



# Horsmonden Primary School

## Back Lane, Horsmonden, Kent TN12 8NJ

Tel: 01892 722529 Fax: 01892 724134

Email: [headteacher@horsmonden.kent.sch.uk](mailto:headteacher@horsmonden.kent.sch.uk)

Website: [www.horsmonden.kent.sch.uk](http://www.horsmonden.kent.sch.uk)

Headmaster:

Mr Malcolm E. Hayes

6<sup>th</sup> November 2009

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school after what I hope was a regenerating mid-term break. The pre-holiday bug seems to have been obliterated, but please remember to keep your child off if they show cold or flu like symptoms. Also please remember to drag them by their coat labels if you think they're malingering!

It's been great to see the **Reception Class** courtyard fully operational this week, with children getting a huge benefit from all that space. The sandpit has undoubtedly been the biggest hit of the week for everybody except the cleaners, but as it was our head cleaner's idea to make the planter into a sandpit, they naturally haven't complained. Are children just playing? Far from it: I'd like to quote a small part of the Cambridge Primary Review:

*"We know, thanks to research, what children need to flourish in their early years. They need the opportunity to build their social skills, their language and their confidence. They do this best through structured play and talk, interacting with each other and with interested and stimulating adults.*

*"There is no evidence that a child who spends more time learning through lessons – as opposed to learning through play – will 'do better' in the long run. In fact, research suggests the opposite; that too formal too soon can be dangerously counterproductive. In 14 of the 15 countries that scored higher than England in a major study of reading and literacy in 2006, children did not enter [formal] school until they were six or seven. And more children read for pleasure in most of those countries than do so in England."*

Thank you so much for your generosity towards the **NSPCC** sponsored events. The count of the first batch of envelopes brought in £1,495, a tangible expression of our school rule - kindness. There are still just a few days to bring in any remaining envelopes, but it's deeply rewarding to know that our fortunate children's efforts will go towards supporting those who are not so lucky.

**What's the state of your wardrobe ladies?** Are you, "So last season" or do you simply want to get top labels without paying top prices? Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> November is **Catwalk Connections** night just for the ladies when a variety of clothes will be modelled and available for you to try and buy alongside what promises to be a highly entertaining social occasion. I'm told that when ladies get together, it's guaranteed to be a riotous evening, so don't miss out on your chance to join in the fun. There are various parents who have tickets for sale, and if you're not sure who they are, just ask for a clue from Sarah or Velsha in the office. Sorry boys, it's ladies only on that night. What could we do?

Thank you for the **tokens** you've collected from **Morrisons**. They aren't giving them out any more, but we're only 44 away from a children's wheelbarrow. Please search your pockets, or those of anyone you know who shops at Morrisons and drop the vouchers in so that **Gardening Club** trundle their equipment round the school more easily.

There's a youth firework event at St Margaret's Church Hall on Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> November for which publicity was sent out before the mid-term holiday. This is for Year 7's and above so it's for older brothers and sisters. The cost is £1 and further details can be obtained from Caroline Turvey.

This Sunday is **Remembrance Sunday**. Thank you for your generosity in purchasing poppies during a week that has reminded us of the continuing sacrifices made by service personnel and their families. Poppies will remain on sale until Wednesday and the whole school will stop for two minutes silence at 11 a.m. as an act of respect.

The annual **Wreath Laying Ceremony** and short multi-faith service will again be held at our village War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday at 12 noon. This year, for the first time in some years, youth organisations from the village will be taking part and the organisers hope they will be joined by many other youngsters with their families.

The short service will include a two-minute silence with bugle calls when we remember those who gave their lives for our country in two World Wars and since. Following the 20 minute service, there will be drinks and snacks available inside the Social Club along with an opportunity to view the unique memorial and look at some of the records, which have been collated, of those who served their country.

Next Wednesday afternoon, some of the Year 6 children will be out on the playground at the end of the school day to help conduct a survey into possibilities for **family learning sessions**. We have an extraordinary range of out of hours activities during the week, which are based around adults or children. Family learning gives the opportunity for parents and children to undertake something together, but before we embark on creating events, we'd like to know what you want. Please take a couple of minutes to speak to our children and give you opinions.

Panetta Horn, who is mum to Jemima and Abigail, is starting up **art classes** for 8-14 year old on a Saturday morning. It is formal instruction in techniques of drawing and water colours for a group of no more than 10 and there's a poster with full details accompanying this newsletter.

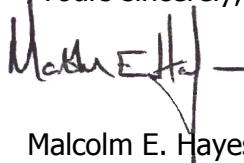
And so the newsletter descends into oblivion as I once again bring you a message from the bathchair of Paula Veysey-Smith, our resident ghost of Christmas Present:

*"The Christmas Present Fayre on the Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> December is now fast approaching!! It's time to start bringing those gifts in and filling Santa's box that is now in the entrance hall. I've enjoyed chatting to a few of you already and am pleased to report that once again the thought of the Fayre is attracting the "Oohs" and "Ahs" it so deserves. Attached is an overview of the event for all you new parents who haven't experienced the Fayre before. So, get those presents rolling in, especially for the Dad's and Lad's so I'm not left knitting socks like mad!!"*

Somehow, the words, 'Paula' and 'like mad' seem to sit comfortably together! Anyhow, thanks to Paula for the time and effort put into an undertaking that your children will absolutely love. If you haven't experienced one of these before, the best way to do so is to help out on the afternoon – it's not a burden, it's an absolute joy.

**And finally...** there are a number of new families this year as with every year. Please let me know which bits of school life you've found helpful and which bits you've struggled with. We can't hope to have you all confidently and fully informed all the way – that's something that only really comes with time. I do hope, though, that you're finding your way through it all and, above all, enjoying the experience. Your child's got one crack at this and we want you to have as positive an experience as them. Take part, encourage your child and share in the joy of learning that should be the central purpose of what goes on. Please also take some time to look at the large display board in the hall to see the huge range of activities for learning beyond the classroom, in which we're celebrating what children do both in and out of school. Please also feel free to bring in extra bits about your child that aren't already there.

Yours sincerely,



Malcolm E. Hayes  
Headmaster