

# Lower Halstow Primary School



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Dear Mums, Dads and Carers

We are at the end of another busy year at Lower Halstow! We continue to upgrade and add to the school buildings.

This year it has been the installation of the lodge used as a well-being centre and for small group teaching. The climate control in there has proved quite popular recently!



Our Forest School has been further developed with the addition of an outside tap allowing for very muddy play. The area has really been put to good use with Year R and 1 children having regular slots. Other year groups have also accessed the forest school this year and we have had other schools visit us who have since set up their own forest schools so we are spreading the good practice beyond the federation.

Work on the curriculum continues and our enrichment and personal development curriculum which complements the national curriculum is now very well established. The music showcase event last week was a great example of this. I have watched the video having only been privy to some individual rehearsals and I continue to be amazed at the confidence of our pupils and the way they support each other.

As always, the staff, ably led by Miss Crowe, have gone above and beyond to provide exciting learning opportunities and continued support for the children in their care as befits our school vision. Hopefully the memorable moments captured in the reports helped communicate the palpable sense of joy your children bring to the school – there is always something to smile at every day.

Thank you for your ongoing support for the Lower Halstow team. We wish you a very restful summer and we look forward to seeing all of you on Tuesday 3rd September.

Kind regards

Mrs Deevoy



**KINDNESS**

**PERSEVERANCE**

**RESPECT**

**HONESTY**

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## NOTE FROM CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

On behalf of the governors, I would like to say thank you to all the staff and senior leaders for their hard work this year in helping the children reach their full potential.

This year we have continued to secure additional income and make improvements both inside and outside with the addition of the well-being lodge and employ additional staff to support children.

As ever, your role as parents is very important and looking at data it is clear that the children who attend regularly have continued to achieve well in school. Your support with ensuring your children are in school has made a significant improvement to our overall attendance. We are now broadly in line with national averages for the first time since COVID. This means even more pupils have benefitted from the great teaching going on in school and the progress outcomes for pupils this year reflect this.

This year writing has been a focus for the school; but reading continues to be so important. I would like to thank you all for the ongoing support that you have given your children with reading at home. We do have a number of kind volunteers who listen to children in school where possible, but nothing can truly replace the regular support of a parent or carer.

I look forward to welcoming you back to school in September.

Have an enjoyable break and stay safe and well.

Peter Marshall

## STAFFING

*Goodbye* Mrs Van Heerden is leaving to set up her own company – we wish her all the best and will certainly be booking her for any supply work until she is established! You will be aware that Mr Wright our caretaker officially left in May due to an injury. After a long time in hospital he is on the road to recovery and he hopes to return as a volunteer reader when he is able. Mrs Atkins will be continuing as our Forest School teacher, but not as a class teacher, as she is taking up a part-time role as a nursery teacher in Upchurch to pursue her passion for early years education. We know that she will be wonderful.

Mr Saunders, the Newington caretaker, has taken over the caretaking role at Lower Halstow having already been working regularly onsite for several months. He will be familiar to many children as someone who regularly drives the bus for trips! Finally, we are welcoming a new face! Mrs Mugford will join us in year 4 to replace Mrs Van Heerden. We are sure she will quickly settle into the team and she really enjoyed the transition afternoons with her new class.



## **VOLUNTEERS**



Our volunteer readers and club leaders have a key role to play and we all benefit from them giving freely of their time. They deserve a special mention as they make a real difference to the children they work with. It was lovely to be able to invite them in, as special guests, to a volunteers' tea party organised by the school council.

## **PARENT AND TEACHER ASSOCIATION (PTA)**

The PTA have done an amazing job of raising money for the school. So much so that they are becoming a Charity called 'The Friends of Lower Halstow School'. This means that we will have greater access to grants and it is also a requirement due to the amount of money raised for the school! The PTA held their AGM recently and a new committee was established, with this year's committee handing over the reins. This year we say goodbye to Claire McLaughlin (secretary) who has given many hours of service to raising funds for the school over many years. Kerry Ward (chair) and Stacey Marsh (treasurer) who formed this year's committee also need special mentions. Thank you ladies for your tireless work in supporting the school.

Due to the size of the role, this year we have a dynamic duo. At the AGM, Rachael Dyke and Lucy Jessey were voted in as joint Chair-persons. Claire Parsons has taken on the role of Treasurer, while Stacey Marsh is staying on the committee in the role of secretary. We are sure the PTA will go from strength to strength with its new charitable status.

There is one PTA fund raising event that took place this year that deserves to be highlighted. At the start of January 2024 the children were challenged to become entrepreneurs and raise £24.24 by either starting up a small business or completing a sponsored event. Any money raised above £24.24 was theirs to keep. 26 pupils took up the challenge, giving up their spare time to make/sell items or complete sponsored events; they managed to raise £323.21. We are sure that some of them are the entrepreneurs of the future!

## **CHARITY WEEK**

Charity week is an important event within our personal development curriculum in school. Each class chooses their charity, then organizes and leads their own fundraising activity with minimal input from staff. Each year the school council vote on the list of charity suggestions which includes every single suggestion from across the whole school! They narrow this list down to an international charity, a national charity and a local charity. Classes then make their choice from this list. This year, following a moving assembly about Mercy Ships under the theme of 'Mercy and Justice', children voted this as their international charity nomination. This assembly clearly resonated with the children as so many remembered it when the time came to make suggestions.

Local Charity - Happy Endings Rescue (animal sanctuary) £202.20

International Charity - Mercy Ships (ships full of Doctors that moor up on the edge of countries with little or no healthcare to offer life-saving operations - £363.18

## HOUSE POINT WINNERS



On sports day Dover scored 128 points, just beating Rochester by 3 points to be crowned this year's winners.



It was a good year for Dover as they were also this year's overall winners with a huge 10,435 points!

1 <sup>st</sup>	Dover	10,435
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Hever	10,134
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Leeds	9,017
4 <sup>th</sup>	Rochester	8,945

As usual, the winning house were treated to a morning of fun on MFSE's inflatable assault course. House points are hotly contested and a great source of pride for houses. The system reflects our commitment to our values and vision as the children can earn house points in a range of ways, not just for academic success.

## SUMMER HOLIDAY CLUB



Tetita (Mrs Collins and Ms Brougham) will be running the Summer Holiday club this year from Monday 29<sup>th</sup> July until Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> August. Please see the information that has already been sent out on School Ping re details and booking.



**Have a great summer and we look forward to seeing you all on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September**

Please see below for September Information.

## SEPTEMBER INFORMATION

### **BREAKFAST AND AFTERSCHOOL CLUB**

Tetita will be running the breakfast and afterschool club as usual in September. For more information and contact details please go to [www.tetitachildcare.uk](http://www.tetitachildcare.uk)



Extra-Curricular after school clubs will be running from the **second week of term**.

### **ENTRY TO SCHOOL**

Classrooms open at **8.30am** and pupils need to be in school by **8.45am** at the latest.

Y1 – Y6 please continue to drop your children at the main gate. New YR parents will be dropping on the playground and we want to keep things calm and quiet on site at the start of the day for everyone.

### **PICK UP FROM SCHOOL**

**3.15pm** pick-up for everyone. Please can everyone remember to stand where the class teacher can see you to allow us to dismiss the children quickly. If you want your child to walk home please ensure you have emailed the office with permission for this.

### **SNACKS**

Tuck shop for KS2 pupils will be starting from Monday 9th September run by Year 6. Everything is 20p. Details of what is on offer will be in a ping at the start of term. Please provide a suitable break-time snack for the first week back – fruit, savoury crackers, breadsticks etc. EYFS & KS1 are provided with fruit by the school, so no break-time snack is needed.

### **PACKED LUNCHES**

**Please save the chocolate and sweets for home.** These will be removed from packed lunches as they adversely affect afternoon learning, so please do not put them in lunchboxes as this causes unnecessary upset. Please use common sense, for example, cereal bars containing a few chocolate drops & Fruit Winders are fine, but snacks such as chocolate covered raisins are not, as these melt and cause a mess. Plain raisins are just as sweet.

### **BAGS**

**Book bags & drawstring bags only.** Just a reminder about this rule. If your child brings a large rucksack the contents will be emptied into a named carrier bag which they can hang on their peg and the rucksack sent to the office to be collected by parents. As the school population has grown we are really pushed for corridor hanging space and this measure has helped keep corridors safe and clear for everyone. Thank you for continuing to help with this. Overnight bags can be handed to the office who will look after them until pick up.

## WATER BOTTLES

Year 2 - 6 pupils need to bring their own clearly named water bottle – any bottles with juice will be emptied and replaced with water so please only send water in. Juice boxes etc. can be included in packed lunches. We will be providing water bottles for Year R and 1 and these will stay in school.

**UNIFORM** [www.forsterskent.co.uk](http://www.forsterskent.co.uk)

The 'active' uniform, which was introduced fully in Sept 2023, having been trialled in 2022, continues to work really well, both for saving time with children not getting changed for PE, as well as saving money. This has also enabled greater levels of other physical activity outside of PE lessons.

We continue to ask pupils to wear their blue sweatshirts/cardigans/fleece everyday including PE days. **No other sportswear is permitted.**



Our active uniform consists of the following:

**Footwear** PLAIN black trainers / trainer style shoes. The children run EVERY DAY and need suitable footwear. NO LACES unless your child can tie their own shoes.

**Tops** Plain/logoed white polo shirt  
Plain/logoed royal blue sweatshirt/cardigan/fleece

**Bottoms** PLAIN black, navy blue or dark grey leggings, shorts or jersey jogging bottoms (optional blue shorts on PE days if you wish)

Summer dresses are still part of our uniform.

Children can still wear hand-me-down traditional grey items if you have siblings in school. But please do not purchase new traditional uniform items. We anticipate minimal legacy items in YR and Y1 from September. Plain black school shoes are still permitted if you prefer, but they ***should be suitable for active playtimes*** and sporting activities, including PE lessons.

Our 'New to You' uniform is still available and offers a range of items in different sizes. If there are any items that you are interested in please send an e-mail into the school office and then Mrs Fox will prepare some items for your perusal.

### Other reminders

Only small **stud** earrings are permitted and pupils must be able to remove these themselves for PE. If your child arrives at school with hooped hearings, they will be asked to remove them.

Long hair should be tied back. Please help us keep everyone lice free! Bows in hair should be small. Save the giant neon JoJo bows for parties rather than the classroom please.

Please ensure your child has coat, hat, sunscreen as appropriate for the weather as we will continue to use the school grounds for outdoor learning and the British weather is notoriously changeable.