



Newsletter 9 10.03.23

Dear Parents and Carers,

Please see below for the latest news and updates from the Havannah First School Family.

World Book Day

We all agree that World Book Day is a brilliant celebration of the 'power of the page' and on the day we had a range of exciting and interesting book activities going on right across school. Thanks everyone for a great day – we are really proud of our budding readers at Havannah who persevere with the learning in reading and enjoy their reading every day of the year!



School Council Get Creative to Encourage More Reading and Support Well Being!



We are very proud of our School Council members who have made a well being bookmark for every child in school. They wanted to help everyone to be happy and positive as well as encouraging them to read. Thank you to them all for this brilliant effort!

Book Fair

We have a book fair coming to school for the last week of this half term – more information to follow. This is a great opportunity to pick up some reading and some book treats for the Easter holidays!

Book Swap

Lots of you are using the book swap and we hope that you are finding it useful. Please continue to bring a book and take a book. Don't forget it's for adults too – there are two boxes on the bottom tier of the trolley for you.

New Football Strip Gets its First Fixture!

Thanks to Robert from Artisan Glass Structures for sponsoring our new football strip. It looks fantastic and had its first use last week when the boy's football team went to Kenton to take part in a tournament where they did very well and played brilliantly!



Walk and Wheel

Mrs McMillan sent a letter earlier this week about Walk and Wheel. This is a great way to encourage sustainable travel to and from school which in turn increases our fitness and also reduces pollution around school and in our local community. If you need to drive each day you can still take part by parking a little way from site, for example at the park and ride, and walk or wheel for the last part of your journey. These journeys will still count towards the data and we will give children recognition and praise for journeys like this.



Idling Engines

Please turn off your engines when you are parked on site. Children and their parents and carers who are walking on the pavement around the car park are having to walk through the fumes from idling engines and this is unpleasant and unsafe. Please help us to keep the air as clean as possible around our school. Thank you for your support.

Cycling Provision

We are building our cycling provision at Havannah First and it is great to see work going on in school with Newcastle PE Service and Bike4Health. We want every child to be a cyclist and to enjoy cycling by the time they leave us ready for Middle School. Cycling Club was a big hit this week and the lessons have also been very successful.



Staffing Update

We have now appointed a new caretaker through Newcastle City Council and he has started working with us last week. He is Mr Ryan Carr and has recently been a relief caretaker in other schools in the city. We are delighted to welcome him to the team. Thank you to Mr Fortune and Mr Thompson who have been covering the role for the past couple of weeks.

Ducklings

It's that time of year again (although it's been a while!) for us to celebrate the new life of spring and learn about life cycles. The eggs arrived earlier in the week and we already have 4 beautiful fluffy ducklings, currently residing in Caterpillar Classroom in Reception. The children throughout school will have opportunities to see the ducklings and to handle them. They are on vacation at Mrs Lancaster's house this weekend but will return on Monday. It's fascinating for the children to see them grow and change and they all learn so much from this experience. Duck squad in Y4 are their carers and will be showing the younger children how to handle them and look after them.



Numbers and Growth in September 2023

National offer day is fast approaching and we are working hard with Newcastle City Council to establish our intake for September. We do not yet know whether we will be sticking at 60 or increasing our numbers but we will keep you in the loop as soon as we have made a decision. We will be expanding numbers in Year 4 to a maximum of 60 and this means that there will be no mixed age classes next year. This is a welcome development and will make our curriculum planning and delivery much more streamlined. More information will follow next term regarding the arrangement of year 4 classes and our staffing plan.

Progress Evenings

The booking system for Y1-Y4 progress evenings went live earlier this week. If you haven't booked yet, please do so. We hope that everyone can come in and talk with their child's teacher. If this is not possible for you on the allocated evenings, please contact the office and we will try to find a mutually convenient time for you to catch up with your child's teacher. Thank you.

Easter Fun Day

There is an Easter Activity Day planned at the Great Park Community Centre on 2nd April from 10.00am – 1pm for anyone who is looking for some Easter activities and fun!



Parent and Carer Reading and Homework Survey

Thank you to everyone who responded to our ParentMail survey. We had 217 responses. We have looked carefully at every response and have summarised the information in order to assist us with future provision. The bullet points below summarise the main findings and trends from the data:

- 188 children enjoy reading at home, 29 don't.
- The great majority (165) of children read every day or on most days at home.
- Most of you would do more reading at home with your children if you had more time, didn't work or if you had the reading book every day (other reasons were given such as 'if the books were more diverse' or 'in better condition')
- 163 children enjoy homework, 54 don't.
- 182 of you like your child to have homework, 35 don't.
- The list of homework you like best and the list of homework you like least are the same. For the people who said that they dislike project based homework, there was a similar number who said that they like project based homework. The same applies to printed sheets, creative activities and spellings. Only maths stood out as a clear favourite with more people saying they liked it. There were also lots of responses to say that a range of activities is preferred.
- Phonics and reading are most desired workshops and areas where you would like to learn more. Maths and handwriting were also popular. There were a few responses indicating that you would like to learn more about Y2 SATs, spelling, grammar and the sciences.
- 98 of you would like workshops during the day and 87 after the school day.
- As well as the information you already receive, some people have requested more information about actual learning week by week, book recommendations, comprehension questions, PSHE and well-being.

As well as the above responses, some of you expressed gratitude for the information you already receive and the workshops and coffee morning which you have already attended. Thank you.

In response to the information collated, we are going to:

- Organise additional workshops

- Share half termly knowledge organisers which will break down learning in different subjects and share key vocabulary.
- Audit reading books from Y2 upwards and purchase some new stock.
- Purchase new Little Wandle reading books (Reception and Y1) with greater diversity.
- Consider an incentive in reception and Y1 (similar to the bookworm in KS2 which has been very popular) to motivate the children to read on the days where they might not be so keen.
- Explore the possibility of partnership working to provide a workshop around well-being, anxiety and family life.
- Ensure consistency in homework days and support children to remember reading books and homework books.

There are some things which were requested which are not feasible or possible and there were some things which we have considered or tried before and we know we won't be able to do in the future. Where we think we can make changes and improve our provision, as well as making it better for you, we will take action.

We are grateful that almost all children complete homework tasks and can talk about learning at home. Thank you for your support.

Best wishes

Helen McKenna

Headteacher

Dates for Spring Term 2023



Friday 10 th March	No Voice Too Small Project starts in Y3
Wednesday 15 th	Strike Date for NEU members
Thursday 16 th March	Strike Date for NEU members
Monday 20 th March	Big Walk and Wheel
	SATs workshop for Y2 Parents and Carers 2.45pm and repeated at 5.00pm
Monday 27 th March	Governors meeting 5pm
	Work begins to transform the yard!
Tuesday 28 th March	Y1 – Y4 progress evening for parents and carers
	Book Fair in school (until Friday)
Wednesday 29 th March	Y1 – Y4 progress evening for parents and carers
	<i>Birch Class Progress evenings are 29th and 30th</i>
Thursday 30 th March	Reception visit to Hall Hill Farm
Friday 31 st March	PTFA Hair Day
	Break up for Easter Holiday