Nurture the Spirit – Grow the Mind – Love your Neighbour

Welcome Back Newsletter

Dear Families of Catsfield CE Primary School,

Welcome back to a brand new school year! I hope that you all had a good summer and the children enjoyed the time off. I am sure they are feeling refreshed and excited to start in a brand new year group. It has been lovely seeing the children come back so enthusiastically and spending time with their friends and new class mates!

With the start of a new school year, there are new beginnings to look forward to and of course that also includes new staff. It's lovely to have Miss Tuff officially join the team and just like the children, she is settling in well! Miss Tuff got to know the school in the spring terms whilst working with us and has thoroughly enjoyed seeing our new Tigers join the school. It's always a joy to welcome new children to the school in both Reception, as well as other year groups. I am delighted with how well the new Reception children have settled in to school life. Their behaviour and attitude have been incredible and the Yr 6 Buddies have been invaluable in helping them to feel happy and settled. Well done to them all.

In the next couple of weeks, we will be electing a brand new school council. They will have an active role in helping to positively shape our school as well as organising some fundraising events throughout the year. Seeing the pride the children take in our school, I know that whoever is elected will do a great job.

The term ahead is already shaping up to be a busy one and I know the staff have been working hard to ensure the children have a great start to the year. If you have any concerns as the weeks go by, please come and speak with us, as working together, we can achieve the best for every child. I look forward to seeing our school continue to 'stir up the gifts' within us all.

With very best wishes.

John Barnes
Headteacher

School Vision and Values

Our school vision, at the top of the newsletter, is underpinned by our six values of compassion, respect, wisdom, perseverance, community and friendship. We take one of these values as a focus each term, culminating in a Values Day. We will start the year with compassion as our focus, as this links well to Harvest, which will be coming up later in Term 1.

Neuro-Ninjas Update

Andrew's team have been busy over the summer creating new materials to support us all with learning about our brain to manage our well-being.

For those new to the school, this is a programme we buy into. The programme is designed to help all in the school community learn about these three elements:

- Wellbeing is a skill (see the picture at the end of the letter for the 12 Rocks of Wellbeing and remember, do your rocks!): Terms 1 and 2
- Managing emotions: Terms 3 and 4
- Unleashing learning: Terms 5 and 6

Each week, the children have a session exploring one of these aspects through watching a short video and talking about it in class. Andrew also comes into school throughout the year to lead sessions with both staff, children and families.

You can sign up to access all their materials on their learning hub by clicking here: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeJyhvCsHzGe1uhuesS-XFi-HOndIdFA-fs-pSXgdHYGBZeXQ/viewform

This includes courses for children and adults.

The Neuro-Ninja programme really does offer so much that anyone can benefit from, so please do make the most of this wonderful resource

Healthy Snacks

Children are welcome to bring in snacks from home to have at break times in school. Please can I remind families, these should be healthy snacks and not crisps, chocolate bars etc. And of course, they should be nut and sesame free.

Trading Cards

Mrs Holmes has very kindly offered to take over the job of 'trading card supervisor' (!) and so children are invited to bring these in on Wednesdays for sharing and trading. Please remember, if children have cards of high monetary value, these should be left at home. Please ensure your children understand that trading means that if a card is swapped, this is then final. They should only do so if they are absolutely sure!

Uniform and Equipment

Catsfeild CE Primary School is a wonderful place to be and we want every child to take pride in being a member of this wonderful community. Therefore, we expect every child to have their complete uniform every day in school including appropriate clothing as the weather changes. Please ensure all items are clearly named.

On PE days, children are to come in wearing the appropriate kit. This is to include t-shirt, shorts/trousers, plain PE jumper (this does not have to be the school jumper) and appropriate footwear.

Many thanks for your support.

Sports Report

After a successful year last year, we are once again looking forward to getting involved in a variety of inter-school events this year.

For Term 1, we have a Y5/6 football tournament, girls rugby tournament (in celebration of the World Cup currently taking place) and cross country to look forward to (dates on the calendar below). Practise in school will begin shortly!

We also had a good start this week to a bonus term of cricket coaching provided by Sussex Cricket Club, with LS Coaching starting up again on Friday.

Church Events

Father Robert and his team will be continuing their monthly children's services on the first Sunday of each month. Father Robert has thoroughly enjoyed getting into school over the last year and is keen to grow the partnership between us. These services are designed to be family friendly and short, so please do get along to support.

For school events, please see dates below for Harvest and end of term Christmas service at the church.

Attendance

Here at Catsfield, we want every child to reach the highest standards of which they are capable. To give children the best possible chance of doing that, regular attendance at school is vital. Our target is for every child to attend for at least 96% of the year which in real terms means only missing a maximum of 5 ½ days across the year. With each day building on the previous one and much thought given by the teachers to provide the children with rich learning experiences, we want every child to enjoy and benefit from these opportunities.

Attendance Monitoring

As a school, we are required to analyse our attendance regularly through the year. In line with the attendance policy, this will be done after every half term. For children whose attendance is between 90-95%, we will contact families with a short message to highlight this. For those under 90%, we may arrange a meeting in school which would involve exploring the reasons for absence, looking at support methods and target setting. A summary of the responsibilities of families, schools, governors and local authorities can be found here:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66bf301e253aee7aafdbdfea/Summary_table_of_responsibilities_for_school_attendance_-_August_2024.pdf

One thing to make you aware of is the revision to penalties for term time holidays. There is now a graduated approach to these, which escalates with the number of unauthorised days taken off over a three-year period (please note, these are cumulative and do not have to be consecutive to trigger these penalties). For absence 1, there is a fine of £80 per parent. For absence 2, there is a fine of £160 per parent. For absence 3, there is possible prosecution or other legal attendance intervention such as attendance contracts, an Education Supervision Order organised by the Family Court and finally, prosecution in a Magistrates Court.

As a school, we do not want to see things escalate and will always remain open to working together to find the best solutions. We will always explore supportive ways of collaborative working as our preferred approach and remain flexible where we can. However, last year saw 165 days of lost learning due to term-time holidays and we are keen to reduce this. To support you, and getting holidays booked in advance, the school year will finish on Friday 17 July, with INSET days on Mon 20- Wed 23 Jul allowing for early getaways. Our other INSET in Monday 3 Nov, allowing for a later return if you wanted to get away over half term.

Open Days for Prospective Reception Parents

Although the 2025-26 academic year is only just beginning, we are already starting to think ahead to next years' Reception intake! I would like to invite all prospective parents to attend one of three open afternoons the school will be holding.

We are always happy to welcome new families into the school so please mention these to any friends or other family members with children who are due to be starting school in September 2026.

The open afternoons will be Weds 15th October, Wednesday 19th November from 1:45 – 2:45pm and Thursday 20th November 6:00 – 7:00pm.

If you are unable to make these dates, please contact the office to arrange a separate appointment.

An Introduction to Read, Write Inc.

This year, we are continuing our programme for phonics and home reading for Reception – Year 3 called Read, Write Inc. Mrs Harwood is our lead on this and would like to invite you to a parent workshop on Thu 25th Sept at 9am to tell you more about how the programme works, the changes to home reading and to share some of the resources. Come along to find out all about this, how to support your child and learn how to Fred Talk! You can also find information on https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/reading-schemes-oxford-levels/read-write-inc-phonics-guide/

Photos from the Start of Term

Catsfield C of E Primary School
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office@catsfieldcep.e-sussex.sch.uk 01424 892247

Headteacher: John Barnes BA (Hons) PGCert.NASENCO NPQH
Chair of Governors: Charlotte Buckland

Dates for Terms 1

September
Tue 16th: PTA AGM 18:00 – Please come along!
Thu 18th: School Council election
Fri 19th: School Council results!
Thu 25th: Read, Write Inc parents meeting at 9:00
Sports Crew training with Mrs Swatton from Claverham
Tue 30th: Flu Vaccines

October
Fri 3rd: Compassion Values Day
Girls Rugby Tournament
Sun 5th: 9:30: Children's service at St Laurence Church
Mon 6th: Y6 Health team checks
Thu 9th: Lions and Tigers Pirate Day!
Y5/6 Boys and Girls Football Tournament
Wed 15th: Prospective Reception Parent tour
Thu 16th: Individual and family photos
Fri 17th: 13:30: Harvest service at St. Laurence – please join us (14:45 end of day)
Wed 22nd: High Weald Workshops x 2 classes
Thu 23rd: High Weald Workshops x 2 classes
Y5/6 Cross Country

Dates for Term 2

November
Sun 2nd: Children's service at St Laurence Church
Tue 4th: Back to school
Thu 6th: Parent consultations 13:15 – 18:30
Mon 10th: Anti-bullying odd socks day
Thu 13th: Y4 Gym session with Mrs Swatton
Wed 19th: Prospective Reception Parent tour
Thu 20th: Prospective Reception Parent tour
Thu 25th: Leopards trip to Imperial War Museum

December
Mon 1st: EY/KS1 Nativity dress rehearsal
Tue 2nd: Nativity at 9:30
Thu 4th: Nativity at 14:00
Fri 5th: Community Values Day
Mon 8th: Enhanced Art Day
Wed 10th: School Council trip to the Houses of Parliament
Thu11th: Y3/4 Gym competition
Tue 16th: Y5/6 One Voice concert at De La Warr Pavilion
Thu 18th: Christmas lunch day
Fri 19th: 13:30: End of term service at St. Laurence – please join us, followed by earlier 14:45 end of school day

Learning Celebration Dates:
Autumn
Thu 20th Nov: 9:00: Panthers
Fri 28th Nov: 9:00: Leopards
Lions and Tigers: Nativity dates opposite

Spring
Tue 10th Mar: 14:00: Panthers
Wed 24th Mar: 9:00: Lions and Tigers
Wed 25th Mar: 9:00: Leopards

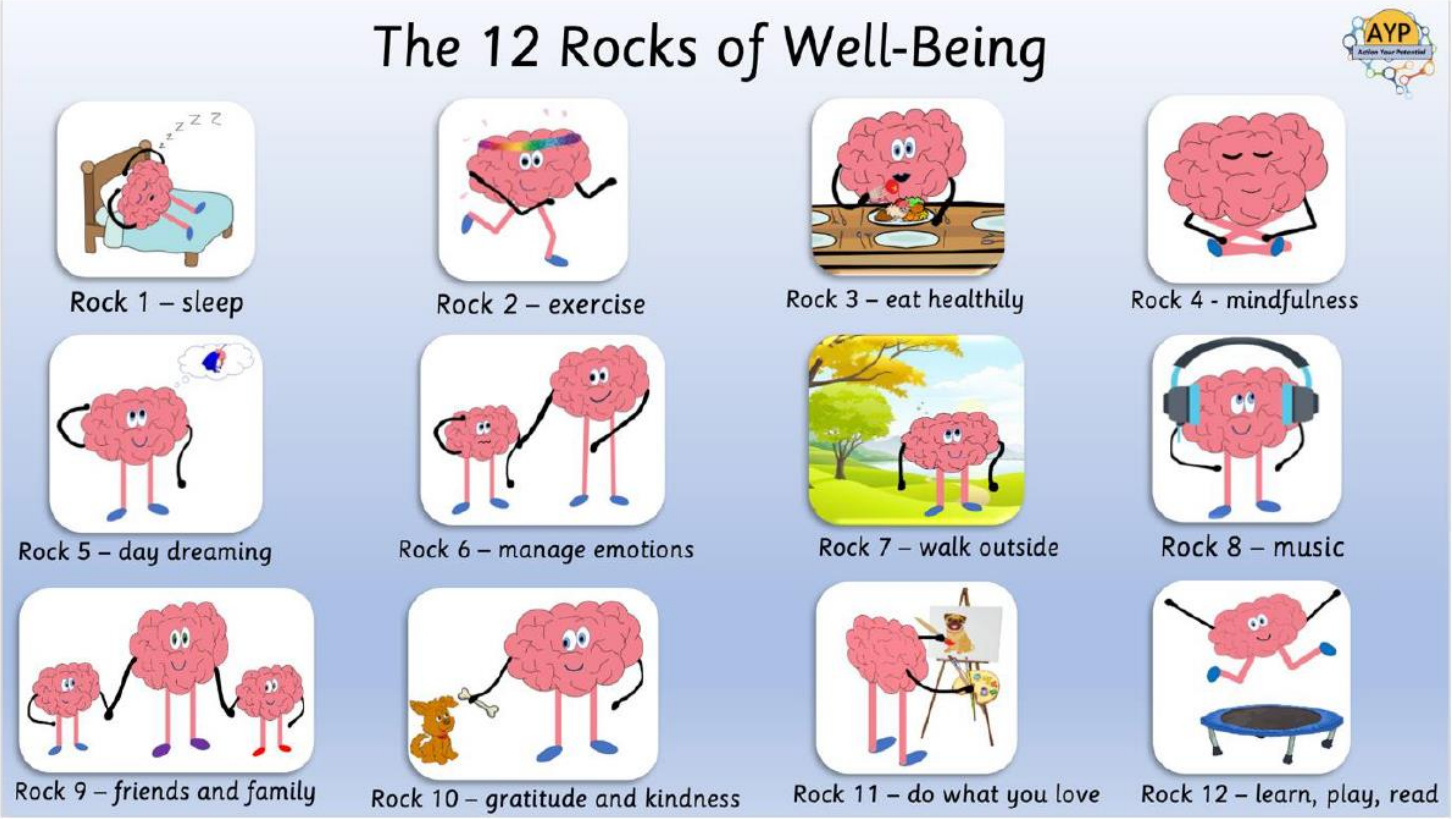
Summer
Tue 30 Jun: 14:30: Tigers
Tue 23rd June 09:00: Panthers
Thu 2nd Jul: 09:00: Lions
Tue 7th Jul: 9:00 Leopards

Future INSET Days:
Monday 3rd November
Monday 20th – Wed 22nd July

Other notable dates:
Spring parent consultation: Thu 26th February 13:15 – 18:30
Easter hat and egg rolling: Thu 26th March
Easter end of term service: Fri 27th March at St. Laurence 13:30 (14:45 end of day)
KS2 SATs: Week beg. 11th May
Sports day: Friday 5th June 13:30
End of year leavers service: Fri 17th July at St. Laurence 13:30 (14:45 end of day)

Safeguarding Information

For your reference, please find some contact details below for people both in and out of school you can contact should you have any safeguarding concerns over any children in our school:

Designated Safeguarding Lead: John Barnes
Deputy Safeguarding Lead: Lex Beckett, Cassie Skevington

East Sussex Single Point of Advice: **01323 464222**
NSPCC: 0808 500 8000