



Horsmonden Primary School

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Mr Malcolm E. Hayes

27th February 2009

Dear Parents,

Have you received your **text messages** this week? Our latest innovation in the world of communications means that all those of you who put your mobile numbers on the data caption slips in the autumn will have received text messages this week in our free month's trial. I promise that you won't be inundated with messages once we're paying for it, but we think some of the uses could be:

- Informing you if your child has had a bump on the head
- Giving you immediate notice of school closures e.g. snow
- Giving you reminders of special occasions for your class e.g. assemblies
- Giving you precise arrival at school times from class trips

As always, please let us know what you think of the value of such a service and if you have good ideas as to how we might effectively use it then tell us.

Whilst endeavouring to enhance communication, I must also apologise for missing one significant piece of information out of the last newsletter. **Mrs Davey** has now begun her maternity leave, for which we all wish her and her family well. For Reception and Year 4, we are delighted that Mrs Jay Skilling is able to cover the maternity leave, giving the children a familiar face and someone who has got to know the school well during the last few months.

We do try to be as available as possible to talk through issues, successes and concerns that you may have, but can you please remember that **first thing in the morning** whilst all the children are arriving is a really difficult time to chat. It's of paramount importance that we are able to get the children ready and settled for their day ahead, so please help teachers by allowing them to concentrate on organising the class first thing. Many simple messages can be passed to teachers by email or note or, if more time is required, a request for a mutually convenient time enables the day to begin smoothly.

Wednesday 11th March sees **Royal visitors** in the village for the official opening of the new Kindergarten building. The Countess of Wessex has agreed to open the facility and our children will be lining the pavement opposite Kindergarten to give a welcome to Her Royal Highness upon her arrival. It's a particularly special occasion for all those who have worked so hard to make the vision a reality and having such a VIP visitor to open the new building will enable us to create a real sense of celebration at the achievement of the village.

Mothers' Day Special takes place on Friday 20th March and we now have a venue for a lunch for mums if you fancy making more of a day of it. The Highwayman have a special lunchtime menu and would like to host the lunchtime event, so if you fancy joining in, take a look at the menu on my noticeboard in the main entrance hall and then let Sarah in the office have your name.

The next two items may seem like a bit of a contradiction, but they both concern **attendance**. Looking through the attendances, it seems that there are some occasions when children could be in school when they aren't. Absence makes the task grow harder. I will be calling some of you in over the next few weeks to talk about your child's attendance where I think there's a problem, and you may like to know that the average attendance last year was 96.5%. Teachers have up to date information about your child's level of attendance and it's worth being proactive before problems arise.

In stark contrast to that sentiment, your child should remain off school for 24 hours following sickness or diarrhoea (such a delightful word for a newsletter) to prevent others from catching bugs.

Have you signed up for the **Village Quiz** next Friday evening? Almost 100 people already have but there's still some time to get a team together. See one of the many posters around for further details and don't delay in getting your name on the list.

Fun Football will start again this Saturday courtesy of Neil Rigby, who remains one of our sporting heroes. It runs from 9.30 - 11 am at Horsmonden Sports Field and children from Years 1 – 6 are very welcome to join in. If you're a parent that's willing to help, even better! Please talk to Neil who can be emailed on neil@eqmedia.co.uk .

On Sunday morning, **Year 6** along with Mr Brown, Mrs Hacker, Mrs Bennett and me, will be heading up the A1 for our residential trip to **York**. There will be no newsletter next Friday, but you can keep in touch with what's happening in York by logging on to the school website and getting an idea of what your children will be doing when their turn comes. It's not a week that guarantees a good night's sleep, but we know the class will come back from an experience that will remain with them as one of the highlights of their time at the school. Year 6 parents will now, of course, also receive text updates during the week to help them share in the experience with their children. Have a great week – we will!

Yours sincerely

Malcolm E. Hayes
Headmaster

