



HOWLETCH LANE PRIMARY SCHOOL

OCTOBER NEWSLETTER

It's difficult to believe it's October already. The term has been extremely busy so far with further challenges brought by COVID 19. We recently had an outbreak in Year 6 with many pupils and staff affected. Thank you to the Year 6 parents who got their children tested, enabling us to identify asymptomatic cases and prevent further spread of this awful disease. We are very grateful for your cooperation and patience at times like this and the governors and I are very pleased that we stuck to our bubble regime which has no doubt stopped further spread. The situation has now greatly improved with most staff and pupils back in school.

KS1 GATE

We are now starting to allow Y1 and Y2 pupils to enter at the same time from the side gate in the morning from 8:50–8:55 am. The weather is changing and to avoid people having to queue up in bad weather and stand on muddy grass we think this will improve the situation and allow both pupils and parents to get to where they need to be more efficiently. All entrance gates will be locked at 9:00 am. If you arrive later than 9:00 am please go to the main entrance.

PARENTS' EVENING

This will be via phone calls again due to the COVID situation during the week before half term. More information will follow to inform you of which days the teachers will be available to ring you to discuss your child's progress.

HARVEST FOODBANK COLLECTION - Wednesday and Thursday 13/14 October.

We will be collecting food for the foodbank as part of our Harvest celebrations next week. If you could send in one or two items (tins, dried foods, packet foods) we will make sure that these are given to the local foodbank to help those in need.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER

The school photographer is coming into school on 14 October to take class photos only. We plan to schedule another visit for individual / family photos later in the year.

HEALTHY SNACKS AND PACKED LUNCHES

Reminder that children in KS1 are given a piece of free fruit each morning. Older children can bring in a healthy snack, ideally a piece of fruit, a healthy cereal bar, but no crisps or chocolate bars please. Catering advice from Durham County Council encourages children to eat healthily at lunchtime with a balance of savoury items such as sandwiches or wraps, salad, fruit and yoghurt. Crisps and chocolate biscuits are fine for a treat but are not recommended every day.

PE KITS

Please can you send your child in our school PE kit which is plain, dark coloured track suit bottoms or leggings (shorts in fine weather) plus a plain white t-shirt. If children are outside, a plain A school jumper or cardigan should also be worn so that the children We do not allow cropped tops or football / logo tops.

FLU IMMUNISATIONS FOR PUPILS – TUESDAY 19 OCTOBER

The immunisation team will be in school on 19 October. Please read the letter which was emailed to you earlier today with full details about the nasal spray vaccine and how to provide parental consent. There is also a copy on our website. Please note: your child will not receive the vaccine without parental consent.

CATCH UP / RECOVERY PREMIUM

The government have provided funding to allow schools to help children to catch up following periods of lockdown during the pandemic. We are using this funding for extra staffing, including two Academic mentors who work with small groups and individuals on a variety of intervention programmes.

HOW YOU CAN HELP US

Please can you make sure that you hear your children read regularly and sign the reading record which they bring home. Extra reading resources are available through Bug Club Online. Children were given these logins last year but if you need a reminder, these are available from your child's class teacher. Reading Plus for Y6 pupils can also be accessed at home, pupils have their own logins for this resource. CGP homework books and Purple Mash homework will continue to be set depending on the age group of the children. Please encourage your children to complete their homework.

CAR PARK

Please can parents park responsibly and avoid parking on pavements near to the school entrances. There have been several near misses already this term and reports of parents and pupils walking behind reversing cars. Please use the paths wherever possible to try to keep everyone safe. We have also received a complaint from residents in Fairclough Court about inconsiderate parking by parents dropping off and collecting children from school.

STAFF TRAINING DAY

Monday 22 November will be an additional staff training day this year. The school will be closed to pupils on that day.

VACANCIES IN SCHOOL

We are looking to recruit to our bank of casual lunchtime supervisors. Full details and application form is available on our website.

DATES FOR DIARY

Wednesday 13 October	Last day for giving parental consent to flu vaccine
Thursday 14 October	School photographer is school to take class group photographs
Tuesday 19 October	Flu Immunisation Team in school
Friday 22 October	School closes for half term holiday
Monday 1 November	School re-opens after half term holiday
Monday 22 November	School closed for staff training
Friday 17 December	School closes for Christmas holiday
Tuesday 4 January	Staff training day
Wednesday 5 January	School re-opens for teaching purposes

More details about Christmas activities to follow at later date.