



6<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023

# High Firs Primary School

# NEWSLETTER

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Visit our school website at [www.high-firs.kent.sch.uk](http://www.high-firs.kent.sch.uk)

## Message from Mr Kilbride

It was a delight to show some of our existing parents around school this week to offer an insight into the way we teach reading across the school. We have done a huge amount of development work with reading over the past couple of years and our attainment by the end of KS2 as the children leave us has reflected this very positively, as shown by the % of pupils reaching the expected standard in their SATs over the past four tested years in the table below:

	High Firs	National average
2018	66%	75%
2019	60%	73%
2022	70%	75%
2023	86%	73%

We have introduced Little Wandle to teach our phonics lessons daily to Reception, Year 1 and the early part of Year 2. Little Wandle catch-up sessions also support children in KS2 who still need to embed their phonics knowledge. We ensure that YR/Y1/Y2 have three days a week where they have 20-30mins of group reading. In this model, the class are divided into 5 reading ability groups – each is led by an adult and the children read a decodable text consistent with their level of phonics understanding. This book then goes home with the children for the remainder of the week, so they are reading fluently a familiar text at home with their parents.

In KS2 we do 2-3 time- a-week close reading sessions, where children are given short extracts of text that are read several times over the 30 min session. New vocabulary is defined for them by the teacher, then the class work together on understanding the context around the meaning of the text, preparing the children to answer one or two inference and explaining questions by the end of the lesson. Children also do a longer comprehension session once a week as well as engaging in a class novel for the term.

Accelerated Reader is also used throughout KS2 to guide children towards choosing reading material from the library that is at the appropriate level of readability for them. They take quizzes at the end of reading the book and this leads to an ongoing word count total for the class, enabling classes to compete to see who is reading the most across the school.

This balanced approach of taught reading experiences that offer a lot of opportunity for the children to get on and actually READ has had a great impact here at High Firs. We collected some lovely comments from parents who came to look round – please see below – and watch this space for news of further such events in the Spring and Summer terms.

## In our classes this week

Reception – explored the outdoors with a magnifying glass.

Year 1 – found out about hot and cold countries.

Year 2 – wrote posters to advertise a job on a pirate ship.

Year 3 – learned about fossilisation.

Year 4 – learned about Tudor homes.

Year 5 – investigated water resistance.

Year 6 – wrote openings to stories set during the Blitz.

THIS WEEK'S  
LEARNING



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**FREE FOOTBALL TICKETS**

**CHARLTON ATHLETIC WOMEN VS CRYSTAL PALACE F.C. WOMEN**

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 22<sup>ND</sup>**  
**KICK-OFF 2PM**  
**AT THE VALLEY STADIUM SE7 8BL**  
**GATES OPEN 12.30PM**

**FAMILY FRIENDLY** ✓  
**FOOD & DRINK** ✓  
**FACE PAINTS & MASCOTS** ✓

**SCAN HERE FOR YOUR FREE TICKETS**

### Parents Consultations

We are looking forward to welcoming parents into school next week for consultation meetings with your child's teacher. The consultation meeting will offer the chance to discuss your child's progress and well-being, as well as to raise any concerns you may have and for teachers to let you know about your child's future targets. You will also be provided with any recent assessment data for your child and will have the opportunity for some time prior to your meeting to view your child's books. Please note –

- Arrive 10 minutes prior to your appointment so you can view your child's books before your consultation.
- Enter and exit the school through the main entrance door only.
- Appointments are limited to 10 minutes.

This year parents of Y3-6 pupils will receive a data sheet containing their child's Verbal reasoning (VR) and Non-verbal Reasoning (NVR) scores from recent tests. Teachers will also communicate verbally to parents their child's reading age and spelling screening test scores – both measures we are now obtaining from new tests that are managed by teachers rather than coming centrally through the data sheet. YR, Y1 and Y2 parents will have information relating to children's attainment and progress communicated verbally by their teachers.

### Special Mentions

Well done to all of our children who received a Special Mention and certificate from their teacher in assembly today –

- Lola F – perseverance with her name writing
- Esme B – showing a great understanding when sorting objects by size.
- Nicole M – working really hard at her reading.
- George S – excellent progress in reading.
- Jake B – always being his best.
- Courtney B – trying hard to improve her writing.
- Millie B – working hard on her spellings every week.
- Luca C – remaining focussed in lessons and working hard.
- Lottie A – working really hard in Maths.
- Mariana S – her clear explanations in Science.
- Thomas H – an amazing Tudor apple pie!
- Grace F – great explanations in Maths.
- Fraser D – contributing his ideas in all lessons.
- Belle Z – fantastic opening to a Blitz story.
- Mabel R – an excellent fact-file about evacuation.
- Ella V – an excellent fact-file about evacuation.



### Register Rabbit

Congratulations to this week's Key Stage winners of Register Rabbit for their excellent attendance:

**YEAR R**

**YEAR 6**

Our class totals were:

**Year 6 – 100%**

**Year 5 – 97.4%**

**Year 4 – 98.5%**

**Rec – 97%**

**Year 1- 94.4%**

**Year 2 – 93.3%**

**Year 3 – 92%**



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## Friends of High Firs Primary School Association

Supporting Our Children's Education

Registered Charity No. 1137633

**A FANTASTIC OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE CHRISTMAS / WINTER CARDS DESIGNED BY YOUR CHILD – AND RAISE FUNDS FOR FHF AT THE SAME TIME!**

In the week ahead, your child will be bringing home their own Christmas / Winter card which they have designed in school. If you would like to purchase cards made from this design they cost £6.00 per 12 cards; £1.00 of which will be donated to FHF. To place your order, please complete the form on the reverse of the proof and return to school with payment (cash or cheque to "Friends of High Firs") by **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October**. *Please return the proof in the plastic wallet provided to ensure it does not become damaged; please do not fold the proof. Please place payment in a separate sealed envelope inside the wallet – we can not accept payments by SchoolMoney.*



### HOUSE POINTS

	This Week	Term Total	Top Scorers this week
BEECH	133	367	Freya B, Jessica B, Jonas C, Joshua C, Korlekie A
CHESTNUT	136	348	Joel C, Isabelle Z
OAK	125	336	Charlie F, Elijah B
ASH	139	374	Drew D, Emanuela M

#Stay Safe  
Get Active

Got to drive?

Park and stride!

Sign up to join us at -  
<https://high-firs.kent.sch.uk/park-stride/>

No Parking

Think before you stop.  
Choose a safe spot...

... and please show consideration to our neighbours.



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**INSET DAYS**  
**No children in school**  
Friday 1<sup>st</sup> Sept 2023  
Mon 30<sup>th</sup> Oct 2023  
Tues 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2024  
Fri 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024  
1 more date TBC

**Coming up next week...**

**Some clubs are cancelled next week due to Parents Consultations – the clubs listed below WILL NOT run. Other clubs will take place as normal. Locations for FOOSC After School Club for Mon/Tues/Weds are also shown below.**

Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October  
Parents Consultations – by appointment  
Clubs cancelled today: Story / Choir  
FOOSC After School Club in Year 1 today

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October  
Parents Consultations – by appointment  
FHF Sponsored Bounce  
Clubs cancelled today: Speed Stacking / Netball / Multiskills  
FOOSC After School Club in Year 2 today

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> October  
Parents Consultations – by appointment  
FOOSC After School Club in Year 4 today

Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> October  
10.10am – Year 5 Class Assembly  
10.40am – Years 5 & 6 Parents Maths Workshop

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October  
pm – Years 5 & 6 School Council representatives at Swanley Council  
3.30pm – Football Match vs Horton Kirby (away)  
Club cancelled today: Football

# MATHS WORKSHOPS FOR PARENTS

*Great opportunity for parents to learn about the types of mathematics that their children are learning in the classroom, activities that can be used at home, and strategies to help them with their homework!*

**JOIN US ON**

**Years 5&6 - 12th October at 10.40am**

**Years 3&4 - 9th November at 10.40am**

**Years 1&2 - 23rd November at 10.40am**

**There is no need to book - just come along.  
Please note there are no tours included!**



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## Reading Open Morning

Thank you to everyone who attended our Reading Open Morning on Thursday. Parents joined Mr Kilbride for a brief information session first, before enjoying a walk around the school to see our classes reading in action – with tours lead by our fantastic Year 6 guides. Below are some of the lovely comments we received from those attending. There will be future Open Mornings for maths and writing so we look forward to welcoming you then.

Very informative and lovely to be able to see the reading in action.

Very useful to understand better what children do at school.

Informative and interesting to see.

Lovely tour around the school by [Year 6 child]. Very knowledgeable about all the different years. Thank you!

This was very helpful and informative. It was also a good opportunity to see the recent building changes which I think is a great use for the space.

Very useful to understand in more detail how the reading progresses between KS1 and KS2. My Yr6 guide was also very helpful and informative. Overall really enjoyed the morning and would love to come to others for maths and writing in the future.

This was an excellent insight into the way that reading is taught at our school and was really worthwhile attending for me as a parent. It was so interesting to see the progress that children make through the years at the school and has given me some inspiration as a parent on how I can help [my child] progress with his reading. I must say a huge thank you to [Yr6 child] who showed us around the school and was very good at answering all our questions. Please continue these sessions.

I think it is a really great idea. Thank you for your time and to give us the opportunity to understand what you are doing in regards to reading for the children. It was lovely to see [my child] getting involved in Reception while doing phonics. Thank you to [child in Yr6] - he was very polite, intelligent and explained all the different lessons going on.

Really informative session. Staff approachable and helpful in explaining the reading scheme and approach. Feel more confident in the scheme and the way it is delivered (and how to support the process). The Yr6 children behaved impeccably. Polite and helpful. They are wonderful ambassadors for the school.

Really enjoyed hearing what improvements are being put in place to support the learning of the children. Nice to see the classes and lessons in progress as this is something you don't get to see as a parent. Thank you.

It was interesting to have the learning explained with what the school do and aim to do. To then see it in place in the classrooms being carried out described explained and understood was great. All children were content and had the opportunity to have their voice heard. It was a lovely environment



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**Friends of High Firs Primary School Association**  
**Supporting Our Children's Education**  
**Registered Charity No. 1137633**

**Exclusive Ice Skating at Ruxley Manor**  
**Tuesday 28th November 2023**



The Friends of High Firs have reserved an exclusive session from 6-7pm at Ruxley Manor Garden Centre's ice skating rink on Tuesday 28th November 2023 for use by all families and friends of High Firs School.

Tickets for this event will be £5 per person and are limited so will be sold on a first come, first served basis. All skate aids will be available at no extra cost. If you would like to come along to this enjoyable evening, please fill in the form below and return it in an envelope marked for the attention of The Friends of High Firs with your payment as soon as possible. Tickets have sold out extremely quickly in previous years.

Deadline for tickets will be Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> October 2023. Please note that all children will need adult supervision.

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**Ruxley Manor Ice Skating – Tuesday 28th November 2023**

Child's Name: ..... Year: .....

Number of Tickets: Under 3 ..... 3yrs – 11yrs ..... 12+ .....

Amount: £.....



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