



**Prior Heath Infant School**  
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Headteacher: Mrs L. Chivers

8<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Parents,

### **Reading Week**

What an exciting week we had celebrating reading! The children thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the drama workshops which were led by a group of very talented Tomlinscote students. Our bedtime story evening was a real highlight although I think some of the children were very disappointed that they weren't staying the night! Thank you for all of your efforts in putting together such wonderful book character costumes. It was lovely to see such an array of different characters in our parade.



### **Curriculum resource suggestion**

This month's curriculum resource suggestion is linked to the teaching of phonics. If you would like to support your child further within this area of the curriculum, do please consider purchasing a subscription to Phonics Play <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/> If you are unsure about which phonic phase your child should be focusing on, please speak to their class teacher at your parent consultation meeting next week.

### **Staffing Update**

At the end of the last half term, we said goodbye to one of our teaching assistants Mrs Muzzall but have welcomed back Mrs Ryan who has joined Oak class for the remainder of the academic year. At the end of March, we will be saying a very sad farewell to our School Business Manager Mrs Dalford who has worked at Prior Heath for 17 years. Mrs Dalford has worked tirelessly to continually improve our school environment and has worked wonders, particularly over the last couple of years, to provide the resources that our children deserve despite the never-ending cuts to school budgets. I would like to take this opportunity to thank both Mrs Dalford and Mrs Muzzall for their commitment and hard work. Mrs Noakes will be joining Prior Heath as our new School Business Manager.

### **Punctuality**

I am concerned about the number of children who are regularly arriving late in the mornings.

In order to help children make the best start to the day they need to arrive on time. The classroom doors open at 8.40am and are locked at 8.50am when registration takes place. If children arrive after this time, they must be taken to the school office to be signed in by office staff and they will be marked as late in the class register.

When a child arrives late to school, there are many consequences:

- He or she misses essential learning at the beginning of lessons – in fact arriving 5 minutes late each day adds up to missing 3 entire days of school by the end of the year. In Year R and 1, the first session of the day is phonics which begins as soon as the register is taken. When children arrive late for this session, not only does it disrupt the other children in the class, it also means that they miss out on vital learning. During the first part of the morning in Year 2, children are given an early morning task to complete. This task allows them to apply or practise key skills that they have previously learnt

and as this work is often independent, it contributes towards teacher assessments. If this work is regularly missed, it will have an impact upon your child's progress.

- Children might feel awkward and embarrassed going into the classroom when everyone else is already settled.
- When one person arrives late everyone loses out – the class is disrupted and the teacher must take time away from the other children to explain what has been missed.

Should you require any assistance with your child's attendance or punctuality, we are here to help. Please contact the office to make an appointment with your child's class teacher.

A punctuality leaflet, which has been provided by the Inclusion Service, is attached for your information.

### **Taking care of our school**

In order to protect the flooring in school, please would you ensure that your child/children do not walk across or run around on the field before school in the morning. We are finding that a lot of mud is being brought into school at the beginning of the day because children are running around the field. Mrs Kercher, our caretaker, spends a long time cleaning the school at the end of the day and it is disheartening to see the flooring become so dirty at the beginning of the school day. If you are using the Southcote Park entrance, please would you walk along the path that runs along the field rather than across the field, particularly whilst the weather is so wet. Whilst we try to get the children to wipe their feet when they come into school, the mud is making the carpets very dirty.

Thank you for your understanding and support.

### **PTA Quiz Night**

Thank you to our wonderful PTA who organised such a successful Quiz Night on Friday evening and thank you to all of you who attended. The event raised over £780 and, in addition, £456 was raised from the pudding auction, half of which will be donated to the Neonatal Unit at Frimley Park Hospital. Congratulations to the winning team, Gin and Phonics, which was made up of school staff. Your children are clearly in safe hands!

### **Comic Relief**

This year we will be raising money for Comic Relief on **Friday 15<sup>th</sup> March**. We would like to invite the children to come into school dressed in their choice of home clothes, including something red wherever possible, in exchange for a suggested donation of £1. We would also like the children to learn a joke to share with their class!



For hygiene reasons, we ask that the children do not wear or bring red noses to school and we kindly ask that you do not send your child into school with coloured hair or wearing face paint. Clothing and footwear should be appropriate for a school day, including for PE where applicable, and must be warm enough for outdoor activities and playtimes.

### **INSET Days – 2023/24 and 2024/25**

A reminder that school will be closed for staff training on the following dates:

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024  
Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024

In addition, school will also be closed for the Bank Holiday on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024.

The INSET days for the 2024/25 school year, when school will be closed for staff training, have now been arranged and are as follows:

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2024  
Monday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024  
Friday 4<sup>th</sup> April 2025  
Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2025  
Monday 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025

When arranging our five INSET days across the year, we look very carefully at the school's development and training needs to ensure the maximum impact on pupils' achievement and development and then place the INSET days accordingly. We also liaise with other local schools, particularly Ravenscote, but we are not always able to match their days. For the 2024/25 school year, two of our INSET days will be the same as Ravenscote but we have been unable to match the remaining three due to our particular requirements.

An updated copy of the 2024/25 School Calendar, which includes the INSET days, is attached and is also available on the school website.

### **Birthday Sweets/Cakes**

We would like to remind parents that, as a Healthy School and following comments received from parents, children should not bring in birthday sweets/cakes for their class. If you wish, you can hand these out on the playground at the end of a school day. Your child will have an opportunity to share their birthday news with their class. Thank you for your understanding.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards,



Mrs L. Chivers  
Headteacher

## Diary Dates

|                        |  |  |
|------------------------|--|--|
| Tuesday & Wednesday    | 12 <sup>th</sup> & 13 <sup>th</sup> March 2024     | Parent interviews with class teachers after school. Later appointments on Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> .           |
| Friday                 | 15 <sup>th</sup> March 2024                        | Comic Relief Red Nose Day– children invited to wear home clothes to school including something red. £1 donation. |
| Wednesday              | 27 <sup>th</sup> March 2024                        | <b>End of spring term at 2.00pm</b> – please note early closure.   |
| Thursday               | <b>28<sup>th</sup> March 2024</b>                  | <b>INSET Day – school closed for staff training.</b>   |
| Monday                 | <b>15<sup>th</sup> April 2024</b>                  | <b>School re-opens for the summer term.</b>  |
| Monday                 | <b>6<sup>th</sup> May 2024</b>                     | <b>Bank Holiday – school closed.</b>   |
| Thursday               | 23 <sup>rd</sup> May 2024                          | Sports Morning – 9.15 to 10.30am.  |
| <b>Monday – Friday</b> | <b>27<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024</b> | <b>Half term.</b>  |
| Monday                 | <b>3<sup>rd</sup> June 2024</b>                    | <b>INSET Day – school closed for staff training.</b>   |
| Tuesday                | 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2024                         | <b>End of summer term at 2.00pm</b> – please note early closure.   |