

Newsletter

Thursday 8th October 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

I just wanted to take a moment to thank parents for their support over the first half of this term. Our aim has been to provide as 'normal' an education as possible for our children, taking into account both their physical and emotional well-being, while also trying to ensure that they still have a broad and balanced curriculum, including specialist teachers, trips and visitors. I believe the teachers and teaching assistants have done an excellent job ensuring that we maintain a high quality of education with the restrictions we have been presented with. Life in classrooms still contains a buzz of excitement, chatter of children, strong and positive relationships between adults and children, and so much fantastic learning going on.

One of the things that does sadden me is not being able to have parents into school like we usually would for workshops, visits and meetings. I know you understand why this is the case but it still feels like a hole in our provision. Like all schools we have adapted the school day, including breaks and lunchtimes to decrease mixing in the playground, the dining hall and the corridors. This has been a challenge in terms of capacity of staff and additional spending, whilst allowing the children to feel as settled and as safe as possible. As with all our routines, we review them on a regular basis and as the Covid situation changes and new guidance comes out, we further review what we do. Thank you for your support.

On a lighter note, at Kingslea we like numbers and data so we wanted to give you a feel for the school as a whole.

Kingslea In Numbers

424 lovely children

61 amazing staff

320 supportive families

38 languages spoken

Approximately 100 lost jumpers per year (50% not named!)

21 children off with possible Covid symptoms since the start of term

No positive tests for Covid amongst children since the start of term

Additional spending on Covid approx. £20,000; lost income approx. £15,000

10 hours per day worked in school typically by teachers

90/10 ratio of positive to developmental comments we aim for with the children

2000 glue sticks used each year

Over 120 computers/tablets in the school

Over 100 applications each year for 60 Reception places

107 peas left on the floor after lunch on Wednesday



Covid-19 Standards Focus

Here at Kingslea, development of our teaching and learning is something we place a very high priority on. As well as our video coaching, peer-to-peer learning walks, high-quality staff meetings/INSETs, external support and Teachmeets for sharing strategies, we also have a half-yearly standards focus. Running one focus September until February then another February until July, our standards team has the aim of improving the provision for pupils and raising standards. In recent years, this time has been spent focusing on children for whom spelling is holding them back in writing, vocabulary across the curriculum, the children who seem to be particularly quiet in the classroom, and specific groups of pupils in maths.

Each standards cycle is led by appropriate members of staff with expertise in the focus area. It consists of teachers meeting with one of the standards leaders each month and discussing classroom strategies, targets for individual pupils and the progress being made in the focus area. The standards team then meet together each month to plan out whole-school actions which have come up through the standards meetings, including any specific professional development required.

This term, we had planned for a focus on strategies to support children to reach the greater depth standard in maths. While this is important and is still a part of the maths team's action plan, we have postponed this focus in favour of understanding how the Covid-19 changes to schooling during 2020 have affected our pupils and, more importantly, what can be done to counteract any negative impact. We have just finished the first round of meetings and we thought you may be interested to read some of the main points which have come out of the standards focus so far.

- On the whole we have been very pleased with how the children have come back to school. Their learning behaviours, kindness to each other and eagerness to learn are all obvious. It is also noticeable that many children (supported by their families) who engaged in the Continuation of Learning in the summer term are working at a higher standard to children who did not engage with it. You really do make a difference.
- Writing seems to be the area in which children have been most affected. Interestingly, many parents commented in communication during lockdown that this is what pupils struggled with at home. Pupils' stamina and sentence structures have suffered, and some key elements from the curriculum so far are missing. Staff are now working to build this back up appropriately, including using a 'little and often' approach.
- Grammar, phonics, handwriting, times tables and number bonds are the main gaps across the school—teachers are focusing on these in key skills sessions throughout the week.
- Some children—particularly in key stage 2—have not been reading aloud at home and this has become quite obvious in their fluency when reading in the classroom. We have some parent helpers coming in so these children will be a priority for them (please speak to Mrs Payne on the gate if you are able to volunteer to help with this in your child's class). Also, we are encouraging parents to resume hearing their child read if they have taken a break.

School Photos

Tempest Photographers will be at school on Thursday 15th October taking individual school photos, due to the need to maintain 'bubbles' we are unable to take sibling group photos this year.

Parents' Evening

Thank you for signing up for parents' evening. As you are aware, we have split parents evening over 4 nights to ensure that we have the bandwidth capacity for a successful evening. We have had a trial run with the software and all went well. In the event of a breakdown in online communication on the evening, we will ring you on your mobile rather than spending time trying to reconnect. Each appointment is 10 minutes.



Conkers—a plea

It is the 5th Annual Kingslea Conker Championship—something we are very much looking forward to. To help us all, please can you ensure that the knot at the end of the string is of a decent size, so that the conker doesn't come flying off. Last year we spent a fair bit of time re-stringing conkers!



Numbots

Thank you to the parents who have mentioned some Numbots difficulties to Mrs Payne on the gate in recent weeks. We have been in contact with the team who run the site and, through our messages, they discovered some glitches: on occasion it has been particularly difficult for children to achieve the two stars needed to move to the next level, even if children (or their adults!) are getting every question correct. Sometimes children can find this frustrating so please do pause their play, encourage them to play levels they've previously scored two stars on to build their confidence, and speak to us if this seems to be the case. Sorry for the issues this has caused.



Y3 to Y6 PE

Thank you to everyone for sending children in in their PE kits on the correct days. We aim to spend most of our PE sessions outside however when the weather is poor we will have our sessions inside, if the halls are available. Please can you ensure Y3-Y6 come in either shorts for PE or shorts and jogging bottoms, as well as their plain white T-shirt, PE hoodie/school jumper/cardigan and socks (not tights). Children can either wear their shorts under their jogging bottoms or bring their shorts in their book bag and then change at lunchtime, depending on where PE will take place.

Community Speedwatch

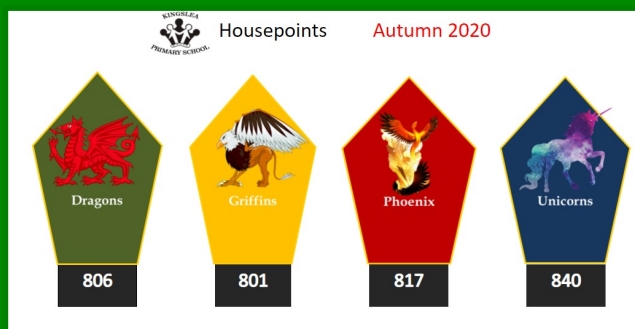
A couple of weeks ago a Community Speedwatch session recorded 219 vehicles approaching the school from the North Street roundabout. 217 of these exceeded the 20 m.p.h. sign when the amber lights were functioning [3.00 pm-3.30p] A bus and two professional drivers drove at or below 20 m.p.h. Eighty one vehicles turned right into the school turning, braking severely as they passed at 30-34mph, one at 38mph.

It is understood that the 20mph area was introduced subsequent to repeated incidents and the hope was to substantially reduce speed at critical times to preclude child injury or death.

Graham Sitton—Horsham Area Speedwatch Coordinator.

Parking

Please show the same level of respect to residents of Kingslea as you would expect others to show to you at your property. Please also be mindful of the flow of cars when deciding where to stop or park.



Notes from the School Office

REMINDERS

- ***Flu vaccination forms and Christmas Card orders should all be returned to your child's class. They will then be passed on to the Office.***
- ***All payments must be made through the ParentMail payment system, we are no longer able to accept payments at the Office***

A big 'Thank You' from the Office for remembering to bring everything to school everyday



Autumn Term 2020		
Monday 12th October	Class 4U Mosque visit (Moved to the Summer Term)	Y1 / Y2 Conker Competition
Tuesday 13th October	Class 4B Mosque visit (Moved to the Summer Term)	Y3/4/5/6 Conker Competition
Wednesday 14th October	Y2 Horsham Museum Victorian Workshop (at school)	
Thursday 15th October	Individual photos (no sibling groups)	6.00pm Governors Curriculum
Week of 19th October	Virtual Parents’ Evening	
Tuesday 20th October	Y6 Homefront Bus	
Wednesday 21st October	2.20pm Reception Stay & Play (postponed for this term)	
Friday 23rd October	INSET DAY	
HALF TERM : MONDAY 26th OCTOBER –FRIDAY 30th OCTOBER		
Monday 2nd November	Flu Vaccinations (all year groups)	
Wednesday 4th November	9.00am Governors morning (TBC)	
Thursday 5th November	Big Draw (postponed)	
Friday 6th November	Y2 Victorian House Walk	Firework Night (?)
Friday 13th November	Children in Need	
Tuesday 17th November	9.00am Governors Resources meeting	
Tuesday 24th November	Y3 Mayan Day (moved forward a week)	
Wednesday 2nd December	Y2 Rainbow Theatre visit	
Friday 4th December	Christmas Decoration Afternoon	
Wednesday 9th December	am Reception Christmas performance	pm Reception Christmas performance
Friday 11th December	am Y1 Christmas performance	pm Y1 Christmas performance
Tuesday 15th December	am Y2 Christmas performance	pm Y2 Christmas performance
Wednesday 16th December	Christmas Dress up day /Christmas lunch	
Thursday 17th December	am Y6 WW2 Workshop	
Friday 18th December	Last Day of Term	

Office staff

Over the last few months, significant demands have been placed on all members of the Kingslea community. I would publicly like to thank our admin and site team who have worked under significant pressure to allow teachers to teach, the school to remain open, systems to be adapted and communication with yourselves to be timely and effective. I would need many, many pages to explain what our admin team have been doing over the last few months on top of their usual workload; however their actions include moving various things online e.g. new starter forms, new Reception parents visits and parents evening. They have carefully monitored absences—including where there have been children off with Covid symptoms—sourced PPE, sourced cleaning equipment including sanitiser, spoken with numerous concerned parents about Covid symptoms, updated our computer network to ensure it has the capacity for Continuation of Learning plans and trained staff in the use of Microsoft teams and the Parents' Evening System. So a huge thank you goes to Mrs Hill, Mrs King, Mrs Webster and Mrs Leyland. We get very little support for any of the above actions from West Sussex so we are very fortunate to have such a dedicated team. I would also like to thank Mr and Mrs Richmond for ensuring that our grounds look lovely and that our building is well-maintained. If you ever walk past the school on a Saturday or Sunday and see a silver Volvo, that is Mr and Mrs Richmond's car. Thank you to our cleaners for their willingness to work overtime and to adapt their hours to fit in with 'Stay late, we'll educate'.