTA), and completed as many laps of the Daily Mile track as they could. We are still counting up the amount raised but everyone enjoyed

the event, including singing along to the Christmas songs as they ran.



Thank you also for your kind contributions towards the Christmas Fayre raffles – the takings for these are still being finalised so look out for the totals in my future newsletters!

Litter Angels' Poster Competition

Beech Class took part in the annual Litter Angels poster competition again this year. There were some lovely designs entered, but this year it was Evie's poster that caught the eye of the judges, Gordon Henderson visited the school to award Evie with her prize.



Trips and in school Workshops

This term various classes headed off-site for their learning! Our Year 1 and 2 children visited the Marlowe Theatre in Canterbury where they watched a performance of 'The Littlest Yak'. Year 6 experienced a day at the Houses of Parliament in London; they had a tour around the Palace of Westminster and considered democracy and the rule of law as they spoke to various representatives from the House. Meanwhile Year 3 were archaeologists for the day and spent their time uncovering artefacts and fossils then identifying each piece they found.



The Dogs Trust

Term 2 got off to a busy start when The Dogs Trust paid us a visit and led a whole school assembly all about being safe around dogs, the Key Stage 2 children then all received a workshop about dog safety, dog breeds and the role of the Dogs Trust.



Christingle Service

For the first time in 3 years the whole school, as well as parents/carers, were able to gather in the St Margaret's church for two Christingle Services. John Guest led the services with a memorable story called 'The Little Yellow Line', we also had readings, sang songs together and lit some of the Christingles for a moment of quiet reflection. It really was special to all be together again in this lovely church.



School Attendance

The whole school attendance stands at **93.5%**. This has **dropped by 0.7%** since the end of Term 1, however we are better than at this point last year by **4.3%**. We need to work together to get in line with the national expectation of at least 96.5%. Currently we are **3.0% below** where we should be. We ended last year with an attendance of **93.6%** - let's work together to see if we can get above that figure – we are very close!

Term by Term breakdown:

Term	2022-2023	2023-2024
1	93.8%	94.2%
Term	2022-2023	2023-2024
2	92.5%	92.8%

Christmas events

The PTA ran their annual Christmas Fayre for the children in which they could participate in

a range of games, decorate baubles, have a go in the raffles or purchase gifts in the Secret Room. Great fun was had by all – thank you to all the volunteers who helped to make it such a special event.

A staple of the Christmas festivities is always the food. Our cooks, Bonnie and Ellie, did a great job of our Christmas dinner this year and everyone tucked in and enjoyed a roast turkey dinner and festive cookie.



The big man in red made a special visit to see all the children and left a gift for each and every child at Lower Halstow School (thank you to the PTA for providing these). He even made time to read a Christmas story to Acorn Class.



It was a bittersweet event for Mrs Saxton as it was her last 'task' before she left Lower Halstow after working at the school for 22 years. The staff, children and of course Teddy,

will be sad to see her go. Mrs Beer will take on the role from January so please feel free to come and say hello to her on the gate.



Year R, 1 and 2 Performances

The Year 1 and 2 children performed their Christmas nativity 'Born in a Barn' to the rest of the school and then their families. It was an enjoyable and memorable performance. The Year R children also took to the stage for their first time and performed a range of Christmas songs to their families. They did amazingly as all the songs were accompanied by signing as well, they even sang one song in a round! Everyone left the hall with a smile on their face that afternoon.



Dates for your diary

Date	Event
2.1.24	Staff Development Day
3.1.24	Start of Term 3 - Children return
16.1.24 am	Acorn Class to visit Newington School for a Guide Dog presentation
24.1.24	Year 3 to Rochester Cathedral, Castle and Museum
24.1.24	Drama workshops for Years R, 2 and 4
1.2.24 – 9.15	Year 5 Class assembly to parents
2.2.24 – 4.30 - 6.00	PFA School Disco
9.2.24 am	Annual Pancake races (children only)
9.2.24	End of Term 3
19.2.24	Start of Term 4 – Children return
23.2.24	Year 5 Swimming begins (all term)
Week beginning 4.3.24	Book Week – details to follow
7.3.24	World Book Day dressing up – details to follow
15.3.24	Comic Relief – details to follow
19.3.24	Year 4 to Maidstone Museum of Kent Life
21.3.24 – 9.15	Year 3 Class assembly to parents.
28.3.24	Easter Services at the church, parents invited – details to follow.
28.3.24 – 3.20	PTA Easter Egg hunt
28.3.24	End of Term 4



Term 5 and 6

Date	Event
15.4.24	Start of Term 5 – Children return
15.4.24 – 17.3.24	Year 5 Bikeability
23.4.24	St Georges day – wear club uniforms – details to follow
2.5.24 am	Year R Vision and Hearing checks
9.5.24	Class Photo day
Week beginning 13.5.24	Year 6 SATs week
24.5.24	PTA Break the Rules day
24.5.24	End of Term 5
3.6.24	Start of Term 6
Week Beginning 3.6.24	Charity Week
10.6.24	Year 6 Activity Week
18.6.24	Athlete visit to the school
19.6.24	Sports Afternoon
21.6.24	Staff Development Day
25.6.24 – 9.15	Year 4 Class assembly to parents
26.6.24	Reserve Sports Afternoon
1.7.24	Staff Development Day
Week Beginning 8.7.24	Outdoor Cooking Week
19.7.24 – 4.30	Leavers' Disco
23.7.24 – 2.00	Year 6 Leavers' Service (in school)
23.7.24	Last Day of Term 6

Staff Development Dates:

- Tuesday 2nd January 2024
- Friday 21st June 2024
- Monday 1st July 202