



7th Jan 2022

High Firs Primary School

NEWSLETTER

Court Crescent, Swanley, Kent BR8 8NR Tel: 01322 669721 Fax: 01322 615997

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

Message from Mr Kilbride

Happy New year to you all and welcome back to the Spring Term at High Firs. I hope that you enjoyed Christmas festivities and did not have to amend plans too much in the light of the spread of the Omicron variant. Thank you so much for all the support you gave to your children in the lead up to Christmas. So many children relished the chance to shine through their various performances. This term we continue to focus heavily on reading in school, kicking off with the Resolution Read at Home initiative detailed below. Additionally, I am delighted to announce that Mrs Verge, our specialist PE teacher, has been recruited to train in and then lead a new Forest School provision at High Firs. Mrs Verge will build up the reach of her sessions over the next year - the training is very in-depth and will see your children learning how to use a variety of sawing and cutting tools to make things from wood and how to look after and enjoy the forest environment. Initially, only small pilot groups of children will benefit, as she hones her new skills - this is a requirement of the course - but by the beginning of the next academic year, I would anticipate Mrs Verge being able to lead a provision that benefits children across the whole school. The importance of creating extended learning opportunities that make the most of the outdoor environment, leading to happy, active children, cannot be understated. In my previous school, forest school days evolved to become the highlight of many children's week in terms when their class was scheduled on. I very much look forward to the same being observed at High Firs.



Resolution Read at Home

As part of our ongoing commitment to developing our children's reading once again we are asking all our children and families to make a New Year's resolution to support our annual RESOLUTION READ AT HOME challenge throughout January. As you will know, it is part of our Home Learning policy that all the children read at home every night and that an adult then signs their Reading Record or Contact Book to indicate this; we do appreciate that so many of our families do this already and give vital support to their children's reading development. From today, 7th January, until Friday 28th January, the children will be given one house point for every night that they read at home and that their contact book or reading record is signed to show this when it is checked by a member of staff in the morning. There will be certificates at the end of each week for those children who have read every night and a special reward for those who read every night for the whole three weeks!

Attainment Reports

Children in Years 1 to 6 will be bringing home their December 2021 Attainment Report today which details your child's current attainment levels. Please confirm receipt of this, along with any comments from you or your child, at <https://www.high-firs.kent.sch.uk/reports/>

Times Tables Rockstars

We are restarting our Times Tables Rockstars challenges this week and throughout January we will be looking each week at which House group gets the highest score, and the top scorers for each house. The battles will run every Friday after school through to the following Thursday. So, if you are in KS2 don't forget to log-on!



Breakfast Club and After School Club

Don't forget to book your Breakfast Club and After School Club places as soon as possible at <http://www.high-firs.kent.sch.uk/breakfast-club-after-school-provision/>

Our charges from 5th January 2022 will be **£3 per session for Breakfast Club** and **£10 per session for After School Club**.

Payment can be made by cash, cheque, childcare vouchers via our SchoolMoney app. If you are paying by the SchoolMoney app then please ensure that you also **indicate the session date(s)** which you are paying for when you make your payment; you will still need to book your session via our website too.



Achieving more together



School Clubs

We are pleased to be able to offer a wide range of school activity clubs at lunchtime / after school once again this term. Our activity clubs this term will be:



- YEAR 1: Drama - Tuesdays to 4.15pm (Miss Angeli)
- YEAR 1: Books & Crafts - Thursdays 12.35pm to 1.15pm (Mrs Ford)
- YEAR 2: Woodland - Tuesdays to 4.15pm (Miss Allin)
- YEAR 2: Table Top Games - Wednesdays to 4.15pm (Mrs Everest)
- YEARS 3 / 4 / 5 & 6: French - Mondays to 3.50pm (Mrs Ives). Outside provider charge - £27 for 9 sessions.
- YEARS 3 & 4: Recorder - Tuesdays to 4.15pm (Mrs Payne)
- YEARS 3 & 4: Football - Wednesdays to 4.15pm (Mrs Verge)
- YEARS 3 / 4 & 5: Speed Stacking - Wednesdays to 4.15pm (Mrs O'Dwyer & Miss Durrant)
- YEAR 4: Eco Club - Tuesdays to 4.15pm (Miss Selby)
- YEARS 4 / 5 & 6: Netball - Thursdays to 4.15pm (Mrs Verge)
- YEAR 5: Table Top Games - Tuesdays to 4.15pm (Mrs McCabe)
- YEARS 5 & 6: Football - Tuesdays to 4.15pm (Mr Kilbride)

Some clubs will change next term for different classes so we hope that over the year there will be something for everyone! In a small school, there are only so many clubs we can accommodate at once (both in terms of staffing and room in school) and we also have to take into consideration "wear and tear" and health & safety in terms of our facilities – particularly use & maintenance of the field. Staff give up their time to run clubs and these therefore reflect their own interests and areas of particular skill which they are choosing to share.

If your child would like to join a particular club, please sign up at <http://high-firs.kent.sch.uk/clubs/> by **Tuesday 11th January**. You will be notified if your child has been offered a place and the starting date for your particular club, along with any other arrangements. Children are expected to commit to attending every week their club is scheduled to run. Where clubs are oversubscribed then we may have to limit the number of weeks in which a group of children attend so that we can have two or more groups.

In some circumstances, particularly in the case of inclement weather or other school commitments, we may have to cancel a club session. In this event we will contact you by text and/or the Newsletter as soon as we are able to. However, **please assume that clubs are running every week unless you are notified otherwise.**

Special Mentions

This week, our special mentions go to:

Logan F - super travelling in PE

Willow W - great balancing in PE

Elias M – working super hard in all lessons!

Kenzie E – brilliant reading.

Daisy S & Clark R-W - trying hard to improve the description in their writing

Grace F – coming back to school with such a positive attitude and being ready to learn.

Holly P – working really hard with her reading.

Alan Z – his determination to work out 12 and 24 hour clock times.

Francesca T – her well-drawn diagrams illustrating the different ways in which mountains are formed.

Skye K – great effort with multiplying fractions and simplifying.



|  HOUSE POINTS | | This Week | Term Total |
|--|----------|-----------|------------|
| | BEECH | 13 | 13 |
| | CHESTNUT | 11 | 11 |
| | OAK | 6 | 6 |
| | ASH | 8 | 8 |



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THIS WEEK'S LEARNING

In our classes this week

Reception – travelled on different pieces of equipment
 Year 1 – classified animals.
 Year 2 – learned about the geography of Antarctica.
 Year 3 – learned about Mrs Edith Pretty and Sutton Hoo.
 Year 4 – learned to read the 12 and 24 hour clock.

Year 5 – calculated the area of compound shapes... and started their new story "The Lion, The Witch & The Wardrobe".

Year 6 – are reading "Darwin's Dragons" and learning about Charles Darwin.

Register Rabbit

Congratulations to this week's winners of Register Rabbit for their excellent attendance:



YEAR 2
YEAR 4

School Volunteers

We welcome parents and adults from the local community to undertake a variety of roles in supporting the school & our children.

Could you help in school by –

- hearing children read?
- playing games with small groups?
- sharing a skill – gardening / sewing / painting / cooking / music?
- talking about or share your job or hobby?
- looking after the books in our school library?
- tidying our outdoor environment?
- helping at or running a lunchtime or after-school club?
- offering specialist skills
- anything else?

It would be great to hear from any parents, grandparents or family friends who would like to come and share their skills with the children in school. It doesn't matter how often or for how long – once a week, once a month or even just once! If you would like to offer your help, please if you can help please visit <http://high-firs.kent.sch.uk/helping-at-school/> to register your interest and someone will be in touch with you soon.

Please note that the school is required to undertake and receive a satisfactory DBS (Police) check on all adult volunteers undertaking voluntary work with the children in school. All volunteers will also receive and need to agree to the School's "Volunteers in School" policy, including safeguarding requirements.

Covid update

As per government guidelines confirmed this week:

- Children who are identified as a contact of someone with COVID-19 are requested to take a Lateral Flow test every day for 7 days. Children should continue to attend school unless they have a positive test result.
- Anyone receiving a positive result on a Lateral Flow test no longer also needs to also take a PCR test unless they have symptoms. They do, however, still need to self-isolate and register the positive test result with <https://www.gov.uk/report-covid19-result>
- Anyone who has had a positive test result (either PCR or Lateral Flow) needs to isolate for a minimum of 7 days. If a negative Lateral Flow result is received on Day 6 AND Day 7 then they can stop isolating. If the Lateral Flow result is positive on either of these days then continue testing and self-isolating until two consecutive days' testing are received or stop after Day 10.



INSET DAYS
No children in school
 Fri 27 May 2022
 Mon 27 June 2022

Next week in school

No clubs next week except for Breakfast Club and After School Club

Mon 10 January FHF Pyjama Day for gift / toiletries / toys donations

Tues 11 January Clubs deadline – sign up at: <http://high-firs.kent.sch.uk/clubs/>



Achieving more together



**Friends of High Firs
Primary School Association**
Supporting Our Children's Education
Registered Charity No. 1137633

MONDAY 10TH JANUARY

is our



Children are invited to wear their pyjamas (or other suitable nightwear) to school in return for a donation to the FHF of any unwanted:

- Christmas gifts
- Toiletries
- Toys

Children should wear normal school footwear (not slippers or trainers!) and Coats, please. Representatives of the FHF will be on the gate to collect your donations –
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

amazonsmile
You shop. Amazon gives.

- STEP ONE** Go to <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1137633-0>
- STEP TWO** Confirm Friends of High Firs as your charity
- STEP THREE** SHOP! 0.5% of your spending will be donated to FHF
- STEP FOUR** Access your Amazon account via smile.amazon.co.uk every time to donate



First Aid for Families

Would you like to know:

- The emergency procedure and making an emergency phone call?
- How to place a casualty into the recovery position?
- How to use the primary survey?
- How to recognise and treat choking?
- How to treat and monitor bleeding, minor bruising and burns?
- How to practise cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR)?

This course is for you!

Venue: Virtual via zoom

Date: 3 -week course starting Tuesday 25th January 2022

Time: 10am-12pm

To book a place please email westkentchildrenscentre@kent.gov.uk

Please kindly note this is an adult only course.

We want you to enjoy learning with us. To help us provide the best possible experience for you, please let us know if you or your child have any disabilities or particular support needs.

FREE, fun & informal courses



West Kent Education is part of Community Learning and Skills



Achieving more together



Proposal for the closure of sixth form provision at Orchards Academy

Introduction

The Kemnal Academies Trust (TKAT) is consulting on the closure of the sixth form provision at Orchards Academy, St Mary's Road, Swanley, Kent, BR8 7TE.

Duration of the Consultation

The consultation process is open from 24 November 2021 to 14 January 2022. If you wish to comment on the proposal you must submit your response in writing during this period. Details of how to submit your views are set out below (see "How to respond to the Consultation").

Who is involved in the Consultation?

- parents in the area of children between the ages of 2 and 18;
- parents of children who attend the Academy
- other persons in the area who in the opinion of TKAT may have an interest in the proposal, such as primary, secondary, AP and special schools and sixth form and FE colleges in the area;
- each LA which maintains an Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or statement of SEN in respect of a child attending the Academy;
- all other admission authorities in the local area; and
- the local authority, Kent County Council

The Proposal

In recent years TKAT has had to withdraw from promoting a sixth form provision, at Orchards Academy. This was due to the poor condition of the existing buildings and the resultant loss of usable space, the level of other high quality sixth form provision in the local area and the increasing demand for 11-16 year old pupil places at the Academy.

The poor condition of the buildings is not a reflection on the lack of maintenance nor investment in the Academy by the Trust. The buildings and supporting infrastructure, are now beyond economic and physical repair. This has been recognised by key stakeholders and we are pleased to confirm that Orchards Academy has been successful in becoming part of the Government's School Rebuilding Programme, announced by the Government in 2020.

This project will replace or refurbish the buildings to the existing physical capacity, so as a result of closing the sixth form and to meet the increasing need for places for 11-16 year olds in the local area, we are proposing to expand the yearly intake at the Academy from 120 pupils per year to 150 pupils per year, from the September following the completion of the rebuild project.

We are submitting a formal request to Secretary of State for consent to close the sixth form. It is anticipated that a decision will be known in January 2022. The revised Admissions Policy can be viewed here. (Please note: The Admissions Policy has also been changed to ensure it is compliant with the latest Admissions Code and to align with a standard template that is being introduced across all TKAT academies. Comments are not sought on any part of the Admissions arrangements where changes are not proposed.)

Will anything change?

As a 'Good' school (Ofsted inspection July 2021), Orchards Academy is well-placed to continue to provide a high standard of education for pupils from 11 through to 16 years old, during the rebuild project and beyond. From a parent perspective there would be little change, however the new and/or refurbished buildings will provide a modern educational environment, allowing a wider range of curriculum and studies to be offered to all pupils, including the ASD SEN resource provision. The existing staffing team at Orchards Academy would remain the same and will continue to serve Swanley and its existing catchment areas.

How to respond to the Consultation

You are invited to send any comments in relation to the closure of the sixth form proposal and the subsequent revision to the Admissions Policy, in writing to Belinda Clack, Head of Asset Development, via email belinda.clack@tkat.org or via post to The Kemnal Academies Trust, Atkins Centre, Kemnal Technology College, Sevenoaks Way, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 5AA marked FAO Belinda Clack. Please mark the subject "Orchards Academy proposal" and respond by **14th January**.

What happens next?

Meetings for parents and local community will be held during the consultation period. Details of these will be available on the Academy's website – www.orchards-tkat.org.

Following the consultation period, the Secretary of State will consider the application for the closure of the sixth form. We will share the outcome when a decision has been made.

