



22nd April 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

Welcome to the Summer Term - I cannot believe we are into the final seasonal term of the school year. This is always an exciting term where the fruits of earlier labour come to harvest, as we lead the children to the completion of the programme of study for their particular year group.

Term got underway with a bang this week with the school disco taking place. This was the first such event for over two years with the various Covid disruptions causing several prior cancellations. Fun was had by all with a mammoth game of musical statues in KS1 and a grand dance off between boys and girls in KS2 being the highlights. Thank you to all the parent helpers in attendance who helped make sure that the event ran smoothly and thank you to organising parents who gave them time to give the children a great fun evening.

We have finally completed our much anticipated Mile Track on the school field. This project began before I was headteacher here and it has been a difficult ride to see it through to completion, involving the insolvency of the original contractor, but we are finally there. Over the summer term, children will begin to start using the mile track for impromptu exercise sessions a few times per week. The idea is that children walk or run for 15 minutes with aim being to complete a regular mile to aid with fitness, stamina and concentration. We look forward to sharing more on this in the future.

Two exciting developments got underway this week to do with reading. We have recently begun to use the Little Wandle approach for the teaching of phonics and early reading. This government approved scheme has come together on the back of a great deal of research over the most efficient and effective approaches to the early teaching and practising of phonics and reading skills. Children in Reception and Year 1 are now taking home brand new reading books that they have practised in groups in class. The purpose of these books, which only have words containing the sounds children have learnt and secured up to that point, is for children to read fluently with their parents, getting regular practise at being a successful reader, rather than taking home a book hitherto unseen and containing many words that require sounding out before they can be read. Research shows that even if a child is needing to sound out as little as 10-20% of the words in a text, this has a detrimental impact on their ability to deeply comprehend the meaning behind what they are reading. We look forward to hearing how you are getting on with these new texts - and this different experience of reading with young children who can read the text without needing to rely on sounding out too much.

Finally, we are beginning an exciting journey into the world of Accelerated reader this week. This is a database that helps to ensure that the reading choices made by our KS2 children are at just the right level of ability for them. The first step is that a willing army of parent volunteers are helping us catalogue all of the existing books in our library onto the Accelerated Reader (AR) database. Then children will be guided by the system to select books within their reading ability, having sat a screening test, and once they have completed a book, they take do an online AR quiz in school that tests how well they have understood that book. If they pass, they are awarded an amount of points and they accumulate the word count total of the book into their personal profile. We look forward to this system inspiring and motivating a great number of our children to read more and more in their own time. Once the library is catalogued and the children are set to start their reading and quizzing journey, I will let you know.



Staff News

This week we have welcomed Miss Hoskins to our TA team.

Today we have wished Mrs Gibbins a long and happy retirement as she leaves High Firs after more than twenty years supporting our children at lunchtimes; she will be very much missed but we know she is looking forward to spending time with her new baby granddaughter.



St George's Day

Members of Guiding (Rainbows/ Brownies/Guides), Scouting (Squirrels/Beavers/ Cubs/Scouts), Girls Brigade, Boys Brigade etc. may wear their organisation's uniform to school on Monday 25th April to commemorate St George's Day.



Achieving more together



Mile Track

The mile track on our field was finished over the break and the children are already enjoying using it! There is a lot of research that a “daily mile” can help support children’s positive physical, emotional and wellbeing and we will be looking at ways we can develop further its use over the coming weeks.



Covid Vaccinations

Children aged between 5 and 12 are now eligible for the paediatric dose of the Covid-19 vaccine. Booking can be made via the national booking service, or by attending a walk-in clinic. Two vaccinations (12 weeks apart) are recommended to give full protection. More information about all the clinics taking place in Kent and Medway can be found at: www.kentandmedwayccg.nhs.uk/covid19vaccine

Just Bin It!

As part of our commitment to the local environment, all the children are invited to participate in this year’s Swanley District Council “Just Bin It!” poster competition. The children are bringing home their blank entry today, which they can complete using either pencil, pen or paint, to encourage others to use bins for rubbish rather than just being dropped. The overall winning poster chosen by the council will be displayed throughout the parish. The children should return their completed entries to school by **Friday 29th April**.



Times Tables Rockstars

There are new Times Tables Rockstars challenges to take part in this half-term. Don’t forget to log on each week and take part – **this term the winning House each week will get 50 extra house points!**



Assemblies

We look forward to welcoming parents to the following assemblies taking place this term:

- Weds 4 May – Year 3 Class Assembly at 10.10am
 - Thurs 19 May – Year 4 Class Assembly at 10.10am
 - Weds 25 May - Eco Club Assembly at 10.10am
 - Thurs 9 June - Year 2 Class Assembly at 10.10am
 - Weds 15 June- - Year 1 Class Assembly at 10.10am
 - Thurs 30 June - Reception Class Assembly at 10.10am
 - Weds 6 July – Years 5&6 IofW & Activity Week Assembly at 10.10am
- Leavers Assembly events will be confirmed at a later date.



Special Mentions

Well done to all of our children who received a Special Mention and certificate from their teacher in assembly today –

- Lenny G – showing good understanding of the sea bed and sharing this with the rest of his class.
- Kaya O – trying really hard with his writing this week.
- Lennie J – creating and recording an interesting rhythm on the computer.
- Roman T – sharing his knowledge and interest in our new topic “The Great Fire of London”.
- Lottie W – for her enthusiasm in sharing her ideas, thoughts and answers.
- Karina C – returning to school with such a positive attitude for learning.
- Bethanie L – always working hard in lessons and especially in Maths this week.
- Mabel R – for her enthusiasm in History.
- Harry F – showing a positive attitude towards his English writing.
- Mickey L – a great piece of report writing about life in Greece.
- Summer S – great efforts with her fractions work this week.
- Joseph F – fantastic work with volume in Maths.
- Daisy LG – excellent History work about the Maya gods.



Register Rabbit

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

**RECEPTION
YEAR 5**



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HOUSE POINTS

	This Week	Top Scorers this week
BEECH	25	Kenzie & Korley
CHESTNUT	10	Iyah, Benjamin, Liam S, Jacob C, Lauren, Kaiden, Jake R, Isla, Lily M, Evie T
OAK	27	Kaylee, Tommy & Daniele
ASH	22	George, Elija & Edy

In our classes this week

Reception – learned to count from 0-20 and 20-0.
 Year 1 – counted in 2s, 5s & 10s.
 Year 2 – learned to use apostrophes for possession.
 Year 3 – learned about different types of nutrients.
 Year 4 – learned how to create a 3D picture.
 Year 5 – are enjoying their new topics about Greece and Ancient Greece.
 Year 6 – found out about the Ancient Maya religion and gods.



Attendance – Assessment weeks

Thank you to all our parents who continue to support their children's good attendance at school. Can we please ask in particular that appointments are not made for children in the following weeks due to statutory testing taking place when the children's attendance is essential:

Year 6 – week beginning 9th May (SATs testing)
 Year 1 – week beginning 6th June (Phonics screening)
 Year 2 – throughout May



Next week in school

Club information will be circulated by leading staff regarding starting dates etc.

Mon 25 April

St George's Day – organisation uniforms may be worn
 Yr6 Cookery Day

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



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