



Heathwood Lower School Newsletter

September 2022

Welcome back!

We hope that you have had a super summer break and are ready for a new school year. We have been working hard over the summer to make sure we're ready for you.

We would like to welcome all those children, parents and staff who are new to our school. Starting somewhere new is both exciting and challenging as you learn new routines and make new friendships. We hope you will find our school community friendly and supportive. It is very easy to make assumptions that we all know what happens on a daily basis and at special events. If you are uncertain or have any worries, please do not hesitate to ask. We aim to work in partnership with you for the benefit of all our children.

If you see a new family on the playground, please make an effort to make them welcome 😊

Heathwood is an inclusive school that promotes a set of values; we strive to nurture our pupils in order that they may become confident, caring, compassionate children, ready to make a positive contribution to the wider community when they leave our care. We work tirelessly to ensure the school continues to flourish and maintains its welcoming, family feel. We hope that as many of you as possible will get involved in the life of the school, as by working together we can make sure your sons and daughters enjoy school and develop the skills and knowledge they need to build successful, happy lives.

We will be reminding children about 'The Heathwood Way' during the first few weeks, a 'non-negotiable approach' to learning ('I can do it' attitude), and a pride in ourselves and our environment; including smartness of school uniform, tidy work books with neat handwriting, and an organised, litter free environment. We hope you will join us in supporting and encouraging 'The Heathwood Way' at home.

We have three **positive school rules** which encompass everything we do:

Be Kind, Be Ready, Be Safe - This is the Heathwood Way.

We have had a change to our senior leadership structure as follows

Mrs Susanne Dove: Headteacher Monday-Thursday

Mrs Jackie Wright: Deputy Headteacher (Curriculum and Mathematics), Headteacher Friday

Mr Paul Dicker: Assistant Headteacher (Inclusion-SEND and More Able, English)

Have a great month.

Susanne Dove and Jackie wright
Headteachers

Pre-School News

We are, of course, very pleased and excited about the return of all our children and also welcoming our new children. We will be focusing on settling all the children into Pre-School, getting to know them, and supporting their confidence, happiness, learning and development. We are also excited and pleased to welcome Mrs Morrell, our new PreSchool Lead.

Our theme for this half-term is 'Me and My Community' and we would like all children to bring in a photograph of themselves with their immediate family; the children love this and enjoy taking their friends to the display to talk about themselves and their home.

Governors News

Do you want to make a difference in your local community? Do you work well in a team and enjoy responsibility? Do you believe that all children should achieve their potential and enjoy a rich curriculum with exciting learning opportunities?

We have vacancies for Foundation and Local Authority Governors with particular experience in Finance or Early Years, and a vacancy for a Clerk to the Governing Board. If you are interested, please contact the school at office@heathwood.beds.sch.uk

No school or educational experience is needed. We are a very welcoming team and you would get lots of support and a full induction for this very rewarding role.

If you would like an informal chat with one of our Governors, the school office will happily arrange this for you.

As Governors could we also remind you that during this term we ask that you take the time to complete parentview by clicking on this link <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk>

For new parents to the school, parentview is something that we ask you to complete each academic year,

Daily Routines

School starts at 9.00am and finishes at 3.30pm.

The school gates are open in the morning between 8.55am and 9.00am, and in the evening between 3.25pm and 3.35pm.

If you are late, please bring your child to the Office, where we will mark him/her in. Lateness after 9.05am is unauthorised.

Play

Research has shown that play is the most important developmental process in any child's life, and the current health situation has identified the importance of outside learning. We aim to spend time outside everyday in addition to 'playtime' and 'lunchtime'.

Children are waterproof. Lack of outdoor play can be extremely bad for children's health. Outdoor play has recently been linked to improved behaviour and mental health as well as promoting healthy eyesight. We will still play outside in all weathers so please ensure your child has suitable clothing for outdoor play, even if they arrive at Pre-School/school by car.

We are committed to protecting children from serious harm but we also believe that minor bumps and bruises are an important part of growing up. You only have to think back to your own childhoods to know this is true. We will sometimes play games where the occasional bump and bruise is possible because of the enormous benefits these experiences have on the development and well-being of children. Studies have shown that overprotecting children can harm their development and that experiencing controlled risk through play can better prepare them for real life risk.

We believe that we are harming children's resilience if we continue to treat insignificant injuries. We will use a common sense approach to assess which injuries genuinely need attention and those which the child can better deal with by continuing playing. Children with minor bruises will be gently encouraged to carry on playing (just like we all did when we were children) rather than taking up time that could be better spent helping children play. This will help children become more physically and emotionally resilient. We hope you will support us in making play as exciting and fun as possible at a time when many children are not getting sufficient quality play in their lives.

Dates for your Diary

September

5th School re-opens for Pre-School and Classes 1-4

6th Open afternoon for Class R

7th First full day for Class R

14th Roald Dahl Museum (Class 2)

16th Higgin Museum (Class 1)

23rd Jeans for Genes Day

30th Macmillan Coffee Morning

October

6th Individual Photographs

12th Harvest Assembly

12th & 13th Virtual Parents Evening-email to follow

20th Legoland (Classes 1-4)

24th - 28th Half Term

November

12th Children in Need

14th-18th Road Safety Week

16th Class 2 Assembly - parents invited

Reading Books

During the first week back, children in Classes 1-4 will be assessed for updated Reading levels - please bear with us while we spend time on this.

From Monday 12th September, a weeks' worth of books will be sent home every Monday and must be returned the following Monday.

In the meantime, don't forget that all children have access to MyON-the online reading platform-check your child's diary for username and password.

Please return any school books that you have at home.

In Class R, we will be sending home books in due course. Initially, we will be sending home books that you, as parents, can read to your child or picture books that you and your child can talk about and make up a related story. In line with the rest of the school, these will go home on a Monday and must be returned the following Monday.

Medicines

Medicines kept in school must be prescribed for the child by a GP. Inhalers and Epipens must be in date and provided in the original box with instructions for use. All medicine must be named clearly. A form must be completed at the OFFICE if your child is prescribed any medicine that needs to be administered in school.

School Diaries

This year's school diary is coming home next week and contains reading records, targets and merits, as well as lots of school information all in one place. We expect these diaries to be in school every day and taken home every evening. **Please spend time with your child looking through and signing the appropriate pages at the front of your child's diary.** Please encourage your child to look after their diary, they are costly and we will have to charge £3.50 for any that are lost.

Playtime Snack

Children in Class R, 1 and 2 will receive a fresh fruit snack daily as part of the Government's 'Schools Fruit and Vegetables Scheme'. As a school, we have decided to extend this scheme and provide a fresh fruit snack for Classes 3 and 4 paid for by us. Please do not send in any other snack.



Fairtrade Council sell Fairtrade tuck on Fridays at playtime. Tuck costs 50p per week/£7 for Autumn term. This will be set up as a payment on School Money

We encourage children to have a water bottle in school every day which can be refilled (water only please - NO squash or juice).

Don't forget that we don't allow single use plastic - Heathwood water bottles are on sale for £2 from the School Office.

Harvest Assembly

Harvest Festival is an annual celebration that occurs around the time of the main harvest. In Britain, thanks have been given for successful harvests since pagan times. Harvest festival is traditionally held on the Sunday of, or nearest to, the Harvest Moon.

In British schools, people bring in produce from the garden, the allotment or farm. The food is often distributed among the poor and senior citizens of the local community, or used to raise funds for the church, or charity.

We will be celebrating the Harvest Assembly in school with pupils only on Wednesday 12th October and then donating the gifts from our Harvest Festival to the Leighton Linlade Helpers. The charity provides food parcels to vulnerable families in Leighton Buzzard and the surrounding area. We will send a link for parents to view the Assembly after the event.

Non-perishable Harvest gifts (including personal care and cleaning items) may be brought into school any time from now onwards, to add to our collection.

Rewards and Celebration

At Heathwood we have a House Point system, our 'Houses' are Squirrels, Foxes, Rabbits and Badgers - your child will know which house they are in. Points are awarded at any time of the day and by all adults in class, in assembly, at playtimes and lunchtimes. The points are collected and counted weekly by the House Captains and celebrated on Fridays. We have a mufti day at the end of each term for the House with the most points.

Merit certificates are awarded for Active Learning (eg. asking a good question, working as part of a team, showing The Heathwood Way), and the two highest attaining Merit earners in each class at the end of each term, are invited to 'Hot Chocolate with the Headteacher'.



On Fridays at 9.30am we hold a Celebration Assembly, this is to recognise 'Good Work' and 'Star Writer' or 'Amazing Mathematician' or 'Remarkable Reader'. We continue to award a pencil to the 'Star Writer', a mathematical reward to the 'Amazing Mathematician' and a 'Reading Tag' in each class every other week.

'Heathwood the Bear' is awarded in Monday Assemblies to the Class with the best weekly attendance.

Children earn Values Stars which are collected on their own Rosette in each class. Stars are counted at the end of each month and The Good Conduct Cup is awarded to the class with the most Values Stars.

CHALLENGE

Welcome back to our School Challenges. I know the last few weeks of term seemed to disappear very quickly as has the Summer break. As I have not received any challenges from July I am running them again as I would love to see

what you can do with them ... Please send in photos of your creations using the office (office@heathwood.beds.sch.uk) or Pre-School (preschool@heathwood.beds.sch.uk) e-mail addresses.

- **Design Challenge: Egg Drop** - Using any items you can find around your home, try to design something that will protect an egg during a drop. Take a look at the poster in the hall for some ideas that could be used.
- **Creative Challenge: My Favourite Animal** - Draw, colour, shade or paint your favourite animal. You can use your own choice of media to capture your favourite animal. Please draw it carefully and then colour, paint or shade it in.



Parents: If you would like more ideas and helpful examples, we have added the challenge Board posters to our website. If you go to our website, click on the drop down menu for children and then click on Monthly challenge; you will find them there. 😊

Please remind your children that they can earn themselves some house points by setting any of the challenges; just send in an email or a note to me saying what they want to challenge the children to do. Have a super time challenging yourself and enjoy this first month back at school!

Mr Paul Dicker

School Dinners

School dinners for children in Reception, Class 1 and Class 2 are **free**, funded by the government (UIFSM-Universal Infant Free School Meals). We are very proud of our super school meals (**have a look at the menu on the school website**), We work really hard to provide a nutritious and delicious selection of food every day. I would encourage all children to have a free meal at lunchtime instead of bringing a packed lunch.

The price for school dinners has not been increased and is **£2.30** per day / **£11.50** per week / **£80.50** for September/October half term for **Years 3 and 4 only** and should be paid for in advance weekly, half-termly or termly.

Please pay for school meals in advance online to NatWest account name: Heathwood Lower School,
sort code 60-02-13
account number 62411632

Please reference with your child's name prefixed with 'SM' e.g. SMJackDove

In the long term we hope to use School Money for this but are waiting until we are all more used to it!

Term Dates 2022/23

Autumn

Monday 5th September 2022 - Friday 21st October 2022

Monday 31st October 2022 - Friday 16th December 2022

Spring

Wednesday 4th January 2023 - Friday 10th February 2023

Monday 20th February 2023 - Friday 31st March 2023

Summer

Tuesday 18th April 2023 - Friday 26th May 2023

Tuesday 6th June 2023 - Friday 21st July 2023

INSET Days

Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd September 2022

Tuesday 3rd January 2023

Monday 17th April 2023

Monday 5th June 2023

Monday 1st May 2023 - May Day Bank Holiday

School Prices

In consideration of the financial pressures that parents find themselves in, We have decided not to increase the cost of Pre-School, Wraparound care and School meals. We will however, keep this under review.

For parents of children in Years R, 1 and 2 the school meals are paid for by the Universal Infant Free School Meal funding and are an excellent opportunity for children to have a warm meal at lunchtime. All the meals are home cooked on site and offer varied, nutritious and delicious choice of meals. The menu is on the school website

at

<https://www.heathwoodlower.com/Forparents/SchoolDinners/>

School Uniform

We are looking forward to seeing the children looking very smart in their new school uniform. May I remind you that we are now in the Autumn Term, so back to shirts and ties please (**no summer uniform**).

We are proud of our uniform and I expect children to have their top button fastened, shirt tucked in and tie correctly tied at all times. Please ensure that your child is smartly dressed as they leave home.

I know how expensive uniform can be - please make sure it is all named so that we can return any mislaid items to you promptly!! Please also ensure that your child has a full named P.E kit and trainers in school every day.

Long hair must be tied back.

Earrings must be removed or covered for P.E. (please provide your own tape). No jewellery.

P.E kits will be sent home every Friday for you to wash and return every Monday.

Pupil Premium

If your family is 'hard pressed' you may be eligible for a Pupil Premium grant; the school uses this funding to support your child's learning in a variety of ways, it can also cover some of the cost of trips, school clubs, school uniform or music lessons.

If you believe that you may be entitled to claim a Pupil Premium grant for your child and you do not already do so, or if you are not sure, please come and speak to Mrs Wilkins in the Office or contact Central Beds Council to lodge an application.

Tel: 0300 300 8306 or customers@centralbedfordshire.gov.uk

Parents' use of Social Media

Heathwood Lower School understands and appreciates the benefits of social media; however, there may also be some significant negative impacts, such as cyber bullying, which the school does not tolerate.

For us to set the best example possible to pupils at the school, we would like to invite parents to also lead by example. The school urges parents to review our Social Media Code of Conduct, which outlines how to act when using social media (available on the Policies section of the school website).

Should the school be subject to any online abuse, we will take the appropriate action, which may include considering our legal options to deal with any defamatory or libellous activity on social media. If any parents do have any concerns to raise, or would like to discuss this subject further, please contact your child's class teacher in the first instance. Mrs Dove and Mrs Wright can be contacted via the school office.

School Milk

If your child would like to have milk at school in the coming term from 'Cool Milk' please see their website (www.coolmilk.com) for details on how to register.

Jeans for Genes Day

We are again supporting Jeans for Genes (Friday 23rd Sept) which raises funds to support children affected by genetic disorders. There are around 6,000 genetic disorders and it is estimated that one in 25 children is affected by a genetic disorder. 30,000 babies and children are newly diagnosed in the UK each year. Some genetic disorders are apparent at birth while others are diagnosed at different stages throughout childhood, and sometimes into adolescence.

Wear jeans/denim skirt with normal school uniform on top (i.e. jumper/cardi, shirt and tie).

Bring in a £1 donation please or, <https://www.jeansforgenesday.org/pay-in-your-money>

Our Value for September is **PRIDE**

A feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one's own achievements, the achievements of one's close associates, or from qualities or possessions that are widely admired.

In school we will be concentrating on 'The Heathwood Way', taking pride in ourselves, and being especially proud of our learning and our environment. We continue to celebrate great learning and to show and tell each other how proud we are. We will discuss what pride looks like and how it makes us feel.

Thought for the month: "Vanity and pride are different things, though the words are often used synonymously. A person may be proud without being vain. Pride relates more to our opinion of ourselves, vanity to what we would have others think of us."— Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*

At home you could make a point of talking about pride in each other in your family, particularly telling children why you are so proud of them - 'I'm really proud of the way you waited so patiently', 'I'm proud that you are so kind to your brother' etc.



Values Stars are awarded to every child demonstrating the Value of the month - collect stars for your class to have the chance to be awarded The Good Conduct Cup!

WOW!



Let us know how your child has demonstrated this month's Value of Pride at home.



Council News...

At Heathwood we are very proud of our active School, Fairtrade, Sports, Rights Respecting and Eco Councils. Mrs Dove assists with the School Council, Mrs Wright with the Fairtrade and Rights Respecting, Mr Dicker with the Sports Council and Mrs Wilkins with the Eco Council.

All our Councils are elected by the children in their classes. After listening to a short speech prepared by potential councillors, the children vote for the candidate of their choice.

The Councils pride themselves on being the voice of their peers, bringing issues raised to monthly meetings. They run coffee mornings for parents and the local community, and raise money for school

resources and charities of their choice. A weekly Fairtrade tuck shop uses its profits to invest in a Shared Interest Bank that offers low-interest loans to farmers in developing countries and to support the education of two children in Sierra Leone.

WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING

We are pleased to announce that we will be holding a coffee morning in support of Macmillan Cancer Support on 30th September at 9am in the school Hall. Everyone welcome.

Operation Encompass

The school has been given the opportunity to take part in a project that will run jointly between schools, Bedford Borough Council and Bedfordshire Police

Operation Encompass is the reporting to schools, prior to the start of the next school day, when a child or young person has experienced or been exposed to any domestic abuse.

Operation Encompass will ensure that a member of the school staff, known as a Key Adult, is trained to allow them to liaise with the police and to use the information that has been shared, in confidence, while ensuring that the school is able to make provision for possible difficulties experienced by children, or their families, who have been experienced a domestic abuse incident.

We are keen to offer the best support possible to all our pupils and we believe this will be extremely beneficial for all those involved.

