

Highfield Primary School January 2019 Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope you have all enjoyed a lovely Christmas holiday and enjoyed spending time with your family and friends. The children have all come back to school looking very smart, refreshed and ready to learn.

We have set our five training days for the next academic year 2019—2020. They are: Monday 2nd September 2019, Friday 25th October 2019, Monday 4th November 2019, Friday 14th February 2020 and Monday 20th July 2020. Our remaining training days this year are: Friday 15th February 2019, Monday 22nd July, Tuesday 23rd July and Wednesday 24th July.

Attendance in school is very good and remains over 97%. I am pleased that so many of you do not take your child out of school in term time and support our attendance policy. Children who have no serious medical issues and whose attendance remains persistently below 90% are classed as persistent absentees and may face legal proceedings. Mrs Calvert, our learning mentor, will contact you if your child's attendance falls below 90%. Please remember that as part of DfE rules and policy, I cannot authorise holidays in term time. This includes travelling overseas to visit sick relatives. So many of us have families who live in different towns, cities or countries and continents (including me of course!) and so visiting families is not classed as an exceptional circumstance. Many parents who have to travel overseas tag a day or two to an existing school holiday. This avoids a penalty notice fine and is less disruptive than taking your child out of school for a full week in term time. Please can you also try, if possible, to arrange dental appointments after school. If you have to contact the office to inform them of another parent taking your child home at the end of the day, please can you give the ladies as much notice as possible, preferably before lunchtime so that they can inform the class teacher via the registers.

I have been invited to join a group of 20 head teachers from successful English schools to meet with the National Director of Education for Ofsted, Sean Harford. The consultation meeting is in London and will be an excellent opportunity to discuss how Ofsted should be inspecting primary curricula and, in particular, the Arts. I will certainly be letting him know how much Highfield parents value our broad curriculum and the opportunities we provide for the children.

At this time of year we always have to be prepared for snow and ice. The governors regularly discuss whether or not to close the Shadwell and Belvedere entrances when it is snowy and icy. They have agreed that this could cause more danger by forcing all parents, children and vehicles to the Sandringham Green entrance. Sandringham Green is not always gritted by the council. It has therefore been decided to keep the Shadwell and Belvedere paths open, to be used by parents at their own discretion as school can only realistically clear and grit paths from the playground gates to the school building. We always endeavour to keep school open when it snows. If I do have to make the decision to close the school for safety reasons, a message will be posted on the front page of the school website as well as the Leeds City Council website. You will also receive a parent mail from the school office. Last year we had one day when we delayed the start time of the school day which allowed all staff to safely travel to work.

Mrs Fritz will be returning to school following her maternity leave on March 27th. She will be able to meet all her class parents with Mrs Woodward at the parent consultation evenings that week. Mr Singh, our new school business manager, has now started work and may be contacted on want.singh@highfield.leeds.sch.uk.

We are recruiting a new lunchtime supervisor to start work from March. Please contact the school office if you wish to apply for the position.

This term, the children will be working with a sculptor called Charis Jones who will be creating a beautiful steel sculpture to celebrate our 60th birthday. The sculpture will be unveiled on May 24th at our Diamond Tea Party afternoon. We are raising funds for the sculpture through Bun Days, school photographs and DVD commissions and concert collections. If you wish to make a donation towards the sculpture please contact the school office.

Please continue to check the school website for information, blogs, newsletters, policies and other useful information. All the other dates for the term, including trips and parents evenings are on the school website school calendar page and the assembly page.

Best wishes

Julie Colley