



Engage - Inspire - Empower
Head Teacher Newsletter
 January 2024

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Welcome back, I hope you all had a lovely break and were able to do everything you had planned.

It is great to see the children back in school and every class has settled straight back in and have already started their new learning. Information on the curriculum and the different subjects can be found on our website by clicking on Curriculum tab on our home page alongside the class newsletters and POWER projects on the individual class pages. As the spring term is short, particularly before the February half term, each Year group has one POWER project for their topic over the term so the children have plenty of time to choose a few projects to do from their POWER project sheet.

I would like to take this opportunity to say goodbye and thank you to one of our longstanding Mid-Day Assistants, Parveen Ahmed. Parveen has worked at our school for 23 years and is taking a well-deserved retirement on Friday 19th January. Thank you Parveen for your hard work and dedication to our school, we all wish you all the very best in your retirement.

I would also like to officially welcome back Fenella from her maternity leave, it was great to see her back in school on the last day of term. Fenella takes over the teaching in Year 5 Cedar and Nursel returns to her PPA role alongside Saima, who continues to cover PPA across the school with Alyson also continuing to teach on a Friday.

Important Information on Attendance and Lateness

The school and Governors have been looking at how we can support our families more in their children regularly attending school and in particular supporting those children who have low attendance and fall into the persistent absence category of below 90%.

We have also been looking at the impact of children who are regularly late at the start of the school day and miss registration, the introduction to a lesson and new learning or having to walk into an assembly late. Not only does lateness impact greatly on a child's attainment but it also counts as a morning absence on the register which impacts on their overall attendance record as well.

To make sure children who are late to school are able to get to class as quickly as possible and to enable them to go immediately to their own classroom we have made the decision that parents and carers will need to take any bikes or scooters home with them when the child is late rather than the child having to go to the bike sheds first and losing more of their learning time. This is supported by Governors and the Local Authority.

Waltham Forest BACME (Behaviour, Absence & Children Missing in Education) service are working very closely with Waltham Forest schools and our Education Welfare Officer (EWO), meets with our attendance officer, Marie every week. During these meetings children's attendance is looked at and any child whose attendance is under 90% is a concern and meetings are arranged to support the children back to school. We do understand that your children do get ill and as you know we are required by the BACME team for you to provide proof of a child's illness by asking to see confirmation of a doctor's visit for example or the medicine you are giving and that is also looked at when looking at attendance. Thank you to everyone that has been able to do this, we do appreciate it's not always easy to have written or physical proof that your child has been ill.

If there is an exceptional circumstance where you need to take your child out of school then you will need to complete an Exceptional Circumstance form detailing the reason for the request for absence. Unfortunately not all absences will be authorised and each request is considered within a few days of being received and fines may be issued by the LA. Holidays will not be authorised and if there is a delay in a flight for example that means a late return to school then we will ask to see the original return flight confirmation so that we can authorise the absence. Forms to request an exceptional circumstance absence can be asked for at the school office.

Spaces in some classes

Unusually for our school we have some spaces for new children across the school, particularly in Key Stage 2. This is due to children leaving in the summer and at Christmas as families move out of the area. If you know of any families that are looking for a school place and they would like to consider our school then please let them know to contact the school and have a chat about whether we can offer them a space through school admissions.

Additional After School Club Provision

Before Covid and school closures both Buxton and Downsell schools provided an after school club (ASC), provision for our children which ran alongside Early Rise and the provision we have at our school. This stopped during covid naturally and didn't resume afterwards. However Downsell Primary School, which is close to our school, have now been able to resume their offer and start to provide ASC provision for our children that haven't been able to get a space in our own ASCs through our Reception ASC or Early Rise.

Downsell are offering an ASC for our children that includes picking up from our school. It will run from Monday to Friday from pick up time to 6pm. It costs £12.50 a day which includes the usual childcare provision and a snack. You would need to pick up from Downsell school. If you are interested in place then please contact the school on 020 8556 0103. Downsell will liaise with us so that we know which children are being picked up and on what day, however it would be helpful for you to inform our school as well so that we can keep an accurate record.

Safeguarding Email

Safeguarding@jennyhammond.waltham.sch.uk

A reminder of our safeguarding email for parents and anyone in the community to email if they have a safeguarding concern about one of our children or their family. It is important that this email should only ever be used to report a safeguarding or child protection concern and if school is open always phone the school office first and ask to speak with Diana Williams our Designated Safeguarding Lead or Andrew Warren, our Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. When phoning always let the office know it is a safeguarding concern.

The email will be checked every day of the year so you will be able to contact us in all of the school holidays. If you are unsure about whether it is a safeguarding matter then it is always best to email or phone so that we can look into it and take the correct course of action if necessary. The email has restricted access so the information in the email will only be shared with the appropriate professionals.

Communication Policy

The Leadership Team and Governors have recently written a Communication Policy which outlines our policy and practice on how we communicate with parents, carers and members of our school community. This includes information on how we will respond to emails in good time and at a time appropriate to the work, life balance of staff.

The policy can be found on our website under the Policy tab.



JHPS Number Day ~ Friday 2nd February

Last year we celebrated our second NSPCC Number Day which was very successful and children had a day full of exciting and challenging maths activities. This half term we are doing it all again on Friday 2nd February. As we have had a number of dressing up days before the

Christmas break we are asking that the children come to school dressed with a number somewhere on their clothes, so it could be a number on a T-shirt, on a sock or even a number face painted on their face, we want to keep it simple and the staff will be joining in as well. This is in aid of raising money for the NSPCC so on the day we will be collecting money for the charity by asking for a donation of £1.00. Again the children will have a fun filled day of practical maths activities and challenges.

Children's Mental Health Week

Children's Mental Health Week 2024 will take place from **5–11 February 2024**. This year's theme is 'My Voice Matters'.

My Voice Matters is about empowering children and young people by providing them with the tools they need to express themselves. During Children's Mental Health Week we want all children and young people, whoever they are, and wherever they are in the world, to be able to say – and believe – “My Voice Matters”.

For Children's Mental Health Week 2024, we're encouraging our children to link with the Unicef Rights of the Child and connect with others in healthy, rewarding and meaningful ways.

World Book Day – Thursday 7th March

It's coming round again to World Book Day which is celebrated in schools across the country. This year we have chosen the theme of Heroes and Villains for staff, and children can follow our theme if they want to or come as their favourite book character. I'm already thinking that I can revive my Cruella Deville costume from the book 101 Dalmatians, I just need to find my dog and the wig!



During the day the children will be doing activities based on reading but they will also have some chill out time to read their favourite books and to have a hot chocolate whilst they're doing so.

We also have our **Book Fair** leading up to World Book Day and it arrives on **Thursday 29th February until Wednesday 6th March**, (just realised writing this that 2024 is a leap year). Children will be able to spend their World Book Day vouchers at the Book Fair and as always the school can take a percentage of the money taken in books for our classrooms.

Reading in school with your child

Just to remind you as well that parents and carers can come in with their children on a Thursday morning to read with their child so you are very welcome to come in a read from 8.55am to 9.15am. The playground gate on Elsham Road will be kept open until 9.20am every Thursday.

Don't worry if you can't read with your child, the teacher, support staff or other parents will always be there to share a book with them.

Monster Phonics Online Books and Bug Club

Children have access to online Monster Phonics books at home to read in addition to the books that we send home. In your class newsletter for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 there is a reminder on how to access the books.

We have also continued to give children in Year 2 to Year 6 access to Bug Club online. Bug Club is an online reading programme, if you haven't got a login or have forgotten it then please email your class teacher who will remind you of the login details.

There are over 360 expertly chosen fiction and non-fiction books, phonic fiction books, comics and graphic novels available in digital formats to support our children, wherever they are. The books feature inside front and back cover notes to advance learning and support parents.

The digital books are assigned to the children by their teacher and feature automatically marked quizzes linked to all taught comprehension skills which assess children's understanding of the content. Your child's teacher will be able to see the books your children have read and how well they are doing in Bug Club and will keep updating the books.

Parent Consultations

Parent consultations happen on a Tuesday where you can sign up to meet with your class teacher to discuss your child's progress and see their work in their books. Each meeting is for 15 minutes and teachers have 2 meetings a week. You can sign up for an appointment in class when you come in to read on a Thursday or email the class teacher to make the appointment. You may also be contacted by the class teacher and invited in. Parent consultations are run differently in the Reception classes and you are given an appointment for your meeting.

Primary School Applications September 2024

If you have a child that turns 4 years old this academic year, (1st September 2023 to 31st August 2024), then you only have until the end of this week to apply for the Reception class starting in September 2024.

The application form can be found on the Council website and the closing date to submit the form is the **15th January 2024** so please do not be late with your application.

And Finally

As always thank you so much for all the support you give to Jenny Hammond School. We have had a great autumn term and look forward to the rest of the academic year. I hope that 2024 brings you all good health, peace and happiness.

Happy New Year!

*Best wishes
Deborah*

Website:

www.jennyhammond.waltham.sch.uk

Twitter:

@jennyhammondE11

Download the Jenny Hammond App from your app store. Please note that if you get an App message from us you need to swipe down on the message rather than click on it otherwise it just disappears!

The Remainder of the Academic Year

Spring Term 2024

NSPCC Number Day – Friday 2nd February

Children's Mental Health Week – Monday 5th to Friday 9th February

Children break up Friday 9th February 2024 at the normal time

Half term holiday Monday 12 February 2024 to Friday 16 February 2024

Whole Class Photos

Tuesday 27th February

Book Fair

Thursday 29th February – Wednesday 6th March

World Book Day – Thursday 7th March

Children break up Wednesday 27 March 2024 at 2.30pm

Staff Inset Day – School closed to children, Thursday 28th March

Easter holiday Friday 29th March 2024 to Friday 12th April 2024.

Summer Term 2024

Children come back on Monday 15 April 2024

May Day Bank Holiday - Monday 6th May 2024, school closed

Year 6 SATS

Monday 13th to Thursday 16th May

Children break up Friday 24th May 2024 at the normal time

Half term holiday Monday 27th May 2024 to Friday 31st May 2024

Children break up for the summer on Tuesday 23rd July 2024 at 2pm

Staff INSET Day – Wednesday 24th July

Gates open between 8.55am and 9.05am each day

Please check class newsletters for more dates related to your child's own class.

Please note that the school academic calendar dates for 2024/25 is being taken to Governors on the 24th January to be ratified and will be sent to all parents via parentmail and paper copy at the end of January.