

Friday, 11th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

End of Term Confirmation

I'd like to start this week's newsletter by clarifying a few things regarding the end of term and the Christmas break. You may well have heard about schools being given flexibility to move a training day to the end of next week, effectively ending the term a day early for pupils. We already have our training days planned and booked so we will **not** be doing this; this means that the last day of term for pupils will stay as **Friday, 18th December**.

Covid-19 Update: Contacting the School over the Christmas Break

Current guidance states that if someone tests positive for the virus, those who were in close contact with them 48 hours before the symptoms emerge may be required to self-isolate. With this in mind, schools are being asked to continue to support the 'track and trace' system for the first **six days** of the holidays. This is because pupils or staff members who develop symptoms up to Sunday, 20th December could still have had close contact with others in school within those 48 hours. An additional challenge is that while symptoms may develop two days after school has broken up, in some cases it could take people a few additional days to book a test and receive test results.

Parents and carers should make contact with the school if their child develops Covid-19 symptoms **up to and including Christmas Eve**. The result of any tests should be forwarded to the school as soon as possible. In the event of a positive test outcome, the school will inform both Public Health and the Local Authority; a decision will then be made on which other families need to be contacted.

While this seems quite serious at what should be a happy time of the year, we know that the virus is not going away any time soon and we all have a continued duty to act responsibly. Should you need to contact the school to report a suspected or confirmed case during the holidays, please email me at head.halebank@halton.gov.uk. I plan to log into my emails at 9.00 am each morning but I will be crossing my fingers and hoping that I don't hear from any of you between 19th and 24th December!



Christmas Bears For Sale

In much brighter news, I am delighted to inform you that we will be selling Christmas Bears to support Halton Haven Hospice. The bears can be bought for **£1.50** and money should be sent into school in a sealed envelope with your child's name and class written on the front. We usually ask our Year 6 pupils to visit each class when they are selling the Christmas 'beanies' but this year we will split our allocation between the three bubbles to keep the bears separate. Bears will be sold on a first come, first served basis; only one bear per child, please. Thank you for supporting the hospice.



Personal Development Goals

This week's personal development strength is **honesty**. We have considered the importance of being true to ourselves and understanding the complexities of 'truth'. Sometimes it can be hard to see other people's points of view; we need to bear in mind that when we have a problem involving someone else, we should try to look at things from their perspective. You could help your child understand the value of honesty by praising him/her for telling the truth, even when owning up is difficult! Well done to the following children who have demonstrated their ability to be honest and truthful:



STARS OF THE WEEK



Reception	Emelia: for always telling the truth and understanding the importance of honesty
Year 1	Jack: for being honest and reliable
Year 2	Lottie: for being a trustworthy member of Class 2
Year 3	Lexi: for being a kind and honest member of Class 3
Year 4	Sophia: for being a polite and honest member of Class 3
Year 5	Oliver: for being an honest and trustworthy member of Class 4
Year 6	Jessica: for being an honest and trustworthy member of Class 4

Free School Meal (FSM) Vouchers

The Government has announced a new winter support scheme, designed to directly help families and individuals who have been hit hardest by the pandemic. The majority of the funding is set aside to ensure children are fed through the winter. The grant has been provided to Halton Borough Council to distribute to families who need it most. In discussion with schools and partners, the Council has agreed to use the funding to provide all families with children eligible for benefit-related Free School Meals (FSM) with supermarket food vouchers over the Christmas holiday period.

The vouchers cover the period of two weeks from Monday, 21st December 2020 to 4th January 2021 and will be £15 per week per child. The vouchers provided can be used in Asda, Morrisons, Aldi, Tesco, Sainsbury's, Iceland, Waitrose or McColl's. They should only be used to buy food and other essential items. To enable the vouchers to be sent out electronically, the Council has appointed a third-party provider, Wonde, to distribute them, and the school has been asked to provide your contact details so that vouchers can be sent to you via email.

The school will provide the following information to Wonde: parents' first and last names, email addresses and phone numbers. If you have changed your mobile phone number or email address, please contact the school office. If your details are not correct, the vouchers may not reach you in time for Christmas.



READING CHAMPIONS



Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Oscar	Marley	Coltyn	Lydia

Christmas at Home: Week Three



Week Three's *Christmas at Home* resources, which are attached to the newsletter, are based on the theme of *joy*. The reading tells the story of Mary and Joseph arriving in Bethlehem and an angel appearing to the shepherds. This week's activities include baking, a sheep mask and paper snowflakes. Once again, we have shared photos of children completing last week's activities. I would love to hear from you if you do have a go this weekend. Please send your images to me at head.halebank@halton.gov.uk. Thank you.

Christmas Events

In the final week of term, a number of Christmas-themed events are taking place in school:

- 🎄 On **Tuesday** (15th), the children will have the opportunity to enjoy a school **Christmas dinner**.
- 🎄 On **Thursday** (17th), all children are asked to come into school in their special clothes for our **Christmas Party**. Staff will organise an afternoon of festive fun for each bubble.
- 🎄 This year's virtual **Christmas 'Performance'** will be available for you to watch next week; a broadcast date and time will be sent to you once Andrew has finished editing it and uploading it onto our YouTube channel.
- 🎄 The school will close for the Christmas break at the usual time on **Friday** (18th).



After School Clubs

The final club sessions for the term will take place next week and we will review after school provision over the Christmas break. Spring term clubs will begin during the week beginning **11th January 2021**. A letter will be sent out to you on the first day of the new term with further information.

Mrs Watkin

Mrs Lena Watkin, who has served the children of Halebank for over **thirty-five years** in the school kitchen, has decided to hang up her apron for the last time on 18th December. Mrs Watkin doesn't want a fuss as she retires from the job she has loved doing for so many years; given the current restrictions we won't be able to say goodbye in the way we would do usually. Nevertheless, we will be marking Mrs Watkin's time at the school by presenting her with a few gifts from the school community on her final day with us. If you would like to make a contribution to the collection, please speak to either Mrs Fenlon or Mrs Boon in the school office.

Have a great weekend and stay safe ☺

Yours sincerely

Richard Harley

Mr R Harley

Headteacher