

Friday, 18th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank You

As we reach the end of the autumn term, I would like to say a huge thank you to you all for your continued support. It has been another challenging and unusual period of time for everyone and I know that for those families affected by self-isolation and Covid testing, this has been uncertain and unsettling. Nevertheless, I think we have all done remarkably well in adjusting to this new way of working together and I hope that the routines we have all got back into have helped restore some sense of normality. I think there is a great deal to be proud of in what we have achieved as a school community.

My heartfelt thanks go out to our super staff team who have worked tirelessly to keep the school experience as close to 'normal' as possible for the children. Speaking of which, I have to commend the children for staying positive and just getting on with things; they have been so understanding and accepting of the changes we have needed to make in school, and they have continued to support us in keeping our bubbles separate. Well done to us all!

Christmas Celebrations

In other good news, there were a few tears shed this week (happy tears, though!) as the staff enjoyed two very special videos. The first was our 'Christmas Extravaganza' compilation that I hope you have managed to see (the YouTube link was emailed to you on Wednesday). Despite not being able to perform together, I thought the children's songs, poems and readings were a great way to lift our spirits. The classes really enjoyed watching themselves yesterday afternoon and I know from your comments and emails that you enjoyed the performances, too.



The staff's second treat this week was a collection of all of your thank you messages; these were presented in video format at our staff meeting last night. We were all overwhelmed with the work that you and the children had put into this 'top secret' task and your efforts provided the staff team with a massive boost at the end of a long and tiring term. Thanks again to those of you who took the time to do this with your children; we very much appreciate your kind words and thoughtful messages (not to mention the fantastic art work). Another brilliant team effort!

After School Clubs

After school clubs will resume during the week beginning **11th January 2021**. The clubs on offer will be basketball/netball for Y5/6 (Monday), multi skills for Y3/4 (Wednesday) and dance for Reception and Y1/2 (Friday). If your child would like to take part, please look out for the club letter that will be sent out on the first day of term in January.



Personal Development Goals

This week's personal development strength is **ambition**. We have encouraged the children to *dream big* and *aim high* in what they hope to achieve in life. We have also thought about the small steps we need to take as we work towards realising our dreams and the importance of working with others as team players. Perhaps you could talk at home about what your dreams were when you were a child and how your ideas changed over time. Well done to the following children who have shown a commitment to achieving their potential:



STARS OF THE WEEK



Reception	Roman: for always trying his best
Year 1	Robin: for being a determined member of the class who always works hard to achieve her best
Year 2	Layton: for working hard and always trying his best
Year 3	Scarlett: for always trying her best
Year 4	Sophia: for always aiming high
Year 5	Daisy: for aiming high and being a star
Year 6	Chloe: for aiming high and trying hard

Covid-19 Update

Schools have received new guidance from Public Health and Halton Borough Council and I have been asked to share this with you.

Self-Isolation: Positive Test Cases

Should you or a family member be required to self-isolate, the period includes the day your symptoms started (or the day your test was taken if you do not have symptoms), and the next 10 full days. This means that if, for example, your symptoms started at any time on the 15th of the month (or if you did not have symptoms but your first positive Covid-19 test was taken on the 15th), your isolation period ends at 23:59 hrs on the 25th.

Self-Isolation: Household Contacts of Cases

The isolation period includes the day the first person in your household's symptoms started (or the day their test was taken if they did not have symptoms), and the next 10 full days. This means that if, for example, your 10 day isolation period starts on the 15th of the month, your isolation period ends at 23:59 hrs on the 25th and you can return to your normal routine.

Arrangements over Christmas

Schools have been asked to be available to take notifications of positive cases and undertake contact tracing for six days after closure. For our school, this will include 24th December. Parents and carers should report positive cases to school during this period by emailing me at head.halebanks@halton.gov.uk. Should your child test positive after this time, please still send an email so that school can make the appropriate arrangements for home learning should this be required for the start of the new term.

Online Help and Booking a Test

For additional information or advice about coronavirus, please refer to:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

Call 111 for advice if you cannot get help online, or 119 if you need to book a test.

Reminders for Next Term

As the current term has worn on, the staff have noticed some parents not sticking to their allotted times as part of the staggered start and end to the school day. In order to avoid congestion at these very busy times, we ask that **only one adult** comes to collect the children and this takes place at the times set out below, unless you have made alternative arrangements with the school. We expect these arrangements to remain in place throughout the spring term.

Please also remember to wear a face covering when entering/moving around the school site and avoid stepping within 2 metres of the classroom doors. Thank you for your cooperation in these matters.

Groups	Pupils	Drop Off	Pick Up
Group 1	Pupils with surnames A-J	8.40 – 8.50 am	2.55 – 3.05 pm
Group 2	Pupils with surnames K-Y	8.50 – 9.00 am	3.05 – 3.15 pm



Christmas at Home: Week Four

Week Four's *Christmas at Home* resources, which are attached to the newsletter, are based on the theme of *faith*. The reading tells the story of Jesus' birth and the three wise men. This week's activities include seed planting, salt dough tree decorations and baby Jesus pebbles! I hope these activities have given you some opportunities to spend time with your children at home. Keep your photos coming as it's always good to see how you're getting on.



READING CHAMPIONS



Class 1	Class 2	Class 3	Class 4
Clara	Sofia	Elsie-May	Alfie

Mrs Watkin

Today, we say a fond farewell to Mrs Lena Watkin, who has served the children of Halebank for over **thirty-five years** in the school kitchen. We presented Mrs Watkin with cards, flowers, chocolates and gift vouchers from the staff, governors and parents. Our presentation also included pupils from Class 4 who shared their special memories of Mrs Watkin and also a visit from Carol Foster, Halton's School Meals Assistant Manager. We wish Mrs Watkin a long and happy retirement.

Start of the New School Term

After the Christmas break, the staff will be completing a training day on Monday, 4th January. School will re-open on **Tuesday, 5th January** and I look forward to seeing you all again next year.

In the meantime, have a safe and relaxing Christmas. I hope the coming year is a more settled one for us all and I wish you and your loved ones all the very best for 2021.

Yours sincerely

Richard Harley

Mr R Harley
Headteacher