



Hoo St Werburgh Primary School

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Dear Parents and Carers

I hope that your child has enjoyed the first week of term and is feeling as excited as we are about the year ahead. This first newsletter is very long but it contains lots of main school information as well as some general reminders to complement the termly year group and sports newsletters. If you have any suggestions or requests for further content, please do let the office know. Future newsletters will be shorter!

The children in years 1 – 6 started the year well, behaving beautifully during our first whole school assembly on Monday afternoon. They have obviously had a great summer break and have come back ready to learn. Our Foundation Stage staff have also been thoroughly impressed with the way our newest pupils have settled in. Tears have quickly turned to smiles as the day starts.

With the new curriculum in its third year (second year for our year 4 pupils) expectations continue to be high and there is information on our website about this. Practising at home has never been so important, particularly with times tables and spellings featuring so highly on the agenda. The saying 'practice makes perfect' is true.

We are really excited to be launching 'Accelerated Reader' this term which we hope will revolutionise the type of information you receive about your child's reading age, progress, understanding and vocabulary.

Please remember that the school can easily be contacted through contact books/planners, morning matters, phone or e-mail.

Kind regards

Tara Deevoy
(Head of School)

COURAGE

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RESPECT

BELONGING

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ACADEMY

We are now an academy! But you might not have noticed and that is a good thing. We are now part of a small, local multi academy trust of 3 schools who share our inclusive ethos. The main difference is that we now get our funding directly from the DfE rather than the Local Authority. We will be keeping you updated with any academy news and we will be doing some joint events, but our governors are still our governors and each school has autonomy within the trust to maintain their individuality.



STAFFING

As some of you will already know, we have 5 new teachers who have joined us to expand our teaching team and provide slightly smaller classes and additional support where needed. Miss Chapman in Y1, Miss Gell in Y3 and Miss Crittenden in Y4 are all familiar faces as they have previously trained and worked in school. We also welcome Miss Kelly to Y4 and Mr Angus to Y6.

Mr Eagles is continuing as our Interim Executive Headteacher on a part-time basis, with Mrs Deevoy as Head of School, Miss McKie as Head of Specialist provision and Mrs Strangleman as Deputy Headteacher.

Miss Dix, a non-class based TA, is leaving the school to pursue a different career and we wish her all the best. Mrs Jeffery will be taking over the running of the sanctuary at lunchtimes, so pupils will still have a quiet place to visit and someone to talk to if they need it.

WEBSITE

Please bear with us while the website is sorted out. EIS host our website and upgraded the web template for all schools last term. This has meant some information has gone astray and random phone numbers have been added. We are working as quickly as possible to get this sorted out. As soon as full access is restored you can expect the usual efficient service of information being posted up within 24 hours. The calendar at the foot of the home page is up-to-date, but please ignore the very old postings which seem to have popped up! Twitter is still working, so please do follow us @HSWprimary.

REFUBISHMENT & BUILDING WORKS

Over the summer there was lots of maintenance work carried out and a big move within school to create additional classrooms. Our biggest project was the provision of external access to the KS2 toilets and the renewal of the rotting timbers along the playground and in the KS2 outdoor classroom area. The wet then hot weather played havoc with our sensory bank with lots of the bark washed away. The steps have been rebarked and the rest of the paths will be done outside of school time. If you see the red and white tape go up, this means that work has started. As you can imagine maintaining our wonderful, huge site is costly and time consuming. We do appreciate parents sharing anything they have noticed with us that may have been missed on the daily site walk, so please do ring the office if you spot something, we would rather hear about a potential issue 5 times than risk it going unnoticed.

VOLUNTEERS



We'd like to take this opportunity to thank our volunteers who give up their time so freely. We now have regular visitors who read with pupils, run our library and generally help out in class to be an extra pair of hands – always helpful when it is an art lesson or a particularly ambitious science experiment!

If you are interested in volunteering or running a club then please contact Mrs Haskins, our school and community officer. We have had a request for a chess club - any grand masters out there?

MORNINGS

KS1 pupils should go straight up to the KS1 playground where a KS1 teacher is supervising so they can have a bit more freedom to move around with their bags out of the way whilst they wait for their teacher to take them in. KS1 Wake Up Shake Up is still running daily and is a popular choice, particularly the dinosaur song. There will always be staff available to help any pupils across the playground if they need it but it seems the majority are keen to get up there with their friends. Please share any concerns with Morning Matters as we can always put temporary special arrangements in for children who find parting from parents difficult.



KS2 pupils should continue to stand and chat or go to the hall to let off some steam. Those running around will be directed to the hall.

We managed to reduce the number of 'before school trips and slips' that needed first aid to less than a dozen last year, down from over fifty the year before and we are aiming for zero this year!

REPORTS



Thank you to everyone who filled out the comments section of the reports. It was lovely to read about how highly you regard the staff and that their dedication to your children is recognized.

Any issues raised will be picked up at the first parents' evenings in a couple of weeks. Please get back in touch if you still have questions or if you feel your feedback hasn't been addressed.

MACMILLAN COFFEE MORNING



Friday 30th September

A group of Year 5/6 pupils will be leading a Macmillan coffee morning which will be held in the KS2 hall from 9am on Friday 30th September.

Many people commented on how handy it was being able to buy a whole homemade cake, with the dairy and gluten free options being very popular. So we will also be combining a cake sale with our coffee morning.

You can support Macmillan in one of 3 ways.

- Donate a cake, cupcakes, cookies or biscuits for us to sell (please label any that are gluten, egg or dairy free)
- Purchase a delicious cake to take along to your own Macmillan coffee morning
- **Attend our coffee morning for a chat and an opportunity to browse through old photographs of the school through the years.**

PARENTS' EVENING

We are increasing the number of parents evenings and reports this year but changing the format slightly. Please look out for further details that will come out next week in a more detailed letter.

SCHOOL COUNCIL

Elections will be taking place soon so if your child asks you to listen to their speech, please give them a hand to practise it. This is one of the ways we educate children about how democracy works and it is more than just a token gesture as our school council members represent their respective classes and vote on issues in school and make suggestions for policy change or improvements.



PTA

Our Parent Teacher Association is very active with regular events run in school such as gift rooms, discos and fayres. Please do offer your services to help staff these various events as our loyal core of volunteers always need an extra pair of hands.

CURRICULUM

Having a strong context for learning and providing 'real life' challenges to apply basic skills continues to underpin our approach to learning. The 'cornerstones' process we use involves 4 stages of learning: engage, develop, innovate and express.

Engage is the 'launch' for the topic, something to capture the imagination

Develop is the traditional 'teaching' part of the topic

Innovate activities require pupils to apply their learning and show their full understanding of key concepts

Express activities give pupils the opportunity to share their learning.



Look out for express events throughout the year – dates to follow in class newsletters! We will continue to run regular 'pop-up' curriculum galleries across the school for parents where pupils have produced work they wish to share. We will be opening the KS2 hall after school on **4th October** so you can pop in to see the Harvest display if you wish. Last year's display is on Twitter @HSWprimary to give you an idea about what our rainbow looks like.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

Wednesday 5th
October



Harvest festival is an integral part of our community links with two assemblies from community leaders in the lead up to the main event.

The RAINBOW theme has been chosen again, so check your new colour on the Harvest Festival letter!

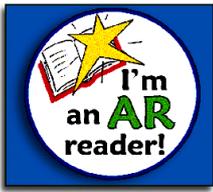
All donations should be in school on Monday 3rd October please.

Pupils can wear a T-shirt in their colour on the day if they wish.



LEARNING

ACCELERATED READER



We are launching Accelerated Reader this term in KS2 and for some Y2 pupils. We have been busy labelling books and testing children to analyse their reading strengths and weaknesses ready for the big day. The launch assembly next week will tell the children all about the programme and there will be displays in school to celebrate when children meet their points targets. Please read the attached parent guide if you have a child in Y2 – 6 which explains the system. FS and Y1 pupils and some Y2 pupils will continue to use Read Write Inc as their main reading programme.

Details of how you can access your child's reading record online using 'homeconnect' will be provided once the system is up and running and the pupils have taken a few quizzes. Book levels (the range your child can choose from) will be written into planners. You can use www.arbookfind.co.uk if your child would like to read a book from home. This will tell you how many points the book is worth and what the book level is. All books in class libraries will be labelled with book levels to make choosing easy for the children. They can choose any book within their range and don't need to start at the bottom and work up.

Part of the programme keeps a record of how many words children have read and every child will be working towards becoming a 'word millionaire'. The School Council will be discussing how to recognise our word millionaires at their first meeting once the elections have taken place.

'Love to Read' whole class reading books



Every child in school has now started or will shortly start their class book and some fantastic displays are already up around the school. We will again be sharing recommended reading lists for every year group. The usual book fairs are already booked and, thanks to your purchases, the school received over £700 in commission to spend on books last year. Thanks go to the PTA for providing individual copies for pupils of key texts.

Spelling

All pupils should now have brought home a comprehensive list of spelling rules for this term as well as the high frequency, key words they will be tested on towards the end of term. Please practise these regularly.

RED WHITE AND BLUE DAY

FRIDAY 14th OCTOBER



We will be marking Red White and Blue day by examining our British Values.

Children will be having lessons throughout the week on this theme and on Friday 14th October they will be able to dress up in red white and/or blue.

We are not asking for any donations on this day as we are dressing up to raise awareness of our values rather than raise money on this occasion.

Writing



We are continuing our focus on writing across the curriculum this year and your child will

be able to share some of the exciting writing challenges they are undertaking in class as part of their topic. Please continue to provide opportunities to write at home for a 'real' purpose. This could be for any reason e.g. shopping lists, diaries of holidays/days out, letters to relatives, e-mails to friends, Christmas lists. In school we will be ensuring that the children have an audience for their writing and will be celebrating its value, so please echo this message at home.

Maths

Monkey Maths will continue on Mondays with pupils practising key skills in their year groups including their tables. These key skills will shortly be on the website (when it is fixed!) so you can see what your child is doing each week and how you can help.



We have renewed our subscription to **MyMaths**. Please continue to use this site to practise key skills at home whenever possible. They have now

created an app which can be used on any tablet or mobile for those families who do not have a desktop computer at home. Pupils should have their new log-ins in their planners with details of the app by the end of next week. Learning times tables and key facts such as doubles is still a challenge for some pupils, so we will be harnessing the power of technology and continuing the popular 'Bingo Bugs' ipad lunchtime club for KS2 pupils. Some pupils in Y5 and Y6 who still do not know their times tables will be asked to attend for 10 minutes every lunchtime to support them in learning this essential maths knowledge. **If you do not have internet access at home or a smart phone to use the app then your child can complete their Mymaths work at school during Mrs Strangleman's lunch club.** Teachers will direct pupils to this as needed if they haven't completed any work set.

One of the key benefits of electronic systems such as MyMaths and Accelerated Reader is that you are able to see immediately how your child is getting on rather than have to wait until parents' evenings to find out.

UNIFORM



The children look very smart in their new logoed jumpers and cardigans. The sew on badges should hopefully last many years and be able to be used several times.

A few reminders...

Please **name all school uniform**. We already have 4 brand new unnamed cardigans in lost property and 1 jumper.

Pupils should only wear **ALL Black** shoes / trainer style shoes or boots. We will be sending letters home to pupils who are still in multi-coloured shoes next week.

Plain or school logoed T-shirts only for PE. Even the staff have a kit they have to wear now!

Small plain stud earrings can be worn. Please ensure your child **can take these out themselves for PE** as we cannot use tape. Absolutely **no loops or large colourful studs**.

HOMEWORK



Setting appropriate homework is expected of primary schools and forms part of the national standards for teachers. Following positive feedback we will be continuing with the flexible family learning projects but will be narrowing the 'menu' and including whole school themes so siblings can work together. Please make sure that when you support your child with a project that they are fully involved, it's not supposed to be homework just for parents! Family learning really helps with the spoken language strand of our curriculum, as speaking about their projects is something the pupils enjoy and helps us to develop their speaking skills.

KS1 have information booklets and KS2 have planners to help with organizing homework, so please make sure that you check your child's planner regularly. Homework in KS1 consists mainly of learning spellings and tables and completing the family learning project. Y2 upwards also have CGP grammar and punctuation workbooks to complete. Teachers will set pages from this for pupils to complete linked to work completed in class – nothing should be new. An answer sheet is provided for you to use to check your child's work if you wish. Work books will not be marked individually and answers will be reviewed in class as a group discussion.

Pupils will be tested weekly on their times tables but formal spelling tests will remain termly for younger pupils. As pupils move through KS2, weekly spelling tests become the norm. Each year group will send home separate details of their arrangements and expectations. The rule for this sort of homework is little and often, 2 mins each per day is plenty. Please don't cram and get stressed the night before a test.

GENERAL REMINDERS

- Every child should come to school with a **filled** water bottle. This can be refilled at break and lunchtime.
- FRESH or DRIED FRUIT for break-time snacks please. Pupils will be asked to put any non-fruit or yoghurt covered items away for lunchtime.
- Lice is an ongoing problem so please tie your child's hair back if it is long and regularly comb through hair when wet using conditioner to keep the nits at bay!

Enjoy the term and make the most of the lovely late summer weather we are having!