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Muswell Hill Primary School

2013/14

www.muswellhillprimary.co.uk

Newsletter No. 3

19.12.2013

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we near the end of the autumn term 2013, I write to thank you for your support during my first term as Headteacher at Muswell Hill Primary School. As you know, we finish school on Friday 20th December. The school closes at 3pm unless you have contacted the office to let us know that you are taking your child/ren at 12pm at the conclusion of the Christmas carol concert. Children must return to school before they are dismissed. I would particularly like to thank you for your support with the necessary changes to the Attendance and Punctuality Policy earlier this term.

The autumn term has been extremely busy and much has been achieved by our dedicated staff team. We conducted an audit of the teaching and learning in conjunction with Haringey Local Authority; they spoke highly of the ethos, atmosphere and standard of teaching. This also served to illuminate areas for school improvement.

I began my post here with a set of parental meetings where I was able to hear the great many positive features of our school and the potential areas for development. It was helpful to listen to parent/carers views and form a set of priorities from those meetings. I valued the chance to share these at the Staff Parent Association AGM in early October.

To enhance communication, we have continually updated and populated our school website: www.muswellhillprimary.co.uk. We have also been able to offer a texting service to parents whose children in Year 5 and 6 walk to school alone or with friends to ensure communication is clear. We have set up systems to cope with any school closure, including potential snow fall. Happily, it looks like we won't need that service this term! Early in the New Year, I will be communicating imminent plans to allow parents and carers the opportunity to make online payments for school lunches, trips and other school items if they wish. This is a really exciting move forward for the school as we look to making payment systems more efficient.

In addition to this, we have many exciting plans for the Spring Term. This includes a review of the homework policy. We hope to make homework as exciting as the class teaching that takes place here each day. Our school Governors and Senior Leadership team have been looking at the after school extended provision. We would value parents/carers completing the survey which is available at: <http://muswellhillprimary.co.uk/school-office/school-clubs/>

Below this covering letter is a Newsletter, letting you know of a few important notices and key dates for the diary in 2014.

Finally, I would like to wish you all a safe and happy holiday period. We all look forward to welcoming the children back on **Tuesday** January 7th 2014 at 8:55am!

Very best wishes and grateful thanks for your warm welcome to our fantastic community.

James Wiltshire

Headteacher





Attendance and Punctuality

Our attendance has risen this term and is now in line with National Expectations. This is currently at 96%. Many thanks again, as mentioned in my covering note, to all Parents and Carers for ensuring the children are in school whenever possible and are here on time for morning registration. The school day begins at **8:55am** and finishes at **3:30pm**. Any absence notification should be communicated to the school office. If you require a leave of absence, please complete the form that is available in the office or on the website under 'school office' and 'forms.'

We are now conducting one assembly a week to reward the class with the highest average attendance. So far, I would like to congratulate Ruby Class on two successive wins!

Dropping off and Collection Times

At collection time, when the children are brought into the Key Stage 2 playground, we ask that parents and carers wait behind the line for the class teacher to be ready before the children are taken home. If your child walks home alone or with friends, please remind them to make their way straight home rather than chatting or playing sports before leaving the school premises. Please speak to the school office to take advantage of the texting service.

I ask that parents and carers do not come into the school building in the mornings or at collection times in the evenings without signing in and collecting a badge. If you have any messages to pass to your child, please speak to the school office who will be happy to pass these along.

At both collection and drop off times please do not bring dogs onto the school premises. Some of the children are a little frightened of dogs so we ask that they are kept outside the grounds. If you are leaving your dog near the school railings please ensure there is a suitable distance for pedestrians and particularly our children to walk around so that it is not impeding the entrances of the school. I appreciate that many dogs are friendly but it is important that the children feel completely safe.

Media Friendly

The BBC filmed the Breakfast Club recently. They stated that the children were extremely cooperative and polite; they were fantastic ambassadors for our school. The final edit of the film is now available and will be uploaded onto the school website as soon as we have the television standard final version rather than the draft that we currently have. I am delighted that our extended provision has been so well staffed and managed and would like to thank all the team for their continued efforts. In particular I thank, Elaine Mason, our Breakfast Club Leader, for her continued hard work and dedication.

The filming of the school vision in action has been postponed until the first few weeks of the New Year. We look forward to showing our creative curriculum through this opportunity in the first few weeks back in the Spring.

Visitors and Events

I would like to thank the entire SPA for their incredible organisation of many events this term. The Winter Fair, the Fireworks night and numerous cake stalls to name but a few. I am always amazed at the SPA's ability to transform a room or a space in a matter of minutes!

I would like to thank Lisa Aulsebrook and Sacha Lamey among many others from the SPA and parent body for their organisation and running of the Michael Rosen and Julie Dawn Cole evening recently. It was a huge success and was thoroughly enjoyed by all the children and adults who attended. A tremendous amount of organisation went in to making this event so successful.

We were recently visited by Councillor Catherine West. She came to school to see the classroom environments. She was very impressed with the school generally and was delighted to meet the children, albeit briefly. Councillor West has asked to return in the near future to lead an assembly and chat further to our children.

Lost Property and Lunch Boxes

The lost property collection box is situated in each of the playgrounds. These are yellow containers. At the end of each half term, these are emptied and the contents are given to charity by depositing them into the TRAIID bin which is located opposite the school office. As we near the end of this term, all lost property will be disposed of in this way. If your child is missing anything, please check the lost property bins before the end of term.

All lunchboxes, which are stored in the KS2 playground in cages, will also be disposed of due to hygienic reasons. This will also take place over the holidays.

Family Courses

Haringey Local Authority currently runs courses to strengthen families and communities. If you would like to learn further strategies to improve communication between you and your child as well as networking with other parents and discussing effective behavioural strategies, please collect a leaflet from the school office and then contact Gillian Collin, our SENDCO, for further details.

Christmas Plays

During week commencing Monday 16th December, our classes put on a fantastic show for parents and carers. 'Christmas Around the World,' was truly superb! I know that this view was shared by parents and carers. The children thoroughly enjoyed the singing, dancing and performing and really did us all proud. We managed to raise £650 for our link school in Ghana. I was delighted that Jill Hughes was able to come and visit us and watched the plays. Jill has attached a note below:

Dear parents/ carers and children, as some of you know, I had the pleasure of watching both of the school Christmas shows over the last two days. I want to pass on my congratulations to the staff and children for 2 lovely entertaining afternoons, full of songs, dances, fun and enthusiasm, and continuing the great tradition of each child having a role in the show. It is the third time I have visited the school this half term, and each time the children have been so warm and affectionate. It is lovely to see how happy they all seem. Many of you asked me of my news, so I just wanted to pass on that I have used my presents from you, as promised, by travelling in France and California, and doing art, music and Spanish courses. I will be continuing my 'senior gap year' in the New Year, by travelling to Argentina, New Zealand and Tasmania, so will not be back in the UK until April. I miss the school community, particularly the children, but I am happy to know the school is in very safe hands. I wish you all a lovely Christmas holiday, and all the very best for 2014 and beyond. I am sure the school will continue from strength to strength.

With very best wishes, Jill (Hughes...your ex- Headteacher).

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Dates for the diary

Please note that the school calendar contains key dates for Parents and Carers for the Spring Term:

Teacher Availability Day (School Closed) Monday 6.1.14

School starts Tuesday 7 th January 8:55am	
After School Activities and Clubs start	w/c 13.1.14
Year 6 Sharing Assembly	17.1.14
Amber Class Assembly	28.1.14
Year 4 Sharing Assembly	31.1.14
Readathon Starts	6.2.14 (More details to follow)
Gold Class Assembly	4.2.14
Year 3 Sharing Assembly	7.2.14

Half-Term 17-21 February 2014

World Book Day	6.3.14
Orange Class Sharing Assembly	11.3.14
Year 5 Sharing Assembly	14.3.14
SPA Quiz night planned	15.3.14
Red Class Sharing Assembly	25.3.14
Yellow Class Sharing Assembly	1.4.14
Parent Consultations	1 & 3. 4.14

Easter Break 7-21 April 2014

Safety online

Our school Governors sent their latest newsletter out with reference to 'Safety Online.' I have attached the relevant document again. This provides some clear guidance for Parents and Carers.



Keeping Your Child Safe Online

The internet has changed all of our lives, particularly our children's. For parents and carers this opens up a new world of things to be aware of and even at primary school age safety online is important. For many of us, this can all be a bit daunting. But it doesn't need to be.

Top Tips for keeping your child safe online from CEOP:

- **Talk to your child about what they're up to online.** Be a part of their online life; involve the whole family and show an interest. Find out what sites they visit and what they love about them, if they know you understand they are more likely to come to you if they have any problems.
- **Watch Thinkuknow films and cartoons with your child.** The [Thinkuknow site](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk) has films, games and advice for children from 5 all the way to 16.
- **Encourage your child to go online and explore!** There is a wealth of age-appropriate sites online for your children. Encourage them to use sites which are fun, educational and that will help them to develop online skills.
- **Keep up-to-date with your child's development online.** Children grow up fast and they will be growing in confidence and learning new skills daily. It's important that as your child learns more, so do you.
- **Set boundaries in the online world just as you would in the real world.** Think about what they might see, what they share, who they talk to and how long they spend online. It is important to discuss boundaries at a young age to develop the tools and skills children need to enjoy their time online.
- **Keep all equipment that connects to the internet in a family space.** For children of this age, it is important to keep internet use in family areas so you can see the sites your child is using and be there for them if they stumble across something they don't want to see.
- **Know what connects to the internet and how.** Nowadays even the TV connects to the internet. Make sure you're aware of which devices your child uses that connect to the internet, such as their phone or games console. Also, find out how they are accessing the internet – is it your connection, or a neighbour's wifi? This will affect whether the safety settings you set are being applied.
- **Use parental controls on devices that link to the internet, such as the TV, laptops, computers, games consoles and mobile phones.** Parental controls are not just about locking and blocking, they are a tool to help you set appropriate boundaries as your child grows and develops. They are not the answer to your child's online safety, but they are a good start and they are not as difficult to install as you might think. Service providers are working hard to make them simple, effective and user friendly. [Find your service provider and learn how to set your controls](#)

For more information on Parental Controls and how to set them up go to www.thinkyounow.co.uk