



Headteachers Newsletter

September 2008

Dear Parents and carers

The children have enjoyed a very successful first week back at school and I have been overwhelmed by the warm welcome I have received. My first impression is that Highgate is a very happy school, with fabulous children and a very talented and hardworking staff. As I said in my recent letter, I am looking forward to meeting you all and building on the undoubted strengths of the school.



Welcome

I introduced myself to parents at the PSA meeting last term, but for those of you who were unable to attend, I thought it might be useful just to tell you a little bit about myself and my background.

I came into teaching in my late 20s, starting at Osidge School in Southgate where I was a class teacher for seven very happy years. From there I moved to Rhodes Avenue School in Muswell Hill. During my seven years as Deputy Head I was very much involved in the leadership of the school; however I continued to have a significant teaching commitment. It was during this time that I took my Headteachers' qualification, and I was delighted to be appointed Head of Highgate Primary in February.

I am committed to the local area, having lived in North London for most of my life, and now live in Muswell Hill with my wife Denise and my two girls, who both attend Haringey schools. Besides teaching, my passion has very much been sport, especially cricket, but these days gardening and dogs come a close second.

I feel that I have arrived at Highgate at a particularly exciting time and I am already hearing ideas on how to make this excellent school even better. I believe strongly in the importance of listening to the views of all sections of the school community including children, parents and

staff, and I will be working with the Governing Body on ways in which views can be sought. I will be starting this process next week when class representatives will be chosen for School Council, which I will be leading. Having been interviewed by the children in February, I am aware of its importance to our pupils.

Parent Consultation Meetings

The schedule for parent consultation meetings will be slightly different this year. The first formal opportunity to meet your child's teachers will be at the class meetings which are taking place this week and next.

This will be followed by the first set of parent consultation meetings, which will be slightly earlier in the year (7th and 8th October). This meeting will give parents an opportunity to discuss how children have settled in the new school year and to hear about their achievements to date. The second set of consultation meetings, to discuss academic progress, will be held in the middle of the year (11th and 12th February).

Parents will receive end-of-year reports at the beginning of July, using the report format that was successfully introduced last year. This will be followed by an end-of-year Open Evening, giving the opportunity for children to share their work and achievements with their parents and carers.

Further details and consultation slips will go out two weeks prior to the meetings.

Bugsy Malone



I would like to give a special thank you to Ruth, Elissa and everyone who was part of the team that produced the stunning Year 6 leavers' performance of Bugsy Malone.

Many congratulations to the children who, I hear, were professional in rehearsal and showed what a talented year group they are.

We now wish the best of luck to all our leavers who are now settled into their new secondary schools.

Resources for Foundation Stage

Sharon, our Foundation Stage Leader, has asked parents to consider donating any unwanted toys, games or dressing-up clothes to the Nursery or Reception classes. If you have anything that you no longer need that might be useful, please speak to one of the members of staff in the Foundation Stage.

Helping in Schools

The school is once again organising the popular 'Helping in Schools' course. Training will take place in the Family Centre on Tuesdays and runs for eleven weeks this term. The course gives parents an overview of the way a primary school works, how children learn and the role of the classroom helper. If you are interested in attending, please speak to Kim Slater or collect a form from the school office.



Our new hall

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Anthony is currently completing the timetable of extra-curricular clubs which will be sent out next week. In the meantime course leaders will be sending out information about their clubs to the relevant classes.

Attendance and Punctuality

In my first assembly I talked to the school about the importance of turning up, turning up on time and turning up prepared. An initial look at our attendance figures shows that there is definitely room for improvement in this area and I ask that parents support their children in this matter.

I actively discourage parents from arranging holidays during term time, but understand that, in exceptional circumstances, this can be unavoidable. If this is the case please complete an absence request form requesting authorisation from the headteacher.

This year I will be regularly celebrating outstanding attendance and punctuality in our 'Shining Stars' assemblies.

Term Dates

Half Term Week	Mon 27 th Oct – Fri 31 st Oct
Second Half Autumn Term	Mon 3 rd Nov – Fri 19 th Dec
First Half Spring Term	Tue 6 th Jan – Fri 13 th Feb
Half Term Week	Mon 16 th Feb – Fri 20 th Feb
Second Half Spring Term	Mon 23 rd Feb – Fri 3 rd April
First Half Summer term	Mon 20 th April – Fri 22 nd May
Half Term Week	Mon 25 th May – Fri 29 th May
Training Day	Mon 1 st June
Second Half Summer Term	Tue 2 nd June – Fri 17 th July

Playground Equipment

Just to remind all parents that children are not allowed to play on the playground equipment either before or after school. I thank you for your support on this matter.

Sport in School

I am very pleased to inform you that the Highgate Primary School football team has been entered for the Haringey Football League. Our teaching assistant Stuart will be managing the team, and organising training sessions. All children in Year 6 who are interested in playing for the school team are welcome to attend training sessions, details of which will follow in a separate letter. Other talented footballers in Year 5 may be invited to join these sessions.

Matches will be starting in October and will take place on Tuesdays at Highgate Wood School, kicking off at around 4.00 pm. Further details will follow and parents are of course welcome to support.

Parent School Association – PSA

The PSA had its first meeting of the year on Friday, which I attended. It was a very positive meeting in which we discussed the types of events that might be held during the year. Details of these will be circulated in due course.

I very much invite you to support these events as they can be great fun and provide an excellent opportunity to get to know other parents, whilst at the same time raising money for the school.

We also discussed how money raised might be spent. I feel strongly that PSA money should be used to enhance and enrich the school curriculum and the children's learning experiences. This might be through music or drama workshops, visiting authors or theatre companies, or sessions led by specialist sports coaches. Other excellent suggestions included the creation of an art gallery in the

lower corridors and the opportunity for children to grow plants in the school grounds.

The PSA meets every Friday mornings at 9.00 am in the Family Centre. Parents and carers are automatically member of the PSA, and we invite you to come along to meetings. The PSA are always looking for new and innovative suggestions to raise money to support the children's education.

Meeting for New parents

I invite all parents who are new to the school to a meeting to be held in the Family Centre on Friday 3rd October. This will be an opportunity to hear about the school, its Governing Body and the PSA, as well as providing an opportunity to meet other parents who are new to the school. The meeting starts at 9.00 am.

Pupil Medication

If your child requires medication such as an asthma pump or an EpiPen, please ensure that the school has been informed and that you bring updated, labelled medication to our Welfare Assistant Alena.

5LB Inspire Event

On the afternoon of 23rd October, 5LB will be trialling what I hope will be the first of a number of 'Inspire' events at school. Each child in the class asks an adult, who is special to them in to school to help them with an exciting piece of work. linking in with Black History Month. The adult and child pairs then work together on a practical task, which this time will link in to Black History Month with a Caribbean theme.

The scheme has been very successful in other schools throughout the country and we think it will be an excellent way for parents, carers, friends or relatives to get an insight into their children's school life.

Further details will be given to parents and carers of children in 5LB. I look forward to reporting back how the afternoon goes.

PE Kits and Kit Bags

All children in KS2 must bring a PE kit to school (shorts and a change of T shirt) every week. We have lovely red PE kit bags available for you to buy for £4, and would encourage all children in KS2 to have a PE kit bag. Children in Y1 and Y2 may buy a PE kit bag and bring a change of clothing should they wish to do so.

Book Bags and KS2 Homework Diaries

Every child is expected to have a book bag to be brought to and from school every day. If you need a new one, they are available from the office for £4. Children in KS2 will

have received their new homework diaries. The first one is a gift and replacement diaries will cost £4, available from the office.

School Lunches

Dinner money must be paid in advance, at the start of each week in the morning. Half-termly paid lunches must be paid for at the beginning of the term. If you are unable to come to the office, please send money in a sealed envelope to your child's teacher (with your child's name and class clearly marked). If your child wishes to change from packed lunch to school dinners, or vice-versa, please be aware that the school office requires one week's notice. This terms lunch prices are as follows:

Weekly @ £2 per day	£10.00
First half of term	£76.00
Second half of term	£70.00
Autumn Term	£146.00

Dates for your Diary

On the back of this newsletter you will find a list of important dates. Please put the dates that are relevant to you in your diary, or post the newsletter on the fridge!

As you can see, plans are well underway for a full and productive year at Highgate. I look forward to working with you this year for the benefit of our pupils.

Kind regards

William Dean
Headteacher



Blanche Nevile Primary Newsletter

Sarah McLay

Welcome back!

It is lovely to see the children back after the Summer holidays refreshed and excited about their new year! All of the children have settled very quickly and are getting to know their new teachers and support staff.

Staffing update

We are very pleased to welcome Nicola Deverson, who has joined us as our Foundation Stage Teacher, covering Chloe's maternity leave. Chloe has now started her maternity leave and we wish her well.

Permission slips and Contact telephone numbers

We will send out a letter this week asking for your permission to take your child on short trips and for contact telephone numbers. Please fill in and return as soon as possible.

Please ensure that the school has up to date contact telephone numbers and a separate emergency contact name and number in case we cannot reach you. If you change your mobile telephone number, please let us know immediately so we can get in touch if we need to.

Dates

Please see the list of dates for your diary – they are the same for both schools. If you would like to meet your child's teacher before the earlier parent consultations meetings, please get in touch to organise an appointment.

BSL classes for parents

We have had to postpone our BSL classes for parents this term, as Emma has fractured a bone in her foot. She should be back for October and I will send out a letter before then confirming a start date. We will be offering BSL classes on Mondays for all parents from Blanche Nevile and Highgate Primary, so if you are interested, please watch out for the letter!

Best wishes,