

Weekly Newsletter



Friday, 15th July, 2016

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Enhanced Healthy School status – This week we received our Enhanced Healthy Schools award recognising the work that our staff and children do to stay healthy, physically and mentally. This is a real achievement and particular thanks should go to Hilda Mehmet who collated evidence to prove that we had been successful in meeting the criteria. Keep up the good work.

More Holly Trees success – We are delighted with how hard our children have worked this year as a result of the engaging learning that happens throughout the school. In EYFS an impressive 83% of our children reached a Good Level of Development, indicating that they have met challenging standards in all areas. In Year 1 an equally impressive 95% of children met the threshold for Phonics Screening. Both of these results are our best ever.

As you are aware, the assessments in Year 2 and Year 6 changed substantially this year. I am not a political creature, but the way the assessments used this year have been rolled out to schools, has been a shambles with final criteria only being published as late as March this year. However, in Year 2 an incredible 90% of children reached the standard in reading, with the outcomes for writing and mathematics being above 70%. We also had a higher than average percentage of Year 2 children reaching standards far above those expected as a minimum. In Year 6, 82% of our children reached the expected standard in at least one of the areas of reading, writing, grammar, punctuation and spelling and mathematics, with 47% achieving the standard in all areas. As yet, we have no idea what criteria the Government is going to use to compare schools' data but we live in hope that the criteria will not change significantly again next year. However, we do believe that we have a far higher than average percentage reaching above the national average with nearly 50% of Year 6 achieving these higher standards. With the new higher expectations, some parents have expressed concern that failing to reach the standard will disadvantage children as they go into their secondary schools. I am pleased to assure parents that we have liaised with Brentwood County High School, who has assured us that the CAT tests that children take prior to Year 7 have demonstrated standards this year completely on a par with those of previous years. Please see below for a statement produced by BCHS:

"We are in a climate at the moment in education, where we are seeing many changes across both the primary and secondary phases. With change there is also an element of uncertainty. The transition from primary to secondary school causes uncertainty at the best of times, but at Brentwood County High school we try to make the transition process as smooth as we possibly can. With that in mind I would like to reassure you about how we will be using the information we receive regarding the recent SAT tests that year 6 took. I know that much has been said about the recent SAT results but they are only a part of a number of pieces of information we use. At the recent induction taster days, year 6 students all took a number of CAT tests. These are cognitive ability tests which produce scores based on the "natural" abilities of the students. We have also visited your school and discussed the progress and ability of the students we will be receiving into year 7 next year with their current teacher.

All of this information will be used to place students into their initial sets for English, Maths and Science. I stress initial as there is always the opportunity for movement between sets based on the continuous assessments and professional judgement of the class teacher.

Whereas in the past we were able to accurately use KS2 SAT scores as an indicator of what GCSE grade a student had the potential to achieve, with new SAT exams and new reformed GCSEs this will no longer be the case for a considerable period of time. To this end we are changing our target setting so that the students will be set a GCSE target as a range of 3 grades, with the lowest grade in the range being our minimum expectation. The targets will of course still prove to be a challenge for students but at BCHS we always help and expect our students to achieve their full potential by aiming high."

As Holly Trees' Headteacher, I would like to thank all the staff for their commitment and dedication to ensuring that children learn so well in a way that they can enjoy and remember.

Year 5 learning – Year 5 children have had a great time taking part in a Greek day in school (which enabled the learning to take place from 9:00 am until 3:15 pm rather than spending time travelling to an offsite venue), looking at artefacts and re-enacting Ancient Greek life. They also spent a day at a Forest Gym, developing teamwork and thoroughly enjoying getting muddy. The staff at WildForestGym have emailed us to say how our children 'behaved impeccably, their behaviour was amazing and they were most polite and attentive'. Who said learning isn't fun?!

Year 6 play – The Year 6 productions of The Keymaster were an absolutely delightful play with an amazing number of children singing solos that brought a lump to the throat. The history that they studied through learning the songs and script will, I am sure, stay with them for many years. Well done to everybody.

A visit from our MP - Sir Eric Pickles MP visited Holly Trees today after a parent wrote to him expressing her pride in how her children's school demonstrated tolerance and respect to all children regardless of their background and origins. She told him how diversity is celebrated at Holly Trees and how the children work together seamlessly. He was shown around the school by some of the Y6 children who hold senior positions, explaining the creative aspects of the curriculum so that children love their learning. Sir Eric delighted in the children's behaviour and standard of work. One of Sir Eric's party said that, "Holly Trees is everything that a primary school should be". I couldn't agree more.

Fundraisers – We are aware that we haven't had a second hand uniform sale this term. We will be having one in September but if you wish to buy any items before the summer holiday, please email hollytreespta@hotmail.co.uk

We had a very rewarding brainstorming event to put together next year's calendar of events. Thanks to all of those who came along the other week with drinks, snack and fresh ideas! Please save the following dates in your diary:

Tuesday, 13 th September	Fundraisers' meeting in school at 9:00 am
Saturday, 17 th September	Family Fun Day
Wednesday, 28 th September	Coffee morning
Tuesday, 4 th October	Fundraisers' AGM
October 2016	My Art Project
Friday, 4 th November	Firework Display
December 2016	Christmas Grotto
December 2016	Secret Santa Gift Shop
Spring Term 2017	Barn Dance, Jazz Night, Sponsored Walk, School Disco
Summer Term 2017	Race Night (adults only)
A Thursday in June 2017	Inflatables Day
July 2017	Summer Fete

We also intend to launch a 50/50 Club from September 2016. Further information to be provided in due course. Thank you for your continued support throughout the year.

Last day of term (22nd July) – On the last day of the school year, children can be collected from 2pm. If you are unable to come at 2pm, then children can be supervised until the end of the school day. If you decide to collect your children early, then we ask that you leave the school site straight away so that those still in school can be kept properly supervised.

NO NEWSLETTER NEXT WEEK – I would like to wish everybody a safe, relaxing and enjoyable summer holiday. The Headteacher's Award and next week's certificates will be announced using Parentmail.

Penny races (18th July) – Start collecting all your copper coins and 5p pieces for our penny races. On Monday children in each class will line up the coins that they have brought in to see which class in each year group can make the longest line. Afterwards, the buckets with the coins in will be weighed to see which class has the heaviest bucket. All the money brought in will go to the Fundraisers.

French lessons – If your child is interested in starting French lessons after school on Tuesdays, please phone Mrs Bright on 01708 376628. Lessons will start again on Tuesday, 13th September.

Lost property – Please make sure you check lost property before the end of term as the box will be emptied during the summer holidays. Please also remember to take home PE bags.

Fun Orchestra Weekend – If your child learns an orchestral instrument, they can take it to the next level as Brentwood's Orchestras for Young Musicians will be running a Fun orchestra Weekend for all children of Junior School age who play an orchestral instrument (from Beginners to Grade 5). This will take place on Friday, 30th September (5:00 to 6:30 pm) and Sunday, 2nd October (12:00 to 4:30 pm). If interested, sign up soon as places are limited. For more information email – boym@btinternet.com

Attendance – 97% target - Congratulations to Beech, Birch, Elm, Hornbeam and Larch for having over 97% attendance since the start of the academic year (September).

Menu – Week One of the summer menu. Please note that there will be chicken for roast dinner on Wednesday.

Letters home

None

Forthcoming dates

18th July – Penny races

21st July – Y6 Leavers' assembly – 1:30 pm

21st July – Y6 visit to Izumi – 6:30 pm

22nd July – Last day of summer term

5th Sept – children return to school

Congratulations

Bronze Certificates went to Thomas Mills and Aman Manoj.

Silver Certificates went to Harry Preston, Fleur Lelievre, Lucas Sharma, Xander Harvey, Guy Wilkinson, Ben Chad and Kitty Cripps.

Gold Certificates went to Ben Phillips, Kaylan Burnett, Amye Swinney, Jessica Bakhsh, Hettie Gevaux and Lola Callaby.

Pen Licences went to Jessica Hart, Priscilla Perkes, Freddie Nelson, Eve Liddard, Sophie Paull, Oliver Wyatt, Emma Wright, Daniel Wright, Randolph de Vera and Joshua Chege.

Music for Schools – Tilly Crook (clarinet) passed Grade 1 with merit and Madeleine Enticknap (clarinet) passed Grade 1 with distinction.

Bronze Certificates went to – Robbie Muncey (trumpet), Harrison Williams (trumpet), Millicent Gevaux (clarinet), Charley Fletcher (clarinet) and Ben Chad (saxophone).

Gold Certificates went to Sam Palmer (coronet) and Edmund Bass (clarinet).