

10 April 2018

Dear Parents

HEADTEACHER'S LETTER

Thank you for making me feel so welcome and for all of your support last term, helping to make it run so smoothly. I hope you have all had a fun Easter with friends and family. I had a very enjoyable, although rather damp, week in Northern Spain. Everyone was really friendly and we had many a laugh as we tried to make ourselves understood.

Looking back, last term may have only been short but there was certainly a lot happening. I had heard how good the music was at Hemdean House, and found out for myself at the fantastic Easter Concert and Year 3 and 4's Production of Jonah. The children also very ably demonstrated their artistic abilities at the end of term Art Exhibition and Easter Bonnet Parade. The children enjoyed some interesting trips and performed some fascinating assemblies. Mr Norman Grundon's visit was very much enjoyed too. Very well done to our Book Club members who raised more than enough to purchase the books to follow the Carnegie/Greenaway Awards and to provide their own opinions. In between all of the activities, the children also found time to work hard. It was wonderful to see so many parents and other family members in school for the first of our parents into school days and also at the PTA Quiz Night.

My thanks to the PTA for all of their hard work not only in providing social events for us to enjoy, but also for raising funds for the school. The new stage lighting really added to the ambience of the play.

Looking ahead, the Summer Term is also going to be action packed. Some of the older pupils will be going away on their residential PGL trip to Liddington, with the rest of the school enjoying an outdoor activity day at Woodrow High House, near Amersham. This is the centre I hope to use for a residential trip for Years 1 - 6 next academic year. One of our main events this term will be our Tea Party to celebrate National Tea Day on Thursday 19th April with members from our local community. All of the pupils were busy last half term writing and sending letters inviting them to tea and we have already received several replies. Our second big event this term is our International Activity Day on Wednesday 20 June which we hope many of you will volunteer to be involved in and we will be inviting pupils from other local schools to join us. There are of course some firm favourites returning such as the Summer Music Concert, Year 5 and 6's Production, Sports Day and the Year 6 versus Staff Rounders Match, with term concluding with a Prize-giving Ceremony on the last day.

Diary Dates:

A copy of the Summer Term Calendar proving dates of all activities is attached with this letter. Please be aware these may be subject to change and other dates added. A confirmed calendar will be issued during the first week of term.

Weds 13 June - Welcome to Key Stage 2 Information Evening for parents of children currently in Year 2

Weds 20 June -Welcome to Reception Information Evening for parents of children currently nursery age and Welcome to Key Stage 1 Information Evening for parents of children currently in Reception.

The purpose of these new events is to run through the changes from one Key Stage to the next and provide parents time to ask any questions they might have.

Weds 27 June - Information Evening for parents of pupils currently in Years 4 and 5 to talk about preparing for entry into Senior School.

Sat 23 June – Summer Fayre

Tues 26 June – Summer Concert

Weds 27 June – Sports Day

Please also check the calendar for Class Assembly dates.

Governors Update

I am delighted to inform you that at the end of last term, the Governing Body appointed a new Governor to the Board, Sue Manser. Sue is both the regional ISA representative and a former Headteacher. Her invaluable experience has already made a positive impact on the strategic running of the school. I am also very pleased to welcome back to the Governing Body Tim Beechey-Newman. Tim has extensive knowledge of Hemdean House having previously been a Governor and, as a former parent of a pupil here, he is fully committed to the school and helping it to fulfil its aims and aspirations. He will be taking over as Chair because Stephen Hogdson has temporarily withdrawn from the Governing Body. However, he remains fully supportive and will still be lending a hand and attending events when he can. The Governing Body remains in a strong position to continue to meet its objectives as laid out in the meeting held with parents, late November 2017.

School Fees 2018 / 2019

You will shortly be receiving a letter from the Tim Beechey-Newman regarding the changes to fees for the next academic year.

School Uniform / Pupil Appearance

For the most part I am pleased to say that the pupils maintained a smarter appearance last term. I hope they will continue this effort as they move into summer uniform this term. Pupils should all be in wearing summer uniform by May half term. However, I appreciate the weather can still remain quite cool during April, so pupils may stay in their winter uniform until parents feel the weather is warm enough. Girls need to wear white socks, not tights when in their summer dresses. Please note this term, pupils are required to wear full School uniform on swimming days, they may wear their costumes underneath their uniform if they have a morning swim. This term we will have Year 5 pupils helping to keep the lost property to a minimum, please help them by ensuring all uniform is clearly labelled with your child's name. At the end of each half term, any unclaimed, unnamed lost property in good condition will be passed to the PTA to sell.

Lunchtime

This term we will be trialling a new system in order to promote excellent table manners and greater social interaction at lunchtime. Each table will be headed by either a Year 5 or Year 6 pupil and contain a mixture of age groups from Year 1 to Year 6, boys and girls. Arrangements for Nursery and Reception will remain as before. Children will be making place mats and a seating plan will be displayed in the hall. Staff will continue to sit with the children. The lunchtime staff will be looking out for children who are consistently well behaved to sit on "The Golden Table" the week before half term.

Absences and Lateness

From this term, you will be able to use the absence reporting function in ParentMail, either via the App or Website, to notify the school office if your child will not be attending for any reason. Please can I remind you that any planned absences need to be requested in writing in advance of the absence.

Healthy Snacks

I noticed some less healthy snacks creeping into school as the term progressed. Please ensure your child has only fruit, vegetables, bread sticks, plain crackers or plain rice cakes. Thank you for your co-operation.

Friends and Families Referral Scheme

We had two successful Open Days last term, as well as many ad hoc visits from prospective parents. Thank you to those of you who have introduced new families to Hemdean House.

One final reminder – if you have not already done so, please plant your sunflower seeds ready to be returned to school week commencing 30 April.

Please remember, my door is always open, do come and see me with any queries / comments.

I look forward to seeing you all back ready to enjoy another exciting term.

Kind regards



Mrs Helen Chalmers
Head Teacher

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