



21st July 2021

High Firs Primary School

NEWSLETTER

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Visit our school website at www.high-firs.kent.sch.uk

Message from Mr Turtle

After more than 25 years at High Firs I have far more to say in my last Newsletter message than I could ever fit in! Therefore, attached to this week's edition is my final letter to you all... it just leaves me here to say a very fond farewell, to share my thanks and to send my very good wishes to you all, our wonderful school community.



GOODBYE

Year 6 Leavers

We welcomed parents into school for the Year 6 Assembly yesterday - our first visitors on-site in 18 months, and what a visit it was with the torrential rain, thunder & hailstorms! It was so lovely to have them with us as we said 'goodbye' to our Year 6 children, who have been fantastic throughout their time at High Firs. We wish them all the very best as they leave for their secondary schools; we are sure that they will all continue to do well and wish them every success for the future. Keep in touch!

GOOD LUCK

CONGRATULATIONS CHESTNUT! HOUSE POINT CHAMPIONS 2020-21

The final totals were:

CHESTNUT - 910

BEECH - 879

ASH - 840

OAK - 829

CONGRATULATIONS ASH! KS2 SPORTS DAY CHAMPIONS 2021

The final scores were:

ASH - 338

BEECH - 352

CHESTNUT - 359

OAK - 374

Special Mentions

This week, special certificates have been awarded to the following children for their achievements during the whole academic year:

- Reception - Chloe P & Sadie B
- Year 1 - Isabella O, Lily G & Smilte M
- Year 2 - Harrison C, Isabella T & Olivia W
- Year 3 - Korlekie A, Jack B & Harrison A
- Year 4 - Evie T, Evie B & Elliott M
- Year 5 - Tristan W, Taylor C & Veda T
- Year 6 - Ruby D, Stanley B & Annabelle L



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Community Awards

Each year, Community Awards are presented to Year 6 Leavers who have shown a great commitment to the school community throughout their time at High Firs. We were delighted to present this year's awards to: **Charlotte L, Reuben B, Darcie J, Evelyn C and Lucy B.**



Yr6 Outstanding Attendance

An incredible six of our Year 6 children - **Harry L, Charlotte L, James L, Grace R, Matthew C & Carolina G** - received Outstanding Attendance Awards for their amazing 98% or 99% attendance during their time at High Firs; a fantastic achievement, well done.



Sports Shield

For the first time, Mr Turtle awarded a special shield which he has gifted to the school as a retirement legacy and which is to be presented to the pupil or pupils each year who show outstanding commitment, effort & enthusiasm in sports. He was pleased to present this to **Chiana W.**



Important Health Information - PLEASE REMEMBER!

Please remember to **let the school know immediately** if you suspect your child has any of the following (even if it has not been confirmed): **measles, chicken pox or shingles**. It is also important to let us know if your child has been exposed to these illnesses (eg through a friend at a club or a family member) but has not shown the symptoms themselves. Please also let us know if your child has also been in contact with any other infectious diseases.

We are a **NUT FREE** school - this is **ALL TYPES OF NUTS**. Please can we therefore ask for the support of all our school families in ensuring that none of our children or visitors bring any nuts or nut-based products (eg: Nutella spread / Snickers / nutty cereal bars etc) into school. Thank you for your understanding and support in helping to ensure the safety & wellbeing of those members of our school community for whom these products pose a serious risk.



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Thank You and Farewell...

Dear Parents

I have written countless messages home to parents over my time at the school but this is without doubt the most difficult of them all, as this will be my last note to you all.

It is sad to be leaving as I have had the most amazing experiences during my 25 years at High Firs.

I came to High Firs in 1995 as Deputy Headteacher, having previously taught in Dartford and Northfleet and it was a very different school then! We only had 6 classes, so some of them were 'mixed' year groups. I taught Year 3/4 in one of the old mobile classrooms for a few years, before coming into the school building to teach Year 6, in the classroom that current Year 4 are in. With excellent support from the Governors, we worked on two key projects - firstly to move to 7 classes and secondly to build new classrooms to replace the old mobile classrooms. The Year 6 & Reception classrooms opened in the year I became Headteacher.

Since then we have all worked so hard to continually develop the school. I am so proud of the improvements we have made and fought so hard to put in place - enlarging the hall and providing a new staffroom, extending the Year 1 classroom, fully replacing all the windows in the school and completely reforming & improving the school playground and field area - does anyone remember the large mounds and wall we had on the edge of the playground onto the field? I also remember that I when I arrived some of the classrooms did not even have doors - just curtains!

I can say with complete honesty that High Firs children are simply the best! We have children who are interested, engaged and full of compassion, who care for one another and uphold our school values every single day. They have always made me extremely proud and I know they will all go on to do great things in later life.

I have so many things to be grateful for - not many Headteachers have the experience of having an entire staff team that they love working with. They all work extremely hard to give the best they can to our pupils. They make it a joy to come into work each day and I will miss this extended family very much.



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I have been surrounded by a staff team and governors, who have worked with me to deliver a shared vision for the school. I know at times it's not been easy, but even through the more difficult times we've always managed to see the humour and keep smiles on our faces.

To all of the High Firs parents, past and present, I cannot thank you enough. You made me feel welcome from the start. You have very much helped to make the experiences for me at High Firs a pleasure. You have engaged and voiced your opinions, shared your concerns and worries, as well as sharing so many positive things about the school with me.

I have thoroughly enjoyed my association with the Friends of High Firs too. Working hard with them, I have seen such dedication from this group of parents, to provide activities and events for the children such as discos, ice skating, sponsored bounces, Christmas Fairs and of course, the Summer Fun Days. Some of you with long memories will remember the sponsored discos we used to do, when the children had a 'wish list' of purchases from the funds raised - great fun!

It has been a pleasure to see the children involved in so many different activities, both in and out of school. There have been performances, class assemblies, celebrations of royal events, sporting events, including many games and matches against other schools- we have won the District Football tournament several times (once on penalties 14-13!) and we have also won the District Athletics competition on the last 4 occasions too. It is so pleasing that inter-school sport will fully start up once again from the start of the new school year.

I am sure the legacy I leave behind will be continued and I am very optimistic for the future. A school that's 'good' in every sense, a staff team committed to providing a safe, respectful and loving environment for the children and a school community that now has renewed enthusiasm for future years.

Mr Kilbride is looking forward to being the new Headteacher and I know that all the children and parents will warmly welcome him to High Firs in September.

Although I am of course very sad to be leaving, after my long association with the school, I am very excited about what lies ahead for me in the future. I wish the High Firs School community all the very best, for continued success in the future. I will truly miss you all.

With very best wishes to you all,
Mr Turtle



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