



18th March 2022

High Firs Primary School

NEWSLETTER

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

Message from Mr Kilbride

I will start this week with a huge thank you to everyone who has given so generously to the Ukraine refugee appeal - the response has been incredible - I have been immensely proud of the whole High Firs community this week. I have just received a message from Knole Academy to say that they are stopping accepting new donations today. Therefore, without a local onward arrangement, I am going to ask that we also stop collecting for next week. If any parents have access to or are willing to organise transport to take any future collections down to Folkstone, please do get in touch and we may be able to resume our role as a hub for High Firs collections in due course.

I have attached a flier about horror games to the newsletter this week. This is a genre of online games that often uses characters with an animated, child appeal and with innocent sounding names like 'Huggy Wuggy' but with adult themed content with disturbing messages related to killing and suffocation. In addition to the content outlined in the flier, please take a look at this excellent article - <https://www.parents.com/news/what-parents-need-to-know-about-huggy-wuggy-and-the-poppy-playtime-game-taking-over-elementary-schools/> - explaining horror games a bit more and making reference to the Poppy Playtime game that this character comes from. We have had children over the last couple of weeks making reference to these characters and we have had drawings appearing in work of characters holding knives, that when questioned, have been explained by making reference to horror games that are not designed for children. One of the key complications is that online games do not come with age advisory certification - and adult themed games, can often masquerade as a child friendly environment, when they are actually leading to nightmares, stress and anxiety. Please take the time to digest this information so that you can effectively police your child's exposure to online threats.



Cross Country

Eight of our children took part in the District Cross Country competition at Swanley Park on Tuesday afternoon along with four other local schools, running a fantastic 1800m! Well done to all the children who took part and a special mention to our girls' team who were placed 2nd and came home with a super silver medal each.



Book Fair

Thank you to everyone who supported our Book



Fair. We sold a fantastic amount of books which meant that we have been able to buy some new books for our library and every class has also had almost £40 each to spend on fantastic new books for their classrooms.

EASTER & SPRING COMPETITION

For this year's competition everyone is bringing home a paper plate! You can use it to make anything you like so long as it is on an Easter / Spring theme....



Bring your finished entry to school on **MONDAY 28th MARCH** - please, not before!

PARENTS - please pop into the hall after school on **MONDAY 28th** to view all our fantastic finished entries.



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Walk to School Week

Walking to school is one of the easiest ways to improve your and your children’s health. It’s also free, great for the environment, and social. 90% of parents who walk their children to school recognise the journey’s importance for them to socialise with their children. Over a third stated that the journey to school is where they find out the most about their child’s life. (Info from www.livingstreets.co.uk) We are also always keen to find ways in which to ease congestion in our local roads and to minimise the inconvenience of “the school run” to our neighbours. To support this, we are asking all our children to take part in

WALK TO SCHOOL WEEK from 21st to 25th March

We are asking all families to try to walk to school every day next week - if you live too far away from school to walk all the way, you could park a few roads away from school and walk the last part instead; this will still count as walking to school! Each class will have a chart to record the children who have walked to school each day. There will be a house point for each child that walks each day and a certificate at the end of the week for children who have walked every day.

Walk to school with the staff! Members of our staff will be at various points around the local area to meet and walk to school with our families on the following dates –

Tuesday 22 nd at 8.40am	Meet us on the corner of Pinks Hill and Cranleigh Drive (top junction).
Wednesday 23 rd at 8.40am	Meet us on the corner of Charnock and Court Crescent.
Thursday 24 th at 8.40am	Meet us on the corner of Waylands and Pinks Hill.

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



- 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

THANK YOU for supporting FHF:

Last week’s Cake Raffle raised £69.00
Amazon Smile users raised £53.37 in the last quarter.

Reception Parents – Meet the Friends!

We know that our new Reception parents missed “Meet the Friends” due to the cancellation of last summer’s induction events and as a result some of you may not be quite sure what the role of the Friends actually is or how you can get involved! Representatives of the Friends will therefore be attending the Reception assembly next Thursday morning and will be happy to share with you afterwards a little about what the Friends do and how you can support them.

Smart Watches

Please can we remind parents that children should not be wearing smart-watches with picture and/or video capabilities to school due to safeguarding measures.

School Travel Plan

Thank you to everyone who completed and returned our travel survey. We are continually looking at ways to improve children’s journeys to school in terms of their health, the environment and our local neighbourhood; the results of the survey help contribute towards any future decisions or plans we make.



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Parents Consultation meetings

We hope that those of you who attended consultation meetings this week found them to be useful, as well as the data sheets that were distributed detailing your child's current attainment. These were the final formal consultation meetings of the academic year (your child's full report will be issued in July) but please do continue to keep in touch with your child's class teacher through the contact book or class email or to make an appointment with them if you have any concerns or queries.

Special Mentions

- Albert T – super ordering of numbers 0-20.
- Logan F – great home learning this week, especially sentence writing.
- Year 1 – for their super class assembly.
- Sadiya M & Anumeya G – working together so well to design & create a rocket.
- Walter A & Agnish S – working well together to design and build a water bottle rocket.
- Korlekie A – fantastic research about Marco Polo.
- Aayden C – making “ice cream in a bag”, following the instructions carefully.
- Evie B, Elizabeth P & Joy J – amazing progress at swimming and doing their first widths of the pool.
- Korley A – writing a great story as a missing chapter from our book.
- Sunni LH – fantastic letter writing, using extended sentences.



Register Rabbit

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



RECEPTION
YEAR 6

HOUSE POINTS

	This Week	Term Total	Top Scorers this week
BEECH	72	1153	Jasmine C & Korley A
CHESTNUT	77	1181	Lily M & Luiza P
OAK	73	1081	Casian C & Kaylee V
ASH	62	1057	Veda T, Logan F, Stanley W, Sadie B & Athena M

Times Tables Rockstars

Well done to **CHESTNUT** who were the winners of this week's Rockstars challenge. Don't forget to take part next week if you are in KS2.



11th March - 17th March 2022



Our top scorers were:

BEECH	Chanelle, Vidit & Zoe
CHESTNUT	Amelia, Ruby Bay & Harry M
OAK	Elliott, Karina & Casian
ASH	Veda, Freya & Isabella T

THIS WEEK'S LEARNING

In our classes this week

- Reception – learned to form their “long ladder letters”.
- Year 1 – have grown their own cress seeds.
- Year 2 – learned what plants need to grow well.
- Year 3 – wrote their own stories based on “Arthur and the Golden Rope”.
- Year 4 – learned to be penguins! They used a peg as a beak to build their own nests.
- Year 5 – have been crime scene investigators!
- Year 6 – had fun making their own zipwires for an egg!



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INSET DAYS

No children in school

Fri 27 May 2022

Mon 27 June 2022

Next week in school

Clubs are running except 3/4 Football (Weds) and Yr6 Netball (Thurs)

Mon 21 March	Walk to School Week
Tues 22 March	Yr3 Viking Day 8.40am Walk to School with the staff - Pinks Hill/Cranleigh Drive (top)
Weds 23 March	8.40am Walk to School with the staff - Charnock / Court Crescent No Yr3/4 Football Club today
Thurs 24 March	10.10am – Rec Class Assembly followed by “Meet the Friends” 8.40am Walk to School with the staff - Waylands / Pinks Hill No Forest School today (Yr4 / afternoon group) No Yr6 Netball Club today



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What Parents & Carers Need to Know about HORROR GAMES

Horror video games come in such a variety that the genre can be hard to define. The overlapping element is that these games are designed to scare or unsettle the player through gameplay, atmosphere, story, music, setting and 'jump scares'. The most common sub-genres are survival horror, action horror, psychological horror, jump-scare horror and reverse horror. These games originate from a range of developers, including smaller indie studios which release download-only titles (that is, they aren't physically sold in shops) and therefore aren't subject to age ratings.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

ADULT THEMES

Horror games are typically made with adults in mind, which means by definition that they often feature adult themes. *Outlast*, for instance, is a popular horror game series including material such as nudity and extreme sadistic violence. Other games, like *Five Night's at Freddy's* and its sequels, have a back-story that doesn't actually appear on screen but still hints at explicit adult themes.

VIOLENT CONTENT

Not all horror games contain graphic violence (titles like *Five Night's at Freddy's* and *Phasmophobia* prefer a spookier, suspenseful aesthetic) but many do portray extreme brutality very realistically. *Until Dawn* and the hugely popular *Resident Evil* and *Outlast* franchises, for instance, feature incredibly graphic violence. The safest course of action is to thoroughly research a game in advance.

ONLINE INTERACTION

Some horror games are played cooperatively with others online. *Phasmophobia* is one of the most popular titles in this category, and while it doesn't feature an excessive amount of gore, it does place a strong emphasis on online interaction – often with strangers. *Dead by Daylight* is another game in which frequent and prolonged online communication with other players is an advantage.

PSYCHOLOGICAL HORROR

Rather than simply lading on the blood and gore, psychological horror games try to scare the player through subtler mental and emotional means. For this reason, this type of game (notable examples include *Alien: Isolation*, *The Medium* and the *Amnesia* series) can have a longer-lasting effect on players; some occasionally 'break the fourth wall' – interacting directly with the player as if they were real.

LONG-TERM FEAR FACTOR

Horror games are designed to be scary; most players accept this fact in advance. They can, however, include content which leaves an unwanted lasting impression. By focusing on our fears and concerns to elicit an emotional reaction, horror games can be triggering in unexpected ways for some players. It's difficult to predict when – and how – a game might have long-term effects on an individual's mental wellbeing.

Advice for Parents & Carers

BEWARE OF JUMP SCARES

Jump scares in video games are often no worse than they are in movies. If a young person doesn't cope well with being suddenly startled by something in a film or on TV, they probably won't be able to handle horror games featuring jump scares. Some games (such as *Five Night's at Freddy's*) are built entirely around this technique and aren't suitable for younger children or those who are easily frightened.

RESEARCH THE GAME

It's best to look into a horror game thoroughly if your child expresses an interest in playing it. Many indie horror titles are download only and therefore aren't required to come with an age rating – so you'll need to do some background reading and judge the game's content for yourself. Check out the game's web pages, read any wikis about it (including fan ones) and watch videos of the gameplay.

ENCOURAGE BREAKS

It's easy to lose track of time when gaming, and horror games are no exception. A short break every hour or so is important to rest the eyes and relieve the posture – especially if traumatic situations in the game have built up tension and stress. For horror gamers, breaks also give the added benefit of feeling more relaxed afterwards, which can mean a scarier gaming session when they resume!

IF IN DOUBT, SWAP IT OUT

If your child finds a horror game to play, but after doing some research you decide it doesn't look like the right one for them, swap it out! There are a lot of horror titles to choose from, and some will be more appropriate than others. Work together with your child to find a suitable game for them. Remember, horror games don't have to be gore-spattered and graphic to be enjoyably scary!

STAY RECEPTIVE

Maintaining good communication with your child is vital for safe gaming. If they see something in a horror game that disturbs them in ways they didn't expect, then they should feel comfortable opening up to you about it. Try not to simply laugh it off or make light of it, and always make time to listen. It's a useful reminder that they can talk to you about any type of problem they have in the future.

Meet Our Expert

Clare Godwin (a.k.a. Lunawolf) has worked as an editor and journalist in the gaming industry since 2015, providing websites with event coverage, reviews and gaming guides. She is the owner of Lunawolf Gaming and is currently working on various gaming-related projects including game development and writing non-fiction books.



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