



FIVE ACRE WOOD SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

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DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Monday 13th, Tuesday 14th & Weds 15th March 2017	Staff training days (pupils not in school)
Thursday 30th March 10am	Easter Fair
Monday 5th June	Staff training day (pupils not in school)
Friday 7th July	Transition day for pupils
Monday 10th July—evening	Meet the New teacher
Weds 12th & Thurs 13th July	Sports days
Tuesday 18th July—10.30am	Secondary performance

A MESSAGE FROM PEGGY...

Here we are at the end of a very busy term 2! I hope that you are looking forward to the Christmas break, I'm sure our pupils are looking forward to a well earned rest.

Although it has been a busy term, it has been full of festive fun! In this newsletter you can read about the many Christmas events that have taken place over the last two terms, in addition to pupil achievements, Harvest Festival, horticulture updates, sixth form updates and the latest fundraising news. There are a couple of Christmas events taking place that, due to printing deadlines, we were unable to include in this newsletter. However, an electronic version will be emailed on parentmail which will include the additional events and you can also find it on our website.

Since the last newsletter, we have had some more new staff join us; Tasha Playle, Paul Nicholl-Pierson, Rosie Walker, Marie Deleslie, Jade Kemsley, Beverley Bird, Louise Nicholson and Carolyn Burdis have joined us as Teaching Assistants

whilst Cheryl Langley and Susan Hale are our new Lunchtime Supervisors. We wish them all the best in their new roles.

For those of you who have recently visited our main site in Loose, you will have seen how the new build has been coming along. Some of our staff and pupils have had the opportunity to have a look inside, which they found very exciting! You can see the photos on pages 6 and 7 and keep up-to-date with developments on our website.

Individual pupil photos were taken in term one and there were some lovely photos. In the new year we will be organising for our school photographer to come in to take class photos so we will be in touch after Christmas to inform you of the date.

Parents evening was held at the beginning of December and this was very successful. Now that we have a new school hall, all meetings are held in the hall, which well. We will continue to hold parents evenings like this in future.

I am sure by now that you are

WINTER 2016



all very familiar with our healthcare plans! These documents include all of your child's medical information so it is very important that they are kept up-to-date and are signed whenever you come in to school for a meeting. Please can I remind you that if you need to make a change to your child's healthcare plan, you should handwrite the change on to your own copy, sign and date next to it and send it into school for us to update. We will then send a copy home again for you to keep.

Finally, I would like to thank all parents, carers and families who have come along to our school events recently. It has been great to see you all and we really appreciate your support. I hope that you all have an enjoyable Christmas and a very happy new year. See you in 2017!

Peggy

HARVEST FESTIVAL

On Tuesday 4th October our primary pupils took part in a Harvest Festival performance.

For the first time, the performance was held in the new school hall and pupils danced, signed and sang along to songs.

Pupils were asked to bring in food donations which were donated to the Vine Church. The Vine Church said that they

were overwhelmed by the generous donations so thank you to everyone who donated. These donations were given to local people in need.

There was a great turnout of parents and carers at the performance and it was enjoyed by all!

Thank you to everyone who helped organise this event.



CHILDREN IN NEED FUNDRAISER

Five Acre Wood School took part in Children in Need Day on 18th November.

Pupils and staff dressed up in their pyjamas or onesies for the day and donated money. There were activities held throughout the day and pupils enjoyed a disco. Fun was had by all!

A total of £321 was raised so thank you to everyone who took part.



CEDAR CLASS PUPIL ACHIEVEMENTS

We have had two very special achievements by two Cedar class students - Courtney and George.

Courtney was asked to represent Demelza and receive a £10,000 cheque from Beadles. She wore a special dress for the occasion which she attended with her mum and her sister.

Courtney loved being the centre of attention for the afternoon and received a small gift from them. She was alert and smiley throughout the experience and her family are very proud that she was selected to attend for such a special occasion.

George has been involved in fund raising for a new sensory garden at the Orchard Centre in Medway. He raised over £100 in school donations when he did a sponsored for a walk on 17th September with his family around a park near Sittingbourne. The Orchard Centre provides a range of specialist services for young people with disabilities.

George held an Olympic torch and received a medal at the end of the event.

Well done to both students, they are very proud of themselves as are we and their families.



FUNDRAISING UPDATE

NEW MINIBUS

We are delighted that Variety have once again chosen to support us by donating another minibus to the school. The 14 seater bus, sponsored by S. C. Farley Electrical Contractors Ltd., is a very welcome addition to our fleet and allows us to continue to take our students out to access community activities.



EYE GAZE TECHNOLOGY

In 2013 The Childwick Trust gave us an £8,000 grant to purchase eye gaze computer equipment. That equipment has proved itself to be a valuable school resource, used on a regular basis for the benefit of many of our PMLD students.

This year we re-approached the same trust to ask them to fund an additional project that will build upon the success of the eye gaze equipment project, and they have agreed to give us £10,000. This has funded the purchase of 3 Grid Pad Pro systems together with the associated software, switches

and wheelchair mounts, which will enable our students who use assistive technology for communication to access environmental controls and influence the world around them.

OUTDOOR GYM

Thanks to a £10,000 grant from Awards 4 All England, we will shortly be having an outdoor gym installed at our Holmesdale site.

This will provide an interesting physical challenge and opportunity for physical activity, and will be a great addition to our provision at Holmesdale.

GYMNASTICS

Some of our students have been very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to participate in gymnastics classes at Pegasus gym in Tovil.

This world-class facility trains young people of all ages and abilities, some of whom compete internationally representing Great Britain. The club also run specialist disability classes.

A £5,000 grant from the Kent Community Foundation enabled 40 of our students to utilise the specialist facilities and instructors for an 8 week block of classes. This grant has also allowed us to purchase specialist gymnastics equipment to use at school and to provide the British Gymnastics Teachers Award training for 18 staff so that they are qualified and confident to continue to deliver quality gymnastics teaching here at school.



CRICKET ITEMS

The Kent Youth Cricket Trust have given us £350 to spend on Kwik Cricket and Table Cricket equipment to build on our sports provision at school. As table cricket is specially designed to allow wheelchair users to access the sport, this means that this sport can be accessed by all students at Five Acre Wood.

CONTACT US

Please feel free to get in touch with Jane Gardiner, our school fundraiser if you would like to get involved with the school charity or would like any more information about anything that the charity is doing. Email jgardiner@five-acre.kent.sch.uk or call the usual school number, 01622 743925.

HORTICULTURE UPDATE

We have introduced a Five Acre Wood Grounds Team here at the Loose site.

The team is made up of six students from our Homesdale sixth form who visit our site every Monday to work maintaining and improving the school grounds.

This experience was introduced to provide valuable work experience within the Horticultural industry and to form part of the students' Duke of Edinburgh award.

This new and exciting project is managed closely to emulate the work environment where possible.

The team have their own fobs to sign in and out of work and they also have tool identification booklets and folders to keep records of their progress. These will form great portfolios for them to keep when they leave school.

I would like to thank Luey, Casey, Ryan, Mikey, Evie, Samuel and all the staff that have helped to get this great project up and running.



Our new planters

We hope that you like our new planters. We have built them ourselves and will soon be planting them up with flowers and plants to make our school entrance look great.



Working together to collect the materials and plan for the task ahead



Team work helps us to achieve



Communication and co-operation



Surveying a job well done!



HOMEBASE GARDENING SPONSORSHIP



On 16th December, Maple and Ash classes visited Homebase to buy some gardening equipment.

Homebase are very keen to support us with our gardening enterprises.

We would like to thank Homebase for their generosity in donating heather plants recently, to brighten-up our flowerbeds.

They have also kindly agreed to help us in future gardening projects; our forthcoming ones are making insect houses and bird-feeding tables, so watch this space.....



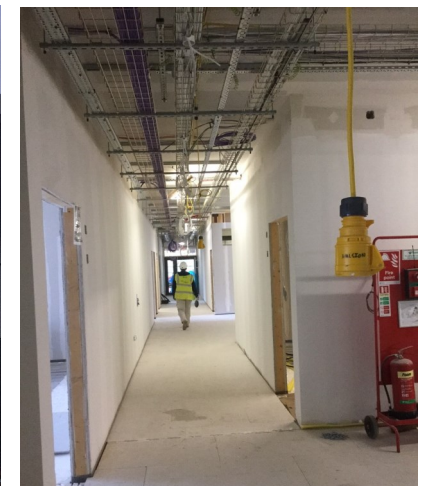
NEW BUILD UPDATES

Since the last update, the new build has really come on!

Some staff and pupils have been lucky enough to walk round the new build. This was very exciting for pupils to see their new school taking shape!

We will be offering more pupils the opportunity to put on their hard hats and high vis jackets to visit the new build in the future.

Here's a sneak peek of inside the building. You can keep up-to-date on building developments by visiting our new build timeline on our website, www.fiveacrewood.co.uk.



NEW BUILD UPDATES



CHRISTMAS CARD COMPETITION

Our annual Christmas card competition was held again this year.

Pupils were asked to draw a picture and the chosen winners would see their picture on the front of the

Christmas card.

The cards were then sent to pupils, staff and external contacts.

We received lots of entries and as always, it was a very

difficult decision to make.

Thank you to everyone who submitted a card, we really enjoyed looking at them all!

The winning entries are shown below. We are sure

you will agree that they are winning designs!

The chosen winners were:

A Sparrow class pupil
Harley — Wren class
Leon — Maple class



CHRISTMAS FAIR

After missing out last year due to having no hall, we were very excited to hold a Christmas Fair again this year! It was held on 6th December and all pupils and their families were invited to attend.

There were a number of stalls selling festive gifts and treats which had been made by pupils. Items for sale included cakes, biscuits, Christmas decorations, reindeer food and festive jars. There were also raffles and competitions including tombola's, Guess the Weight of the cake and a Christmas Tree game.

Lots of people came along to the fair and some stalls completely sold out of items!

All money raised was split between classes to buy presents for pupils.

Thank you to everyone involved in organising the Christmas Fair and also to everyone who attended and made the event so successful.



CHRISTMAS NATIVITY

This year we held two nativity performances for Primary classes. They took place in our new school hall on 14th and 15th December and parents/carers were invited to watch.

Pupils really enjoyed getting involved with singing, dancing and signing and they wore some brilliant costumes! Some pupils narrated the nativity and then went on to perform Christmas songs.

A great deal of time and effort

went in to organising, rehearsing and preparing costumes so thank you to everyone who contributed to this.

At the end of the performances, there was a guest performance from Chantelle Lee who sang a Christmas song and her own single, When I think of You, whilst dancing with our pupils!

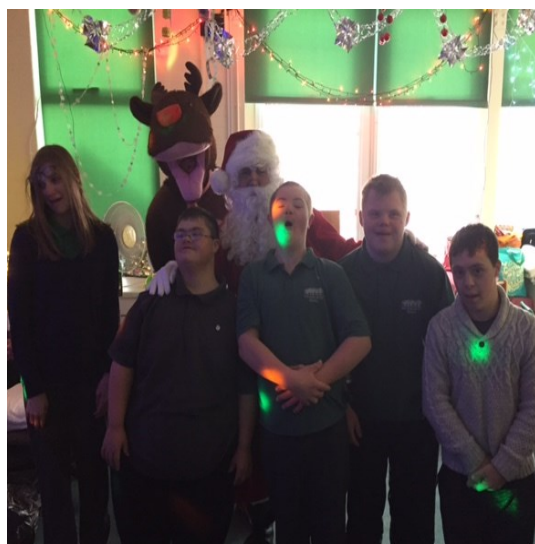
We would like to thank everyone involved in the nativity and in particular to Leanne Burgess who organised the performances.



CLASS CHRISTMAS PARTIES AND SANTA VISIT

On 20th December, classes held their own Christmas parties. Pupils had great fun dressing up, playing festive games and enjoying party food.

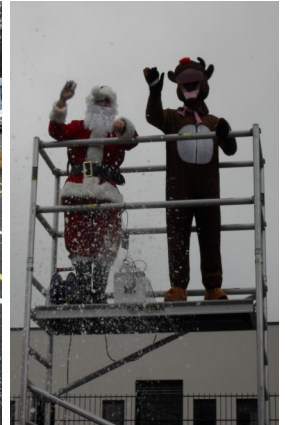
On the same day, primary pupils also got the chance to meet Father Christmas. Some older pupils worked as Santa's helpers to help distribute presents. Thank you and well done!



A WHITE CHRISTMAS AND GREETING FROM SANTA

Pupils were very excited on the last day of term when they arrived to find that it was snowing. If that wasn't enough, Father Christmas and Rudolph were also there to greet them with Christmas songs playing.

Everyone was so excited and had a great time dancing in the snow!



FIVE ACRE WOOD CHRISTMAS DINNER

On the last day of term pupils tucked into a Christmas lunch of roast turkey and all the trimmings.

Pupils enjoyed sitting in the hall with their friends eating their lunch and in particular enjoyed pulling crackers!



SIXTH FORM UPDATES

HALLOWEEN



In October, the sixth form school council (pictured above) organised a Halloween disco.

All students enjoyed themselves and there were some amazing costumes as you can see below!



MID-KENT COLLEGE TASTER MORNING

On 10th November Year 13 & 14 visited Mid Kent for a taster morning. Students met previous students and asked questions to get a feel for the college.



HOLMESDALE CHRISTMAS FAIR

On 1st December, students at our Holmesdale site held their own Christmas Fair.

Everyone had a great time getting in the festive spirit.

There were items for sale that students had made themselves, including decorated mugs, sweet jars, biscuits, cakes and decorations.

Cameron even made a snowman in his own time and used it for 'guess the number of cups' at the Christmas Fair (pictured below).

