

Dear Parent / Carer,

Welcome back! We hope everyone had a restful summer and have been able to recharge batteries! Certainly the children have come back very keen and eager to get on with work – it has been a delight to welcome them all back. We are also pleased to welcome Mrs Latimer and Miss Hinde to the teaching team. We look forward to getting to know those of you who are new parents to the school in the coming days and weeks.

The teachers and teaching assistants spent the last few days of the holiday finalising their plans for the term and we know that the children will respond really well to, and enjoy, the challenges ahead!

As reported last term, we congratulate the Year 6 children their achievements in the SAT tests last summer. The test regime changed last year and a new Spelling Grammar and Punctuation test was introduced. We are pleased to report that 92% achieved Level 4 or better in writing (30% L5). In mathematics 85% achieved Level 4 or better (38% at L5). These levels of attainment are a real credit to the hard work of both the children and their teachers.

We look forward to many more successes over the coming months.

Pupil Targets

The children in Years 4, 5 & 6 will have been given their new targets already. Children in Year 3 will receive their targets once the first teacher assessments have been made and they have settled in. All parents will receive the parent's card at the Parent Meetings at the beginning of October, when the teacher will be able to discuss them with you. We hope that you will be able to talk to your child from time to time about their targets and how well they are doing – this is really encouraging for them and will help them achieve their best.

Holidays in Term Time – IMPORTANT REMINDER!

The new government regulations came into force this month! As you will be aware, key changes mean that schools cannot authorise any absence of any sort unless there are exceptional circumstances (medical needs, family emergencies etc.). This includes holidays! We would like parents to understand that the regulations are very clear and schools have no leeway in this. The Hellesdon and Horsford Cluster has updated the attendance leaflet to reflect these changes and a copy will be sent home this week.

Performance Poet Visit – next week! Donovan Christopher, the performance poet is visiting Firside next Tuesday! Donovan will be giving a whole school performance as well as working with Year 6 during the day. Donovan's visit should prove to be a fun and thought-provoking event! His work in schools is geared towards motivating and inspiring children not only to perform better in the classroom but to be truly socially responsible members of the larger community. We can't wait!

There will be the opportunity to buy his books and he will be doing a book-signing at 3:15.

Start of School – Please note children should not arrive before 8:30 each day – staff are busy and not available to supervise before then.

Absences – If your child is unable to attend school please ring in before 9:30 on the first day of absence giving a reason and if they are still absent after two days please ring to update us and thereafter every two days if illness persists.

Emergency Contacts – Please make sure you keep the office informed of changes to contact numbers, names and addresses.

Parentmail – Please collect a form from the office if you have not yet signed up to receive emails from the school.

School Dinners – Please remember to order & pay for your child’s lunches on a Monday for the week ahead - envelopes from the office.

Uniform – Please note that all uniform needs to be ordered and paid for in advance using the forms available from the office or the website.

Diary Dates

September

Tuesday 17th Donavan Christopher, performance poet in school
Thursday 19th Year 5 parents “welcome” meeting 3.30pm in 5C
Monday 23rd 5L to visit River Glaven at Holt Hall
Tuesday 24th 5C to visit River Glaven at Holt Hall
Thursday 26th Year 4 parents “welcome” meeting 3.30pm in 4P
Year 3 parents “welcome” meeting 3.30pm in 3Mc
Friday 27th School photographer
Monday 30th 5H to visit River Glaven at Holt Hall

October

Tues/Wed 8-9th Parent/Teacher progress meetings after school
Monday 14th Chinese teachers visiting from Hui Shi Primary School, Shanghai
Year 6 parents “welcome” meeting 3:30 pm in 6K
Tuesday 22nd Year 6 to visit Gressenhall Museum – Victorian Day

November

Friday 8th Year 6 to visit Sainsbury Centre
Thursday 14th School Disco (details to follow)
Friday 29th Year 6 Newspaper Day in school

Term dates: 2013-14

Autumn term	5 th September to 20 th December	Half term holiday: 28 th October to 1 st November
Spring term	7 th January to 4 th April	Half term holiday: 17 th to 21 st February
Summer term	23 rd April to 23 rd July	Half term holiday: 26 th to 30 th May (Norfolk Schools closed on 26 th June for staff training)

YEAR 3 NEWS

We are really pleased to welcome all our new year 3s to Firside. We have had several meetings with the infant school teachers and look forward to building on the skills they have developed there. All the children have already made a fantastic start at Firside learning our routines and expectations and we are looking forward to a great year with them.

In Literacy we will be studying a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts and will encourage the children to recognise the similarities and differences between them. We will be using Vocabulary, Connectives, Openers and Punctuation, (often abbreviated to VCOP) as key ideas to help the children improve their writing.

You can make a real difference to your child's progress by reading regularly with them at home - 4 or 5 times a week would be ideal. If you could briefly record what they do in the reading record section of the learning journal we would be grateful. We will give the children a team point if they read on 4 or more occasions each week, if it has been recorded by you. Times-table practice is also important and we will let the children know which tables they need to work on. We will be introducing the children to two websites, Reading Eggs and Mathletics, which will support their progress in literacy and maths. We would also encourage the children to make regular use of these sites at home. Both can be done independently or supported by an adult. Recommendations are to perhaps do two 20 minute sessions on each per week.

In addition to Reading and Mathletics, children in Year 3 are expected to do one piece of literacy or maths homework each week. Homework will be given every week on a Friday and should be returned the following Wednesday. Occasionally this will be topic based homework.

We would appreciate any help from parents and carers who can come into school to help with individual reading practice. Please talk to your child's teacher if you would like to help with this.

In ICT, we will introduce the children to email, and they will have their own Gmail account. We feel confident that use of the internet and email will support their learning and will discuss e-safety issues as part of our programme of study. We recognise that computer and internet access is not always available at home and we will run a lunchtime club to allow access. During this club children will also be able to keep up with Reading Eggs and Mathletics.

Some practical advice to help you and your child:

- For the first week, your child's teacher will bring your child, with his or her class, out to the playground at the end of the day. As the term progresses the children will start to come out independently at the end of the day. Please make sure that you and your child are aware of your arrangements for collection. If a child is waiting more than 10 minutes, they will be taken to wait outside the secretary's office in the foyer.
- During the morning, there is an opportunity to have a piece of fruit. This should be brought into class rather than kept in their lunchbox. We also allow and encourage water bottles with lids that children can drink out of in class; water only please.
- Children may buy tuck from the canteen at break time and should bring no more than £1 in a named purse. This should be handed to their teacher for safe-keeping at the beginning of the day and taken home at the end of each day.
- The children will be given a Learning Journal in the coming weeks. This should be brought in every day along with their reading book. Please sign the learning journal each week to acknowledge that you have seen their homework and any notes. If you add any urgent notes into your child's learning journal, please encourage them to show it to their teacher as soon as possible.

Please make sure ALL clothing that comes into school is clearly named. It saves a great deal of learning time.

YEAR 4 NEWS

READING

Reading is a vitally important part of every child's learning both at school and at home. Your child should have brought home their reading book already.

Please support your child by listening to them read every night. Your child will be able to record this in their learning journal.

PE AND GAMES

As we move into Autumn and the days get a little colder your child will need to have appropriate clothing for Games outside. Unless it is raining heavily every child will go outside for a Games lesson every week. Therefore, they will need track suit trousers, a sweatshirt and trainers for these lessons. Could we also remind you to name everything! Finding lost items of clothing is much easier if everybody names all their belongings.

This term our main topic in science is 'Habitats@. We will also be incorporating this topic within our Literacy and D.T. lessons.

In geography our topic is 'All about the UK'. We will be looking at maps of the UK, identifying where capital and major cities are, learning about our national parks and rivers.

We would like to hear about any library visits or home research your child does to support these topics.

YEAR 5 NEWS

Cheery smiles and enthusiastic pupils made the new school year get off to a great start. There have been a number of changes to the teaching team, with the return of Mrs Elliot and the welcome additions of Miss Hinde and Mrs Latimer. We look forward to combining our skills to maximize learning through an enjoyable and challenging curriculum.

Our curriculum gets off to a great start with our trip to Holt Hall Field Study Centre in order to study the River Glaven. This will provide the basis for our teaching about rivers and will provide a local example to refer to as we work through linked topics such as the water cycle, habitats, river energy flow, settlement and natural features. As you will be aware Year 5 also plan a residential trip to Holt Hall in June, so this early experience acts as a bit of a taster too.

Literacy sessions focus on the work of Michael Morpurgo during the first four weeks where we will look at a range of his novels before writing in his style ourselves. Later we will be moving onto stories from other cultures. Aboriginal culture and traditional stories will be part of this study, as it works well with our teaching for Black History Month. We are particularly looking forward to the art work which we hope to generate from this project.

Later in the term our project work will have a science focus. We will be learning about ourselves and how the body functions. We are keen to link this to P.E. and ICT when we look at links between health, exercise and fitness. Towards the end of the term we will be preparing for a school performance of winter poems and Christmas songs.

We have an after school tea party on Thursday 19th. September at 3:30pm, to meet parents, introduce ourselves and discuss the coming year. Of course, you are welcome to bring your children to this meeting.

Games are on a Thursday as usual. 5C have their PE lesson on a Monday, 5LE on Tuesday and 5H on Wednesday. Please make sure all kit is named clearly. For indoor PE, pupils need plimsolls or they can take part in bare feet. It is vitally important that pupils have a PE top!

YEAR 6 NEWS

READING

Reading is a vitally important part of every child's learning both at school and at home.

Please support your child by listening to them read every night and getting them to complete their Learning Journal. We expect everyone to read at least four times every week and have this recorded.

PE AND GAMES

Games are on a Thursday as usual. 6T have P.E. on a Monday. 6K and 6T have P.E. on a Friday. Please make sure all kit is named clearly. For indoor PE pupils need plimsolls or they can take part in bare feet. It is vitally important that pupils have a PE top!

FOOTBALL

Football for Y6 will be on Tuesday lunchtime.
Football for the Girls Team will be on Friday lunchtime.
Games will take place after school.

Victorians

Our first topic this term is The Victorians. We will be
If you wish to help your child with their learning the following website may be of some use to you.

http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/primaryhistory/victorian_britain/

We have a trip to Gressenhall planned for Tuesday 22nd October which will involve dressing as a Victorian!

After the half term holiday we will be studying rainforests. As part of this project we will be visiting the Sainsbury's Centre to look at art work from the rainforests after half-term.

A GREAT START!

We have been very pleased with the way the pupils have started the new year and their attitude towards improving their work. Let's keep that up!

KEY STAGE 2 NATIONAL TESTS

The National Tests take place in the week starting May 12th.
Please make a note of this date!

HOMEWORK

Please help your child to complete their work and return it to school by the Wednesday of the following week. If your child has any problems completing their homework then please call in and see their class teacher, or alternatively write a note explaining the difficulties your child has had. We expect Numeracy homework to be completed in pencil. We expect Literacy homework to be completed in blue pen, with a date and title underlined with a ruler.
