



Horsmonden Primary School

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Mr Malcolm E. Hayes

12th June 2009

Dear Parents,

Try not to let the glare from the shiny new fascia board above Year 2 distract you from this newsletter – there's a lot of important information to take in and a plethora of additional attachments to fill your evening and remove the fear of needing to watch Big Brother to pass the time. Alongside the fascia board, the **Reception and Year 1 activity area** refurbishment is now almost complete, and those of you who only have older children but remember the cluttered unhinged elements from before (fixtures not staff) will probably be astounded at the difference. Many thanks again to the Friends Association for providing the funding for this to happen.

And so we come to the big week of the year for FoHPS with the **Jungle Jamboree** taking place next Saturday. There's a poster attached to this newsletter for you to place in a convenient location to help raise the awareness of the day for the locality. Bloco Fogo will bring something special to the proceedings and we're delighted that 'Disco Dave' will be Master of Ceremonies for the day – for those of you who don't know Dave, your children will probably remember him from their disco earlier in the year. **We still need** bric-a-brac, crockery for the crockery smash, toys and puzzles, Teddies for Caroline Turvey's stall and assistance.

On the day we need help with setting up of stalls from 8 a.m., support on the stalls during the day, a few more gazebos and your attendance. There will be a list of stalls appearing in the entrance hall next week, so please take a look and see where you could give a little bit of time to support in a very practical way.

Accompanying your child today is an **empty plate**. We'd really appreciate this being filled with a delicious cake or smaller cakes. Yes, it's a bit of hassle and time, but let this be an opportunity for outrageous competitive spirit. Create something that your friends will marvel at and envy and then deliver it in ostentatious fashion on Friday morning to the tables in the middle of the computer suite.

During the week children will be undertaking a variety of activities related to the theme along with their usual learning and on Friday it's **dressing up day!** I can almost hear the collective groan at the prospect of finding or making another outfit, but it doesn't have to be something that you'd use in a West End production of Lion King. Keep it simple, keep it fun and remember that it's for Saturday as well as Friday. We've experienced some wonderful village events with the children during the course of this year, and the fete gives us another opportunity to help the children appreciate where we live.

Speaking of village events, it was good to see so many of you at the **Village Pet Show** last weekend which raised just under £3,000 for the Locket Green Regeneration Fund. Many thanks from the organisers for your support and from us in school as it's all of the local children who get the benefit.

On June 23rd and 25th we have our **parent consultation** sessions. These provide you with an opportunity to have a formal appointment with your child's teacher to discuss successes and challenges for the year and in the past couple of years we've played about with the format a little. Whilst the format will stay the same, we're trying to make sure that you get the appointment times you want and this summer we're asking that you come in to the computer suite where there will be class lists with appointment times for which you can sign up. This saves the backwards and forwards process of bits of paper that sometimes get lost and means that you know from the moment you put your name down exactly what time your appointment will be. Lists will be in the suite from Tuesday so please sign in yourself or, if you organise babysitting rotas between friends, get one person to sign in for you.

Don't forget the **Performance from Scratch Day** on Friday 3rd July. This is an opportunity for junior children and parents to come together, form an ensemble and then perform. Some of you have already signed up to join in on the day, so if there are more of you hiding your flute under a bushel, please don't be shy. If you'd simply like to come along and be a part of the action but you don't play an instrument, just let me know. Courtesy of Jonathan Chapter, our cello teacher, you can download the words and music for the day by logging on to www.crotchets.info, so you can be prepared in advance of the day itself.

Accompanying this newsletter, I'm delighted to send you the results of the **annual survey** of parents and children. I have colour coded each area to show you where you perceive things to have improved from last year, with improvements in green, areas broadly the same in amber and a couple of areas in red that dropped, albeit by a very small percentage. The most improved section in your eyes is in the partnership between home and school, which is a great indicator of positive influence on your child's learning.

Along with me, governors have also looked at the individual comments made by parents, which were overwhelmingly positive. The more common themes for areas you'd like us to address, although not in significant numbers, were:

- Class sizes increasing
- Smelly toilets (we're working on this and have had some positive feedback since the survey)
- Additional reporting for parents.
- Children not leaving class sharp at 3.20!

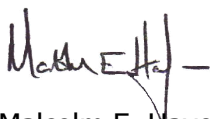
Common themes in significant numbers about things we do well:

- Standards and behaviour
- High quality teaching
- Adults work together as a team, like children and are focused on their needs
- Improvements in building and environment
- Partners schemes
- Self-confidence of children and their enjoyment of school
- Positive welcoming community
- After school clubs
- Links with the local community
- Preparation for life not just tests

The overwhelmingly positive feedback now gives us the challenge of making it even better next year. Thank you for the time you took in completing those forms and I look forward to informing you in the autumn of how we intend to address the issues your feedback has placed on the School Development Plan at the open evening on 24th September.

And so to the list of attachments; please check you've got them all and if you haven't we'll endeavour to get you one.

Yours sincerely,



Malcolm E. Hayes
Headmaster

Attachments:

- Fete Poster
- Fete Brochure
- An empty plate!
- A summary of feedback from the parental questionnaire
- A letter from Paula Veysey-Smith regarding her sponsored cycle ride to Paris
- A letter for pupils of Mrs Brown (piano and singing teacher)

