



Horsmonden Primary School

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Mr Malcolm E. Hayes

10th October 2008

Dear Parents,

Thank you for your support on **Harvest Festival Day** this week. The harvest gifts that went out to our local elderly residents looked wonderful in their attractive decorated boxes and the time that many of you gave up to help with the preparation and distribution of goods. Well done to Year 4 in leading the assembly and to all the children for their singing on the morning. Letters of thanks from recipients of the gifts will be on display in the main entrance hall.

Part of the service involved the judging of pumpkins grown by children and the following children received prizes in the three categories:

Most beautifully formed cute pumpkin:	Lauren Mascal
Most beautifully coloured:	Millie Ironmonger
Most enormous whopper:	Isobel Johnson

This morning, the children had an assembly led by **LEPRA** about which there are details below:

Your child has an envelope and activity sheet with this letter because during the coming weeks, in school time, they will have the opportunity to take part in a Workout to raise money for LEPRA Health in Action.

LEPRA is an organisation committed to the eradication of leprosy and to the help of those whose bodies and lives have already been damaged by it. As a medical development charity it also deals with many poverty related diseases in the poorest countries of the world.

Your child has taken part in an assembly about leprosy, given by a representative of LEPRA, and has learned how he or she can help. The children have been asked to collect donations in the envelope provided from friends and relatives, and to bring it in to school by **Thursday 23rd October, 2008**.

LEPRA likes to say 'thank you' to the pupils for their help, so every pupil who takes part in the Workout will receive a badge. Anyone who raises £21 or more will receive a special LEPRA t-shirt or cap, as this sum represents the amount it costs to help cure someone of leprosy.

We hope you will support your son/daughter through this appeal and thereby enable him/her to become a true global citizen in the fight against disease and poverty.

We're working hard this term to make sure your children have a better learning environment. You may well have spotted a few dinosaurs appearing along the front path, but there are other significant alterations afoot. The contractors have now been commissioned for the **Computer Suite** and refurbishment of the **junior toilets** and by Christmas work will have started on the internal rebuild of the **cookery area** and **children's library**. Computer generated images of the cookery area are currently on display on my noticeboard in the main entrance hall.

The builders of the Kindergarten didn't fancy my chances on Tuesday morning as I wandered out with a barrow load of cones and fluorescent jacket. Incredibly they told me that the **parking** and crossing isn't always that straightforward, but I thought it was remarkably good – thank you. We still need to remember that the zig-zag lines across the middle of the road outside the playground entrance do not delineate a safe parking zone. Moreover, if we expect teachers to encourage road safety and following the rules inside school, it's worth supporting this when dropping off children.

On a similar safety conscious note, we use a KCC filtering system on our computer network which, most of the time, proves reliable. Are you fully aware of what your **children** are looking at **on their computers**? We've had some disturbing information given to us and will be contacting specific parents as appropriate about what some children have been looking at on their home computers. Please check what your children are viewing; we are bringing forward a planned evening on internet safety and will let you know in due course of an evening at which the issues around your child's e-safety can be explored.

Earlier in the year we sent out a questionnaire about **extended services provision** for your children. What this offers alongside the existing school clubs is the opportunity for you to buy into after school care for your children. We've battled through a tidal wave of irritating bureaucracy designed to thwart not support, and we're now at the point where we are going to make it happen! Our trial sessions which will be Monday 15:30 – 17:00 and Friday 15:30 – 18:00 and we'll be sending home full details along with a booking form next week.

And now, for something completely different; from a rocking chair by the fireside (tumbler in hand) comes a message from the home of Paula Veysey-Smith:

Christmas Present Fayre – What's it all about?

The Christmas Present Fayre has been a popular event on Horsmonden School's calendar for well over 10 years now. It is as much an established part of the school's Christmas activities as the Infant Production & school Christmas dinner.

This year the event takes place on the afternoon of **Thursday 4th December**.

So this is how it works – we ask parents to provide 6 gifts for each child they have at the school, which can be put in the big gift wrapped box that will be in the entrance hall after half term. Now, we are looking for small and inexpensive items, even unwanted gifts. There will be some pictures up on the notice board giving examples of gifts that parents can provide but do ask around to get some idea of what is given. We sort gifts into Men's, Women's, Children's & Pets.

Each child has the opportunity to buy 6 gifts for family, friends and, yes, pets. Two of the gifts bought can be gift-wrapped, a service available to the children on the day. Presents are priced between 40p and £1.50 to ensure that every child can partake fully. We do suggest that children bring between £4 and £6 to the fayre.

A couple of weeks before the event each child fills in a form listing the 6 people (or animals!) they wish to buy for. To avoid a child crushing rush the classes are divided into three sessions with Year 6 helping Reception partners with their shopping. We also refresh the tables with new gifts for each new shopping session so no group misses out.

There will be two lists for you to pop your name on, one to help on the actual day and the other to help on Wednesday night with the final sorting and pricing. This event is very popular but there's no limit on helpers so please do try and come along. The incentive to help on the Wednesday night is free wine and nibbles!! It's also good fun in itself.

Many of the parents in the school are very familiar with this event so please just chat around to learn more. If you do have any specific questions please ask any parent or contact me by email paula@veyseysmith.co.uk or phone 07816 687616 if you have any suggestion or comments about the Christmas Present Fayre.

And finally... the fertility cake brought in by the Morris Men back in May clearly got results! Many congratulations to Mrs Davey, who is expecting her second child later in the academic year and will be taking up a little more space in the staff room until Easter! I'm sure you will join with me in wishing Becky, Tim and soon-to-be big sister Lucy all the very best in the coming months.

Yours sincerely,



Malcolm E. Hayes
Headmaster

