

Tuesday 13th June 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Summer Term Update 4

This final half term is well and truly underway and the pupils are as busy as ever. The final few weeks will fly by but as I said in my blog last week, there is still a significant percentage of the year to go and lots of opportunity to make even more progress.

This update contains a few bits of information as well as a request from me for some support.

Hair

Please would you make sure that children with long hair have it tied back when at school. We are having a few problems at the moment with head lice and having long hair tied back is one way of limiting their spread. With the hot weather we are also experiencing, it is another way of helping the pupils to stay cool. My staff will be reminding pupils they see around school with long hair not tied back to tie it up.

Phone Use

My next request relates to pupils' use of mobile phones. This issue isn't something that impacts upon pupils whilst they are at school but the time I have to spend sorting out 'squabbles' carried out online or via group WhatsApp chats after school is too much.

We have done a lot of work in school, particularly with our older pupils, on appropriate use of phones and commissioned additional workshops for pupils and parents in the Spring Term.

It would be really simplistic of me to state that primary aged children should not have access to social media platforms. WhatsApp, for example has an age rating of 16+. In reality, many parents are happy for their children to use phones and access these apps on them. If this is the case, then we also need a little more parent support in policing the conversations that take place and helping their children reflect on the impact unkind words might have on their 'friends'.

At Whitehill we use the acronym **THINK** when teaching children what is acceptable to write. **THINK** stands for:

T True

H Helpful

I Inspiring

N Necessary

K Kind

If the message they are sending or saying is none of the above, then don't send it.

As a trustee of a local secondary school, I have also seen the impact inappropriate and unkind use of social media can have when the pupils get older and therefore it is imperative that we all work as hard as possible now, to educate and instil in our pupils a responsible and acceptable way to behave online.

Your support with this will be greatly appreciated.

Sports Day

And now, as they say, for something completely different. This year's sports day will take place on Tuesday 18th July. For those new to Whitehill and as a reminder to others, I thought it would be useful to outline what your child might be doing and how the day works as it is quite different from Highbury. Further information will come home in due course.

Whitehill Sports Day is just that, a whole day event. In the morning, pupils will take part in a range of field events and group activities, earning points for their respective houses. Each pupil will have a number of different activities to take part in appropriate for their age and ability.

In the afternoon, to which parents are invited, pupils take part in track events and it will look a little like an athletics meet.

All pupils will take part in events in the morning and in the afternoon but it is important to remember that, given the number of pupils we have and the number of events there are, some pupils may only take part in two or three track events. They will however have contributed towards the overall points total for their house throughout the day. It is very much a team event.

The afternoon events start at around 12.45pm and parents will be able to access the school site from 12.30pm.

Other Key Dates

The school website calendar is as up to date as I can make it at the moment. As other events are added to our calendar, I will do my best to update the one on the website. Some noteworthy events to include here are:

Friday 16 th June	Parent workshop – Understanding your child's thoughts, emotions and behaviours
Tuesday 20 th June	Year 6s to Hitchin Swimming Centre
Wednesday 21 st June	Year 3 to Shepreth
Friday 30 th June	School reports to come home together with details of classes and teachers from September
Wednesday 5 th July	Junior Leadership Team Music Festival
Friday 7 th July	Friends' Association Summer Social
Monday 10 th July	Year 6 Production – Matinee
Tuesday 11 th July	Year 6 Production – Evening
Wednesday 12 th July	Year 6 Production – Evening
Thursday 13 th July	Transition Day
Friday 14 th July	Year 6 Party
Tuesday 18 th July	Sports Day
Friday 21 st July	End of Term (1.30pm)

As always, thank you for your ongoing support, especially with items one and two on this update.

Best wishes,



Steve Mills
Headteacher