



November Newsletter 2011

Issue Number 46

Dear Parents & Carers,

It's been a while since our last newsletter so please take the time to read through the information included in this edition. We are only five weeks away from our Christmas holiday and there is a great deal to be done so without further ado...

POTENTIAL STRIKE ACTION IMPORTANT INFORMATION

As you may have heard, in the media, a number of teaching and support staff unions have balloted their members regarding potential strike action on Wednesday 30th November. This includes all the main teachers' and head teachers' unions. Not surprisingly, a number of our staff are members of these unions and may, if they choose, take action and not attend work on the day in question.

I would like to inform parents that whilst my own union may be asking members to strike I will not personally be doing so.

I am able to ask colleagues if they intend to strike but they are not obliged to answer this question in advance of the day (although I have requested that they do so). If a member of staff is absent due to strike action their role cannot, due to legislation, be covered by other colleagues or supply agency staff and consequently any classes affected will have to be closed for the day.

Obviously I will inform parents if any or all classes are closed with as much notice as possible although, given the above, this may not be until the actual morning of the proposed strike. I will make use of the school website and will send emails (or texts if no email address is available) to any parents concerned as soon as I

am aware of any members of staff electing to exercise their right to strike. This may be at very short notice, as late as 8.30am on the day. I am aware that this may present folk with considerable difficulty but I have no alternative and cannot offer other cover to any classes that may be affected.

If no members of staff opt to take action then school we be open as usual. If some but not all classes are open, those children whose classes are open will be expected to attend as usual.

KEEN TO BE GREEN WEEK



Our very enjoyable and successful eco themed curriculum week took place during the week beginning 31st October. On the Tuesday (as the school was closed for an INSET Day on the Monday) the events commenced with a special assembly during which we learned about various endangered animals, issues which affect climate change and how we can make a difference.

During the afternoon of Tuesday 1st November we held an inter house "Green" themed quiz with rounds including recycling, "Wombles" observation, newspaper clothes and true or false. The winning house was the Saxons with an eco friendly 59 points.

The Wednesday was litter pick day with all the children, at some point, joining in to help remove litter (including natural litter such as Autumn leaves) from the school site and a number of key sites in the village. The village can be proud of the fact that the children found very little "man-made" litter and some of the children were very excited that they found an actual piece of rubbish!



Thursday was our "Green Fashion" day and many of the children came to school dressed in

home made "eco-clothing" made from re-used materials. Thank you to everyone who took part and helped make our fashion parade a real pleasure; there were some really creative and attractive ideas and designs.

Thursday lunch time focussed our thoughts on another important issue, that of Fair Trade. Mrs Staples prepared a fantastic and tasty feast using, as far as possible, fairly traded ingredients. First course was a very popular mince, cheese and salad wrap (which has since been incorporated into the main weekly menu due to its popularity), followed by a chocolate fountain with fruit pieces and chocolate cookies.



Friday, despite the weather forcing us indoors, was our sponsored walk in aid of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF). We arranged a fairly convoluted "track" in the hall and counted our laps accordingly. So far, I am thrilled to announce, that we have collected **£387** in sponsor money and donations. This is a magnificent result and will support the charity in their continued efforts to secure the natural world for the future. If you have any outstanding amounts of sponsor money please would you return this by Friday 18th November. Many thanks and congratulations to all the children who took part.



TEACHERS IN TRAINING



Mrs Handley is continuing with her Graduate Teacher Programme training and is currently working in the Dragon Class with Mrs Regan and Mrs Parry, developing her teaching skills with our Key Stage 1 pupils who are enjoying working with her.

We welcome two PGCE Student Teachers, Miss Stiles and Miss Larner to Phoenix Class, working alongside Mrs Smith. They are making good progress and a very positive contribution to the pupils' learning.

CHILDREN IN NEED CAKE SALE



The School Association are holding a cake sale on Friday 18th November in support of the 2011 Children In Need

appeal. Cakes will be on sale at the end of the school day. If you are able to donate any cakes for sale, please bring them to school on Friday morning and place them on the table in the entrance library area.

SCHOOL ASSOCIATION CHRISTMAS EVENT



The SA are holding a family Christmas "evening" on Saturday 26th November between 4.00pm and 7.00pm. This will include food, a quiz, a magnificent "Twelve Days of Christmas" raffle and other fun and games. I believe a certain jolly, bearded gentleman will also be putting in an appearance. Please watch out for further information and raffle tickets. And don't forget the non-uniform days on Friday 18th and Friday 25th November in return for contributions to stalls etc.

ADVENT ASSEMBLY



As the Pegasus and Phoenix Classes will not be in school on Monday 28th November we will now be holding our Advent Assembly on **Tuesday 29th November**. For the sake of convenience we will hold the assembly at 9.00am, immediately following registration. Parents are welcome to join us for this special event.

Parents' Update Meeting



Continuing with our development projects and partnership aims we will be holding our next Parents' Update Meeting on Tuesday 6th December at 7.30pm. The agenda and aspects for discussion will be circulated in the near future. If you would like to attend you do not need to inform us in advance. If you are not able to attend but would like to contribute any thoughts regarding the aspects for consideration then please feel free to submit comments via email in response to details when circulated.

MAKING MUSIC - Pegasus & Phoenix



The children of Pegasus and Phoenix Classes invite you to join them on **Friday 9th December 2011 at 2.15pm** for a little concert of songs and music with a rivers

and rainforests theme. The concert will include original compositions and items performed by groups from each class.

INFANT NATIVITY



The children of Unicorn and Dragon Classes will be performing their nativity "Busy, Busy Bethlehem" on Thursday 15th December at 9.15am in the school hall. We would ask that pre-school children do not attend the performance as the children will have worked hard to prepare and it is always a shame if their efforts are drowned out by the cries of younger siblings. Mrs Skinner and Mrs Duncanson have offered to provide a crèche for younger children if you are unable to find alternative care.

There will be a dress rehearsal on Tuesday 13th December (also at 9.15am) so if you are unable to attend on the 15th, we are not able to provide a crèche on this occasion.

CAROL SERVICE



Our end of term Carol Service will be held on Friday 16th December at 2.15pm in St Margaret's Church. You are all invited to attend and join in singing some old favourites and hear the Christmas Story in simple readings. I hope that, unlike last year, we won't be snowed in during the service!

ADVERSE WEATHER



Whilst we hope that school will not be disrupted by snow or other adverse weather (although the children may disagree); should it be necessary to close the school we will again make full use of our school website www.westhoathlyschool.org.uk to make necessary announcements and keep people informed. We will also endeavour to send emails (or texts as necessary).

BOOK CLUB



Do you enjoy books and sharing books with children? Then we would value your help. After Christmas we would like to trial "Book Club" to help to encourage our pupils to read for pleasure.

On two mornings a week, at the start of the school day, we would like parent volunteers (you don't have to do both days or every week) to join groups of children in the studio (all children will have the opportunity to attend at some point) to share books, read to and with individuals and groups and encourage discussions or themes, authors, contents and opinions as well as encouraging older pupils to share books with younger ones.

We would like to trial this, initially, for the first half of the Spring Term but may opt to continue if it proves effective. If you would be willing to volunteer to help with book club on a regular or occasional basis then please contact the school office to add your name to our list. Please also indicate which mornings would suit you most.

FRIDAY "UNIVERSITIES"



Do you have a hobby, interest or skill which you would be willing to share with a group of children? If so then we are looking for volunteers to help us with a new project to provide the children with some curriculum enrichment experiences.

The idea will be to offer six week "courses", some led by parents and some by teachers, for about an hour and a half on a Friday afternoon. Children will sign up to a course and attend for six weeks at the end of which they will take part in a presentation of their efforts and receive a "graduation" certificate.

We would like to trial this idea in the Spring Term, for six weeks, three either side of the half term break. If you are willing and able to help perhaps with cooking, sewing, knitting, music, craft activities etc. then please contact the office and add your name to the list.

Well that's just about all for now. Thank you all for your ongoing enthusiasm and support.

Yours Sincerely,



Adam J. Earle
Headteacher