



PALACE WOOD PRIMARY SCHOOL

An Unexpected Flood

What a week. All seemed to be going well this week. The routines and arrangements are well embedded and we were looking forward to having our EYFS children in full time this week.

However, the rain on Wednesday night/Thursday morning had other ideas. We came in on Thursday morning to find Elephants under a couple of inches of water. To say it was unexpected was an understatement. We had to make the tough decision to close the class for the day while we worked on our contingency plans and what we could do! I thought that if I had to communicate with parents about closing a class, it would be for something to do with COVID!

The whole team, as they always do, pulled together and worked miracles in salvaging what they could from the classroom and rapidly transporting it to the KS2 library to create a temporary classroom so that we could welcome Elephants back into school on Friday.

We will continue to work with the local authority on how we can return to 'normal' as soon as possible but, as I am sure you can imagine, not an easy fix! We will keep you updated with any information as soon as we get it.

Palace Wood Needs You!

Every year, around this time, we begin planning our Open Events for prospective new parents. With the restrictions and risks in place this year, we will be unable to hold the traditional Open Mornings to show children how amazing Palace Wood is.

We have taken this decision together with the other schools in our collaboration so that we have a united approach to keep all of our communities safe.

Therefore, we will be holding a series of virtual events to show families the school and give them a flavour of what we offer. We have plans and ideas in place, but would really like your help.

We would like to include a short section that has some parent testimonials (we all know how we like to read a Trip Advisor review!) to share with parents your experiences and thoughts on the school. If you are feeling really brave, you could record a short video of yourself, or send in a voice recording that we could share (this will prove that it isn't just me choosing what to say!). If this all seems a bit too much, sending in some words that we could add to a slide on a presentation would also be fantastic.

If you are keen to support, please send your testimonials to headteacher@palacewood.kent.sch.uk. If the file size is too big, using We Transfer is an excellent free site to share a link.

How to help your children

I mentioned last week about some workshops for parents on supporting how children learn. The first two sessions will be on memory and how this works in relation to how children learn. The session will last about 30-40mins with an opportunity for questions – so allow approximately 1 hour.

We will use Zoom for these sessions, and I will run Session 1 on Memory twice on Thursday 1st October to try and meet the needs and times for all parents. The first session will be 12:30-1:30 and the second session will be 7:30pm-8:30pm. The links to the meetings will be in the body of the ParentMail rather than here to keep the links more private.

Session 2 will be in the following week and I will provide more information in next week's newsletter.

And finally

Last week, I sent out a survey about Statutory Assessments for children. I really believe that they are not necessary this year and that we should focus on teaching the children and building on our own assessments. Thank you to everyone who completed the survey. I thought the results from our school were really interesting. You can see them here.

1. At school, which of the following do you think is important?
 - Children's physical health **85%**
 - Children's mental well-being **97%**
 - A welcoming and safe environment **94%**
 - Children seeing their friends again **87%**
 - A curriculum that takes into account what pupils have missed and provides ample opportunities to catch up **82%**
 - Preparing for SATs and formal tests **4%**
2. Do you believe a rich, broad and stimulating curriculum is more important than preparing for SATs or other formal tests in 2021?
 - Yes: **96%** No: **4%**

3. Which of the following do you think is the best way to find out where the learning gaps are and how schools can bridge them?
 - A personalised assessment by your child's teacher, including some informal tests, starting this term: **99%**
 - SATs and other formal government tests taken under exam conditions in the Summer Term: **0%**
4. Should formal tests be cancelled to allow children to spend that time catching up on learning?
 - Yes: **94%** No: **3%**

October Holiday Club

Monday 28th is the last day to register your interest in the Holiday club which will run from Friday 23rd (INSET) to Friday 30th October from 8am until 5pm. Please email lynne.emmerson@palacewood.kent.sch.uk.

Thursday 1st October Census Lunch

Please encourage your child to have a school meal on Thursday – menu attached.

Dates for your Diary:

3 remaining INSET days: 23/10, 4/1, 7/6
Flu immunisation – whole school – 20/11
Individual Portrait Photos – 13/10
Parentmails: Uniform, Homework



Superstar Corner

Caden (Crocodiles) held a cake sale for friends, family and passers-by at the end of our driveway and raised £202.16 for Macmillan Cancer Support. Ava (Panthers) entered a writing competition in lockdown to have her story published in a young writers' book that will be in the British Archives Library forever and she won! It had to be a ridiculously silly story and hers was titled 'The banana eating bubble'.