



in partnership with Blanche Nevile

Headteacher's Newsletter October 2009

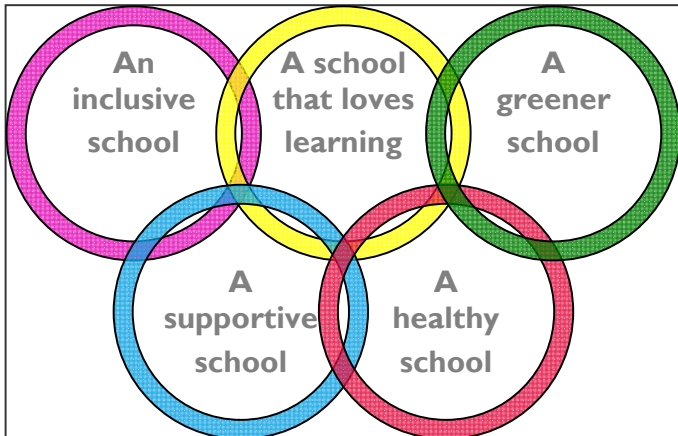
Dear parents and carers,

It has been an exceptionally busy start to the term and the children have settled very well into their new classes. The school is looking lovely, especially the 'Proud to be Me' displays which you may have seen in the school hall. In addition, there is a great deal planned for the month of October with our Black History Month and Harvest celebrations. Details of these, as well as information about other exciting developments, are all in this newsletter.

School Vision

During the summer term the school conducted a series of questionnaires, which was supported by a number of workshops led by parent governor, Ingrid Wassenaar. These focus groups, representing parents, governors, pupils, and staff from both Highgate and Blanche Nevile, explored our views of the school and how we would like to see the school develop in the future.

The result of this excellent work is that Highgate Primary School now has a school vision and set of aims:



- An inclusive school: we want everyone who uses our school to feel involved and included
- A school that loves learning: we want everyone to enjoy learning and to achieve their best
- A greener school: we want our school to look and be a greener place
- A supportive school: we want everyone involved with our school to feel supported, and sure of where to look for support
- A healthy school: we want our school to be a healthy place for our minds and our bodies

I am very excited about what has been arrived at and welcome all members of our school community to consider how they can play a part making the vision reality. I would be very interested to hear your thoughts.

PGL



The sun shone on our Year 6 children who last week enjoyed a fabulous week at the PGL activity centre at Windmill Hill in Sussex.

On abseiling, Jamil reports, 'I was really excited as we approached the tower feeling really pumped up but a little bit scared. My partner and I walked up the stairs to the third floor. We were ready to go. As we walked backwards down the 40 foot tower we did Spiderman jumps. It was really hard but a fun and frightening first activity.'

Ella reports that her funniest moment 'was seeing a bucket of water poured over William's head'. I think we'll probably have to disagree on that one! It was a brilliant week and one that will be remembered by our Year 6 pupils for a very long time.

Assemblies



4JS entertained the school with the first of this year's class assemblies. Themed around the topic 'proud to be me', pupils shared their hobbies, interests and undoubted talents in a thoroughly entertaining performance.

This was followed by 4MKs assembly in which the class re-enacted the life of Henry VIII, complete with Tudor music, dancing and the odd beheading.

Music Tuition Year 4

The Year 4 music project has started with instrumental lessons well underway. Every child in Mags' class has started lessons on the guitar, whilst the children in Jen's class have been

introduced to the violin. From half term the instruments will be coming home, filling your homes with beautiful sound.

I would also like to announce that in addition, we have started group instrument lessons in Year 2, with every child now receiving a weekly recorder lesson. We look forward to hearing the children's progress.

Attendance and Punctuality

Congratulations to the following classes who have each won the attendance cup during the month of September

	Class	% attendance
Week 1	3LM	99%
Week 2	ISM	99%
Week 3	ISM	100%
Week 4	6RO	99%

Ocean Maths Project

Supporting children with maths at home has for a while been seen by many as something of a challenge. As you know, the approach to teaching maths in primary school is very different to how we were taught the subject.

This year the school will be looking to help improve pupils' mathematics through involving parents/carers by:

- Providing accessible and challenging homework that children and parents share.
- Delivering school-based workshops where parents and children engage in practical and enjoyable maths activities together.

The first of these workshops is for parents of children in Year 4, and is taking place in The Dining centre at 9.00 am on Tuesday 13th October. Please come along if you can.

Harvest



Just to remind you that all parents and carers are very welcome to attend our special Harvest Assembly which is taking place at 9.30 am on Wednesday 14th October. The theme this year is harvest around the world, which will link in with our celebrations surrounding Black History Month.

Children are invited to bring in donations of foods to their classroom collection box, which will go towards the traditional

display on the stage in the school hall, which is being set up on Tuesday afternoon. Your gifts will be transported to the drop-in centre for homeless people in Muswell Hill

New Parents Meeting

All parents and carers of children who are new to the school are warmly invited to attend a short meeting at 9.15 am on Thursday 15th October. This will be a chance to hear about how you can best support your child's learning, how you can become involved in school life, and the work of the PSA. There will be an opportunity to ask questions and an opportunity to meet other new parents.

Leading Parents Partnership Award



Last year I reported that school has made a commitment to achieving the Leading Parent Partnership Award, which is an accreditation designed to strengthen the school's partnership with parents and carers. Central to the award is a commitment to develop effective communication between home and school, to facilitate more effective participation in children's learning, and to build confidence through participation in lifelong learning opportunities.

At the end of last term we received our interim report, which was very positive, and we look forward to continuing this work for the mutual benefit of our pupils

Playground Update

Our most recent pupil survey highlighted that the great majority of our children enjoy their playtime. Nevertheless the school is always looking to improve its provision and ensure that our play times are happy and exciting times for all children. To this end we have just appointed a large number of Year 6 playground buddies to work with our younger children. In addition our after-school football coach, Riaan, has just started leading lunchtime sports sessions in the junior playground on three days each week.

Dads in the playground

We have also discussed the idea of inviting dads to volunteer to help with organising, and refereeing sports matches during a lunch-time. If you feel that you have skills in this area and are prepared and able to support the occasional session, please speak to Anthony or William.

Black History Month



Black History Month is a time when we highlight and celebrate the achievements of the black community and uncover hidden history about our communities. It is indeed a time 'to recognise the splendid contributions made by black people throughout the centuries', and at Highgate Primary, to celebrate the richness and diversity of our school community.

This year the school will be celebrating Black History Month through special assemblies in school, class based activities and workshops. Already a number of parents have come in to lead activities with classes or groups of children including a talk to Year 5 about Kwame Nkrumah, Ghana's first black president, a presentation to Years 1 & 2 about black inventors and a quiz with Year 6 and Year 4 about Caribbean Creole proverbs.

Black History Month Celebration



The school is hosting a special African and Caribbean evening on Thursday 22nd October between 6.30 and 9.00pm.

There will be great music, delicious food, entertainment featuring traditional costumes and a raffle in aid of the Sickle Cell Foundation and to raise awareness of the need for Black Bone Marrow Donors.

If you can like to help with the organisation of the evening, make a donation for the raffle, or bring food for the buffet, please contact either:

Kim Slater (07950 334 111)
Claudine Campbell (07958 903484)
Lana Bennett (07962 365083), or
Shirley Moore (07814 926385)

Tickets are now on sale in the playground at the end of the school day.

PSA - Parent School Association

Please keep an eye out for the PSA newsletter, which will be circulated next week. It gives details of all forthcoming events, as well as information about how you can get involved with the PSA.

I'd like to give a special thank you to the PSA and everyone who supported last Friday's Year 1 cake sale, which raised the grand sum of £250.

Gardening Volunteers

We are very keen to maintain and develop our growing areas in the school grounds, both to provide a stimulating learning environment for our children and to give pupils experience of growing their own flowers, fruit and vegetables.

Work is needed in a several areas, particularly The Peace Garden. If you have expertise in this area or are willing to help out please speak to Laura Sanchez who works in Year 1. Your support will be greatly appreciated.

Website

Just to let you know that we are constantly updating the school website, which I think is very informative and a really useful way of keeping in touch with what is going at school. You'll even find the full colour version of this newsletter. You can visit it at: www.highgate-primary.org.uk

Very much looking forward to a rich and fulfilling autumn at Highgate Primary.

With best wishes

William Dean
Headteacher

Important dates for the Autumn Term

Year 4 Maths Meeting	Tuesday 13 th October 9.00 am
Harvest	Wednesday 14 th October 9.30 am
Black History Month celebration Lunch	Thursday 22 nd October
Black History Month Celebration event	Thursday 22 nd October 6.30 – 9.00 pm
Year 3 Cake Sale	Friday 23 rd October 3.30 pm
Half Term	w/c Monday 26 th October
3EH class assembly	Friday 6 th November 9.30 am
PSA Quiz Evening	Thursday 12 th November 7.30 pm
Year 6 Assembly	Friday 13 th November 9.30 am
Individual Photographs	Wednesday 18 th November
2RV class assembly	Friday 20 th November 9.30 am
Year 5 Cake Sale	Friday 20 th November 3.30 pm
5NL class assembly	Thursday 26 th November
Staff Training Day (School Closed)	Friday 27 th November
3LM Assembly	Thursday 3 rd December
Christmas Craft Fair	Saturday 4 th December
Christmas Performances	Wed 9 th December Thursday 10 th December
Term Ends	Friday 18 th December



Blanche Nevile Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

Kaos choir performance

Thank you to those who have sent back permission for their child to perform at an NSPCC event on Wednesday 14th October 2009 at the Royal Geographical Society in Kensington. There were only twenty places on this occasion, but there will be future performances involving all children in the choir. The NSPCC event is honouring a young deaf man who has volunteered with the charity for years, so we will be helping to celebrate his contribution.

The Big Draw

You will have received a letter earlier this week inviting you to come along to the Blanche Nevile Big Draw event next Friday 23rd October 2009. Activities will start at 11 am. The whole of Primary will be travelling to the secondary department to take part in fun drawing and art activities with the older children. Parent, carers and governors are warmly invited to come and join the fun. Please let us know if you would like to come, either by sending back the slip on the letter or telling us through the home/school book.



Eid celebration

We invited some children from each Highgate Primary inclusion class to our Eid celebration last week. Everyone had a go at all the activities in groups, which included dancing, Mendhi patterns, making Eid cards and sweets! Experiences like this are invaluable in helping our children to develop their understanding of the world and for developing relationships between hearing and deaf pupils – and we all had fun!

BSL classes

We are delighted that many parents and carers have joined or continued BSL classes this term. Thank you to those of you who are waiting for the level 2 class, which we will start in January.

Best wishes,

Sarah McLay
Deputy Head Teacher, Primary Leader