



# HOW WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

ESTABLISHED 1968

Head Teacher: Mrs C Rowe  
Newsletter 1



17<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents & Carers,

***'You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.'***

*Maya Angelou*  
(American poet, memoirist, and civil rights activist)



Welcome back! I would like to extend a big welcome to all the children joining Nursery & Reception class and to new families joining in other year groups – a special and warm hello to you all.

It is wonderful to be 'back to normal' and the first two-weeks of term have been very positive indeed. The staff are thrilled to be with their new classes and the children are excited and eager to learn. This newsletter is full of important information so please take time to read it so nothing is missed!

### **New staff**

We welcome Mrs Dawes, who is teaching Nursery on Mondays and Spanish in Key Stage 2 & Mrs Bruce who is the afternoon Teaching Assistant in Year 1 & Midday Supervisor.

### **Healthy Lifestyles**



I was thrilled to be asked to take on the curriculum lead for Healthy Lifestyles at How Wood School and I have kicked it off today with an Assembly about **'Start the Day the Right Way.'**

We discussed breakfast being an important meal and looked at a variety of different cereals and breakfast items the children eat daily.

I then showed the children how much sugar there was in some popular breakfast cereals – which was quite an eye opener for us all! The children were shown the app **Change for Life – Food Scanner** which I highly recommend. Please download and a play around, scanning different items!



In the coming weeks I will be looking at all aspects of Healthy Lifestyles in How Wood school, from school dinners and packed lunches to break-time snacks and after school clubs. If you have any ideas you wish to put forward then please do email [admin@howwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:admin@howwood.herts.sch.uk) – Mrs Reed – Healthy Lifestyle

## **Black History Month**

Since spring 2020, the staff and I have been working on our curriculum. Our aim is to ensure that we offer an inclusive, culturally rich curriculum to our children that recognises the positive contributions of Black & Asian people in the UK and beyond and represents minority groups. This is a work in progress – history and geography are now melded to create Topic and this term the teachers are revising art, music and design & technology curriculums to this end.

At How Wood School, Black History is an integral part of our curriculum and not a stand-alone subject taught only through the month of October. During Black History Month this year, we aim to enrich our children's cultural learning in the following ways:

- Take part in National Poetry Day
- Celebrate Harvest Festival
- Welcoming the Electric Umbrella Orchestra who will perform to the whole school
- Mrs Rowe will teach Unconscious Bias to all Key stage 2 classes
- Watford FC Community Sports & Education Trust are delivering a day of inclusion workshops for KS2 on Friday 22nd of October designed to support anti-racist behaviour
- Participate in World Mental Health Day

## **Attendance**

The Department for Education has made it clear that '**Head Teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time unless there are exceptional circumstances**'. Head Teachers do not have the discretion to allow up to 10 days in a school year for a family holiday or to agree extended leave for parents to visit their country of origin.

You will no doubt understand that as the Head Teacher I have a duty, along with the school Governors, to promote the highest attendance levels possible. The school is set very high attendance targets by the Government; and our attendance data is regularly scrutinised by the Local Authority and Ofsted and is one of the factors by which they measure the success of the school. The academic progress of a child, whatever his/her level of academic ability, will be adversely affected if they miss school. If a child is unwell then they should not come to school, but if, in addition, they have other time off school, then this will definitely have a detrimental effect on their progress. ***Please take this into consideration when planning trips in the future.*** If you believe your circumstances may be exceptional, then please discuss your request with me before making final plans. I will review each request for absence carefully, consulting with the Local Authority's Attendance Improvement Officer where and if necessary, and give you an answer as soon as possible. If you need to make a request for leave, then please download a holiday request form from the school website or school office. We ask that all requests are put in writing using the form at least two weeks prior to any leave.

The overall attendance record of the vast majority of our pupils is very good and I very much appreciate your support in respecting and supporting the school's policy on attendance. ***The policy can be found on the school's website. Part of our new policy outlines the requirement for all parents to provide a written note or letter explaining their child's absence. Staff will actively be requesting letters and it would be most helpful if parents could send this letter in with their child when they return to school.***

**May we also remind you that if you need to collect your child from school for any reason, they must be signed out and signed in if returning to school on the same day.**

I have included a reminder of school dates for the coming year; please keep these dates in mind when making any arrangements for holidays.

### **Absence and illness**

If your child has been physically sick, he/she should be kept at home for a period of **48 hours**, to prevent the spreading of infections. We will endeavour to contact parents of any pupils who are away from school (unless we have been previously informed). Please let the office staff know of any absence before 9 am to save Mrs Clarke from having to make a call. As part of our new Attendance Policy all pupil absences must be followed up by a written note or letter.

### **Parent / Teacher Consultations**

Parent/teacher consultation sessions will be held in the week before the October and February half-term holidays. This term the consultation sessions will be on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> October 3.30-6pm and Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> October 4-7pm. Dates for February 2022 consultations will be sent out at a later date.

Parents will have a third opportunity to meet formally with the teachers, if they wish, at the end of the academic year, to discuss the annual written report. Parents of children who have additional needs are invited to Child Review Meetings which are held termly. During these, we discuss what is working well for your child and formulate a plan for next steps which involve the school and the family.

You will be aware that we encourage an open door policy at the school, so if you have any queries or concerns, do speak to class teachers or myself. It is always preferable to meet with teachers after school, rather than before school. Alternatively, you can call the school office to make an appointment.

### **Punctuality**

It is important that all children attend school regularly and on time each day. Please ensure that your child is in the playground before the whistle is blown at 8.50am, allowing sufficient time for your journey to school, so that a prompt start can be made. However, as the playground is not supervised before 8.40 am, I would ask that children **do not arrive** at school before this time. If your child arrives at school after 8.50am they should report to the school office, so that the register is accurate. We finish at 3.15pm each day; it is helpful if you are here to collect your child promptly at 3.15pm. Older children who are walking home by themselves should leave promptly.

### **End of the day arrangements**

Children in Year R to Year 2 must be collected by an adult from the infant playground. Children in Year 3 & Year 4 must also be collected from outside their classroom.

Children in Years 5 and 6 are dismissed from their classrooms at the end of the day. Year 5 must be met from school at the gate. Year 6 are the only Year group who are permitted to walk home alone so please ensure your child knows what arrangements have been made.

### **Coming into and leaving school**

In order to reduce congestion, please use the path and/or drive to come into and leave school.

Children who ride scooters and bikes should dismount by the school gate and walk their bikes and scooters down the pathway/drive. ***It is also important that pre-school children who come into school do not use scooters or bikes in the school car park or along the path/drive up to the office.***

The entrance to the school should not under any circumstances be used for turning cars round or dropping children off. I would like to remind all parents not to use the yellow zig zag area for parking in the interests of keeping all our children safe.

### **Snacks**

A reminder that if the junior children bring in a mid-morning snack it should be a healthy one and consist of a ***piece of fruit***. Crisps, chocolate biscuits and sweets are not acceptable. The infant children will continue to receive a 'free' piece of fruit or vegetable at break time each morning. ***As there are some children across the school with nut allergies we ask all parents not to send in nut based products.***

### **Photographs and filming**

Please remember that any photographs taken of children in school productions, assemblies, sports days and other events are solely for your own personal use. As a school community, we must always put the safety of all children first. With this in mind I would like to clarify;

- Any filming/photographs that parents take will be for personal use only.
- Images must not be uploaded onto any public Internet sites, such as Facebook, YouTube etc.

### **Payment of any money**

All payments are to be made via the School Gateway – link on website. Cheque payments continue to be taken at the school office.

### **Reward and Certificate system**

#### Weekly Rewards

Each week your child's class teacher will be issuing four special certificates which will be given out in our Celebration Assembly on Thursday mornings. The certificates are:

**Star of the Week**- linked to behaviour

**Learner of the Week**- linked to work

**Worker of the Week**- linked to effort

**Kindness Award**

#### Head Teacher's Certificates

Throughout the school all children will work towards gaining merits for learning, effort and behaviour which will be awarded by class teachers. Once a child gains ten merits they will receive a Head Teacher Certificate, which will be presented in our Celebration Assembly. The first Head Teacher's Certificate will be Bronze, followed by Silver and then Gold.

Children achieving 40 merits will receive a Platinum certificate and for 50 merits – diamond!

All children are aware of our merit system which provides a consistent and shared approach for rewarding learning, effort and behaviour. I look forward to giving out the first Head Teacher's Certificate of the new academic year later on in the term.

### Praise Post Cards

In addition to Head Teacher's Certificates for achieving merits, children who are sent to me by their teacher for excellent learning will receive a Praise Postcard in the post. This is always a lovely surprise as the children are not aware that they will receive this reward until it arrives by post.

### Head Teacher Award

My Head Teacher Award is given to children who have achieved over and above what is expected. Children are presented with a medal and a certificate in our Celebration Assembly.

### Special Recognition Award

How Wood School Special Recognition Award is awarded at the end of the academic year in the final assembly of the summer term. Parents of the children are invited and their child's achievement is shared with the whole school in this very special assembly. Two children from each class - Reception to Year 6 – are chosen by their teacher and me for outstanding progress in an area of their learning. They are presented with a classic book and certificate and their name and personal achievement is written in a special book that is displayed in our reception area.

**Due to COVID restrictions in the summer term, the Special Recognition Assembly will now take place later this term.**

### Staff Appreciation Board

I often receive emails from parents praising members of the How Wood Team and I know that your children regularly say wonderful things about the adults working and supporting them.



wonderful  
fantastic  
awesome  
positive  
incredible  
welcoming  
care  
thoughtful  
amazing

In order to recognise and celebrate our teachers and support staff I am asking parents to send me 'appreciative comments' made by you or your children. These comments and the name of the member of staff receiving them, will be written on the 'Staff Appreciation Board' and shared with parents in newsletters. I look forward to hearing from you over the coming weeks. Comments can be sent to: [head@howwood.herts.sch.uk](mailto:head@howwood.herts.sch.uk). Thank you.

I have included a list of key dates for the term. Further information about the various forthcoming events will be sent out to relevant classes.

### Key Dates for the Autumn Term 2021

#### Dairy Dates

Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> October	National Poetry Day
Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> October	Electric Umbrella Orchestra
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> October	Harvest Festival – details to follow
Wednesday 20 <sup>th</sup> October	Parent Consultations 3.30pm to 6pm
Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> October	Parent Consultations 4pm to 7pm
Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October	Last day of half term - Dress Down Friday
<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October Half term</b>	
Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> November	Year 6 trip to Cadbury World
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> December	Whole School Trip to St Albans Arena Pantomime – Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	Key Stage 1 Dress Rehearsal to parents/carers 9.30am
Wednesday 15 <sup>th</sup> December	Key Stage 1 Evening Performance 5.30pm
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December	Christingle – Y3 parents invited 10.30am
Tuesday 21 <sup>st</sup> December - <b>Finish at 1.30pm</b>	Last day of term - Dress Down Friday

#### Assemblies

Parents are invited to their child's class assembly at 9am. Year 1 and Year 2 will not be sharing an assembly as they will be performing an end of year Christmas production.

Date	Class	
Friday 8 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 6	Parent Assembly
Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> October	Year 5	Parent Assembly
Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Year 4	Parent Assembly
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	Reception Christmas Assembly	Parent Assembly
Thursday 9 <sup>th</sup> December	Nursery Christmas Assembly	Parent Assembly
Friday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Year 3	Parent Assembly

### How Wood School Term and Holiday Dates 2021/2022

#### Autumn Term

Half term: **Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> October 2021**

Children back to school: Monday 1<sup>st</sup> November to Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2021

**INSET Day Friday 26<sup>th</sup> November**

---

#### Spring Term

**INSET Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> January 2022**

Children back to school: Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> January to Friday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2022

Half term: **Monday 14<sup>th</sup> February to Friday 18<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

Children back to school: Monday 21<sup>st</sup> February to Friday 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022

---

#### Summer Term

Children back to school: Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April to Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**May Bank Holiday Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**

**Additional Occasional Day on Friday 27<sup>th</sup> May - due to Queen's Jubilee**

Half term: **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> May to Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2022**

Children back to school: Monday 6<sup>th</sup> June to Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2022