



## AUTUMN TERM NEWSLETTER



Hello Helmingham!

Firstly I want to say a huge Thank You to everyone. I have been made to feel so welcome by the children, staff and parents here at Helmingham and

I am really looking forward to getting to know you all over the coming weeks.

Obviously I am spreading my time between Henley and Helmingham but I will endeavor to be here as much as possible. In my absence, Kathy Lloyd, the office manager has a senior lead role and will be the point of contact for any issues arising.

Although things appear to have changed very quickly, there are lots of really positive things happening in school. I met with the children to discuss the school rules. They took ownership of these and generated their ideas to help create the new rules.



We are also in the middle of changing our curriculum to ensure that in our mixed age classes, all children have access to an enriched, exciting curriculum. We will be changing our topics from January and making links with Henley to share planning, resources and (when Covid regulations allow) school trips and wider educational experiences.

The Friends of Helmingham School (PTA) have also got the term off to a flying start by organizing a pumpkin carving competition and raffle. Thank you to everyone involved in the organizing of school events. If you are

interested in being part of this team, please do not hesitate to get in touch and we will pass your details on.

There is going to be a big **change to the school structure** following the half term break. Due to the staffing arrangements, there is a need to join the Woodpeckers and Otters classes for some of the afternoon sessions. This is to ensure that they have qualified teachers and practitioners across the week. Mrs Checketts will continue teaching Woodpeckers in the mornings only, covering the core subjects of English Maths and Science across the week. At the same time, The Otters class teachers will continue to teach the Otters the same subjects. These curriculums are specific to the year groups and need to remain being taught in the phase groups. In the afternoons, Woodpeckers will continue to be taught PE by Mrs Sturmeay and ICT by Mr Barlow who come across as specialists from Henley. Mrs Fayers will also continue to spend one afternoon a week with the class teaching PSHE, Philosophy and basic skills.

Woodpeckers and Otters will join together for 2.5 afternoon per week to focus on topic work, creative projects and the wider curriculum which will include History, Geography, Art, DT etc. Whilst the classes are mixed, they will have 3 adults- a teacher and 2 TA's to support the learning of all ages and abilities, ensuring that all objectives are covered and the best opportunities given to all.

The other classes remain the same in their organisation and staffing.

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In other staffing news, Mrs Salmon will be leaving us at Christmas. She has been a member of staff here at Helmingham for 15 years and will be moving on to pastures new. I'm sure this will be a really exciting opportunity for her and I'm sure you will join me in wishing her all the best for the future.

We will be looking at getting a replacement teacher for after the Christmas holidays and will inform you as soon as we have made a successful recruitment.

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Please make sure you are checking your child's class google pages and the school website for the most up to date information about their learning. All classes will be adding information for their topics and recommending resources that you might be interested in sharing at home.



**We do expect** children to read at home throughout the week. The national recommendation is

**KS1 and EYFS- 10 mins daily/ KS2- 20 mins daily** but we ask that you try to fit in 5 times a week as a minimum. This

does have an impact on their progress and attainment in school.

## A Few Reminders!

- Please make sure you sign up for your parent's evening sessions- Although they are not as we would like to do them, we hope that a virtual catch up will be useful in discussing your child[ren's] learning journeys.
- Please make sure your children are wearing the correct uniforms and PE kits. We have been seeing more and more patterned and decorated sweatshirts and hoodies which is not part of the PE uniform.
- If your child has long hair, please ensure it is tied back/up appropriately
- Now that the weather is turning cooler, please make sure that your child has a coat. We do encourage them to be outside in all weathers!



Now that half term is nearly upon us, please be mindful of what your children are watching on the TV and internet. Some of the conversations that have been overheard with the older children have involved the use of inappropriate themes and language. We are obviously addressing this in school but it is important that you are all aware of online content and the language that is used but the children.



After half term we are introducing a 'points passport' behaviour system in school. Each child will be given a booklet in which to collect stamps from members of staff including office staff, lunchtime supervisors, teachers and TA's. Points can be awarded for polite behaviour, personal achievements, positive play choices and good manners etc. These can then be saved on their cards and 'cashed in' later in the term when they have earned different amounts of points. They can choose to opt for the cheaper prizes as soon as they have enough points, or to save them for prizes of greater value. This will not only encourage the positive behaviour choices and encourage them to gain personal reward but also to appreciate the value of saving.

These points will then also feed in to the house point systems to be totaled for team achievement across the school.

We wish to celebrate the children's achievements on our WOW board in school. If your child has won awards out of school for their sporting

achievements or out of school activities, or they have completed new or unusual challenges, then please let us know so that these can be celebrated in school too. A photo with a small piece of information is also useful.



I am always keen to hear your views! I always say that if I don't know about a problem, I cannot try to solve it. As with any schools there are a few grumblings. We are human and make mistakes. We don't always get things right but we do like to work with you for the absolute very best for all our children.

**Ideas, Suggestions and Comments-** there will be a box in the entrance hall near the main office for you to add any comments you may wish to share.

*If you have any worries, concerns or problems, please do not hesitate to get in touch, firstly with your child's teacher and then with myself if this persists.*

*Enjoy the Half Term holiday!*



Miss Stephanie Hawes