

Woodfield Community Primary School

Woodfield Road

Harrogate

HG1 4HZ

Tel: 01423 566494

Fax: 01423 529 840

Email: admin@woodfield.n-yorks.sch.uk

Website: www.woodfieldprimary.org.uk

Headteacher: Mr Neil Hedworth BA (Hons) QTS NPQH

Tuesday 17th January 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

I can hardly believe that I'm into my third week at Woodfield. It has been great to meet so many of you over the last three weeks and I look forward to meeting more of you over the coming weeks. Please do come up and introduce yourself to me if I don't end up catching you.

Young Voices

This was an amazing experience for the children and adults alike. Being part of the young voices choir of over 5000 children packed into the Sheffield Arena was a real memory making moment for all the children. The children were an absolute credit to yourselves and despite a very late night, the school demonstrated exemplary behaviour! The bus driver, who had been driving different schools all week, commented that we had the most polite and well-mannered children. It's always so lovely to hear others from outside our school recognise what we inside our school community already know. A very big thanks to Mrs Horsfield and Mrs Summerton who have worked so hard to teach the children the songs and despite a very late night, still came in bright and early the next day with their usual warm smiles. A special thanks to Mrs Plummer who kindly gave up her evening too, to accompanying us to Sheffield.



Attendance Assembly



Yesterday morning, we had a fantastic celebration assembly for those children who have received an attendance award. Mrs Hunter had organised Certificates, Pencils and Badges which were awarded to pupils.

I have noticed that there are still several children arriving late in a morning. In our assembly, we talked about this and the children were very quick to tell me how, when they are late, it really impacts upon their learning as the time they have missed, they cannot get back. Having had two children of my own, I do appreciate how a busy morning in the household can turn out however we need to make a concerted effort to ensure that this doesn't impact upon your child's education.

This week we had **good** overall attendance. Our current attendance this week is standing at **96.9%** This is a vast improvement on last week. Since September our attendance stands at **96.1%**

School Matters!



SPELLING, PUNCTUATION and GRAMMAR

In order to exploit technology and create additional ways for our children to learn at home, we have bought a subscription for each child to access the website www.spag.com

In recent years, the Government has placed a huge push on raising the standards of Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPaG) of all school children as it does have a significant impact on children's written work. In order to support our pupils and their families better, we have subscribed to this



“Woodfield – Where We Celebrate Success”

valuable tool. Teachers are able to set bespoke assessment tasks etc for individual children to complete via an online web browser by using the child's unique login and password at www.spag.com. Children then work through relevant tasks set by their teacher as either homework or an additional learning opportunity to develop their understanding of aspects. The system automatically marks the pupils' answers and logs the score achieved; identifies any areas where a child may be struggling and supports the teacher in helping them to 'Close the gap'. As I'm sure you will appreciate, anything like this which greatly supports our children's learning is a great resource when used regularly. I would ask you to encourage your child to access this regularly. Children's usage will be monitored by staff and those not accessing the system will be encouraged to do so as we encourage the children to have greater ownership of their own learning. Your child's individual log in is attached to this newsletter. Please write it down somewhere safe such as in the front of their reading record.

Parental Consultations

Following discussion at a recent staff meeting, it would seem that feedback provided by many of you at the last consultation evening and a lower than anticipated turnout would suggest that half termly parent meetings are not helpful to parents. We are therefore going to revert back to parental consultations on a termly basis. However, in the interests of being able to provide you with timely information about your child's progress, we are looking at a form of report which will be pull together this information, including that from ICT packages such as SPaG.com. Needless to say, staff are always willing to meet with parents to discuss a child's progress should you wish.



Reading

We are having a **big** push on reading across the whole school. I believe that reading skills are very important as they allow children access to the entire curriculum. There are two major aspects to reading: decoding and comprehension. Decoding is the ability to read words by translating written symbols into the sounds of spoken language. This is done either orally or silently. Decoding is sometimes called "word identification". It's this skill that the Year 1 Phonics Screen test assesses. Alongside this, is the ability to comprehend or understand what has been read. It is possible to decode a challenging text providing a child has a good phonological awareness and not actually understand any of what they have read. It's therefore important that a child's comprehension skills are matched in the book they are reading. I am often asked if it's ok for a child to read their own home books. I would always answer that anything we can do to encourage children to read or promote reading for pleasure can only be a good thing. However, this is where the mismatch of decoding and comprehension skills can sometimes not be in line with the child's stage of reading development. The school scheme book is carefully matched to your child's decoding and comprehension stage of development and therefore we would also actively encourage you to use this to listen to your child read at home at least four times per week for about 10 minutes. It is with this shared partnership between home and school, our children will make much more rapid progress with their reading.



School Meals

Mrs Heys and I met with the NYCC Caterers to discuss our lunchtime which we feel could be improved further. One aspect of lunchtime which is hugely important to me is the opportunity to develop our social skills. Mrs Patrick had done a great deal of excellent work to promote this already and I feel we are now ready to move another step forward. As a result of our meeting, we are going to try a 'family service'. In a nutshell, there will be two choices with one being suitable for vegetarians such as a cheese pasta bake or Risotto etc along with a school meal. Children will be seated in the same place each day and those who have selecting the alternative will find their meal in their place setting when they enter the dining hall. The other school meal will be served by the older pupils (*who will be trained in portion size etc*) at the table from serving dishes. This new system will allow us to revert back to a 12 – 1pm whole school lunchtime which will increase KS1s learning time by 15mins per day. It will also enable us to complete lunch in just one sitting as opposed to the current two sittings which are in place. Furthermore, children will not be spending as long sat waiting for their lunch. We aim to trial this after February half term and more details about the choices for each day for that period will be available soon. When completing the meal selection, please could you involve your child as on several occasions we have had distressed children because they do not like or were not expecting the choice they have been given. From February half term, we are going to offer children in Nursery the opportunity to have a school meal.



Due to the changes we are implementing with our school meals for pupils, Chinese New Year and Valentine's Day Meal for parents have had to be cancelled. We look forward to welcoming you next term when we are also looking at instigating 'Class Parent lunches'.

Free School Meals

If you are entitled to Free School Meals (*even if your child gets the Universal Meal that all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children are entitled to*) can I make a **MASSIVE** plea to you to let us know. Schools receive additional funding over and above the '*normal*' funding based upon the numbers of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. We are aware that some families are entitled to these but do not claim as the children have a packed lunch. As a school community, this means we miss out on some additional government funding.

If your child qualifies for free school meals and stays all day in nursery, we can apply for the appropriate funding. Please see Mrs Heyes for more details. A separate letter to parents and carers of children in Nursery will be sent in due course.

Sainsbury's Active Kids Vouchers

We will once again be collecting the Sainsbury's Active Kids vouchers. Please drop off any vouchers in the box provided in school.



Once again, many thanks for your continued support in the journey that we share in your child's learning.

Yours sincerely,

Neil Hedworth
Headteacher

“Woodfield – Where We Celebrate Success”