



Hassocks Infant School

NEWSLETTER NO. 2 - November 2024



Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome Back!

We do hope that you all enjoyed the half-term holiday. The children have all settled in well to the school and we've enjoyed another productive start to the half term. We're 2 weeks in and we've already enjoyed a visit from an author, a whole school Diwali celebration, parent consultation meetings, Year 2 space day and many more activities! Each of our year group teams and some of our subject leaders have provided a summary of some of the amazing things which have been happening throughout the school.

This is another busy half term and Christmas is now only 6 weeks away! This does mean that there are lots of events in the diary; the diary dates have been sent out with this Newsletter.

Adrian Bates-Holland, Headteacher

**Hassocks
Goes Gold**

Back in September we held a non-uniform day for Hassocks Goes Gold.

The total raised by Hassocks Infant School was £192.05. Thank you for your donations, it was lovely to see pupils dressed in gold around the village.

News from the Governing Body

What a busy start to the new school year! We would like to extend a very warm welcome, on behalf of the Governors to all new children and their families not just in Reception but across the school. We hope you have settled in and are enjoying your time with us.

At Hassocks Infants, we are extremely lucky to have a dedicated and hard-working group of governors, who regularly visit school and are proactive in their roles. The Governing Body meets on a termly basis and we have a programme of visits to the school, linked to the school improvement plan, which include lesson visits, meetings with subject leaders and talking with children to discuss their learning and their experience of the school. It has been exciting to see the children's progress and listen to them speak so passionately about what they have been learning and gather feedback from them on their time at school.

This term, we say farewell and a huge thank you to Jo Brumby for her service to the Governing Body as a parent governor and Safeguarding lead governor. We also want to say thank you to everyone who voted in our recent parent governor elections, and to those parents that took part. We are pleased to announce that the elected Governor is Gillian Walton. Gillian has already attended her first Full Governing Body (FGB) meeting, and will be a valuable member of the Governing Body.

Please contact us via the school office or visit our Governor webpage if you would like any more information: [Governors - Hassocks Infant School](#).

Reminder about Inconsiderate and Dangerous Driving and Parking

Unfortunately we do regularly receive phone calls or emails from people living in neighboring roads around the school or parents themselves about inconsiderate and dangerous parking and driving. Whilst the school does not have any responsibility for policing the roads around our school, we would like to remind all of our families about the importance of driving and parking carefully at drop-off and collection time. Sadly, there has been an incident recently where a child was almost hit by a car.

If you are parking near the school, please ensure that it is in a designated parking area and do avoid blocking neighbour's driveways or access to their properties or pathways.

Sports Leaders

In the Autumn Term the Year Two Sports Leaders were elected by the teaching and PE staff.

These children will be looking forward to supporting PE events throughout the school and helping younger children during these. Watch this space for events to come! They will be using their leadership skills to promote team play, good sportsmanship and playing by the rules. These children have been chosen based on their communication, listening and social skills as well as their love of PE!

We would like to congratulate:

Oak:

Oscar, Bethany, Sophie, Teddy M

Elm:

Jennifer, Louis, Jayden C, Amelia

Holly:

Lalise, Fletcher, Peyton, Lola

School Council

Just before the half term break, our Year 1 and 2 children took to the corridors to vote at their local polling station (Alder classroom) for their class representatives. The event was hugely successful, and we now have a fantastic group of school councilors!

The children learned about democracy and considering which of their friends would be the best for the job. The job criteria covered being a good role model, a confident communicator and a good friend.

We now have a group of 12 councillors, two from each class who were fully elected by their peers. They attended their first important meeting; all were happy to have been elected for the role and were pleased to discover important meetings come with juice and biscuits!

This term they are due to start working on their first job, promoting our new Planet Protectors Challenge!

Well done to:

Year One: Ash—Rowan & Evie, Chestnut—River & Juno, Apple—Philip & Emilia

Year Two: Elm—Rosie & Carter, Holly—Delilah & Owen, Oak—Cleo & Louis



Light Up Hassocks (LUH) - Friday 6th December



Don't forget to return your booze barrow raffle tickets to be in with the chance of winning a fabulous barrow of alcohol to get the festive season off to a cracking start; tickets cost £2 each. Complete any tickets you wish to purchase and return the ticket stubs, cash and any unwanted tickets to the school office by **Friday 29th November**.

Donations of the following are gratefully received ready for LUH. Please bring to the school office:

- * Sweets and chocolates
- * Booze for the booze barrow
- * Any clean, empty jam jars

We always need volunteers to make these events run smoothly and to support with our efforts of raising extra money for the school. Please sign up to help at LUH by clicking the link here: <https://forms.gle/S2NACDaNd8RZMJE49> Even helping for a small amount of time can make a big difference. Free burger / hot dog for all volunteers and a member of their family.

Thank you for your continued support ~ The FoHIS Team

Road closures:

Please bear in mind that the set-up for Light Up Hassocks will be starting from 1.30pm onwards with all roads surrounding school being very busy with stall holders setting up and vans moving around. Please can you avoid driving to school at pick-up time on 6th December and allow yourself more time to park further away and walk to school if you are able. The road closures proper start at 4pm. Thank you for your co-operation.

Update from Reception

Reception- People Who Help Us

In Reception, we have been learning all about people who help our community. We started this exciting topic with a visit from the fire service, we learnt all about the equipment they use and how to stay safe around fire. The following week, we had a visit from some paramedics, in their ambulance! We got to explore the inside of the ambulance and pretend to be patients. Finally, we had a visit from the police! As well as turning on and off the flashing lights, we got to see how the police fly a drone with a camera on it.



Update from Year One

Outdoor learning—In year 1 we have been embracing our outdoor learning. We have had so many experiences from den building to a blindfolded sensory trail and making clay wolves to drawing pumpkins with charcoal. We hope to continue building on these experiences this term and will be outside everyday so please come prepared with warm coats and wellie boots.



Update from Year Two

Year 2 blasted off the new half term with a wonderful Space Day for their stunning start to our new topic - Spectacular Space!

We met Bob the astronaut who told us about his job as the man on the moon. He sent us special clues and a book to find out all about him. We also made our own rockets and painted a nebula using a variety of artistic techniques.



Whole School Diwali Celebration

On Friday 8th November, Hassocks Infant School was transformed into a vibrant canvas of colour and light as we celebrated Diwali: the Hindu Festival of Light. This year Diwali took place on Thursday 31st October.

The day was filled with a variety of engaging activities designed to introduce our children to the significance of Diwali and answer our Big Question: "Why is Diwali important to Hindus?" From storytelling sessions to hands-on crafts, every moment was filled with wonder and excitement.

Reception were introduced to Diwali and encouraged to think about what they already know about light. They followed the story of Deeya, a seven year old girl, and her family as they celebrated Diwali and were encouraged to think about all of the ways that they celebrated. The children were given the opportunity to make firework pictures and create rangoli patterns using pasta and rice.



Year 1 delved deeper, learning about The Story of Rama and Sita and the key message of good over evil. The children then crafted their own clay Diyas, traditional oil lamps, complete with battery-operated candles!



Year 2 were invited to come into school wearing vibrant clothes for an afternoon of dance. The children brought The Story of Rama and Sita to life through expressive dance. Working in small groups, they choreographed and performed dance sequences, capturing the essence of the story and the joy of the Diwali festival.

We were delighted to see the enthusiasm and creativity of our children as they embraced the spirit of Diwali. We hope that Diwali Afternoon becomes an annual event in our school calendar which provides an opportunity for our children to immerse themselves in three distinct cultural experiences around Diwali by the time that they leave our school.

By celebrating key festivals from the major world religions, we hope to instill in our children tolerance, respect and appreciation for different cultures and traditions. These are fundamental British Values which lie at the heart of teaching and learning.

Take a look at some of our photos from Diwali Afternoon! You may also wish to ask your child some of these questions at home.

What is Diwali?

What happens during Diwali?

How is Diwali celebrated?

What is The Story of Rama and Sita about?



In the beginning of the Autumn Term the pupils in Elm Class embraced the outdoors and participated in the first of many weekly Forest School sessions!



The children have built confidence in learning practical skills whilst exploring and connecting with their natural environment. Most importantly the groups have had huge amounts of fun building bonds with nature and each other - strengthening old and new friendships through teamwork, games, skill work and problem solving activities. Each week these brilliant children have been building upon their own independence, self esteem, resilience, confidence, curiosity, social skills, communication skills and knowledge of the wonders of our natural world.



In each session the children have enjoyed fun games allowing them the freedom to run and play whilst working together. A wide range of exciting activities have been enjoyed by the children, including;

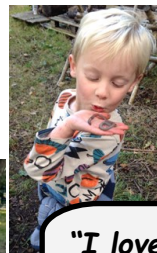
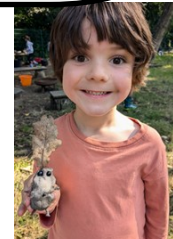
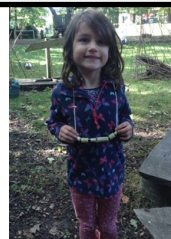
- * Blindfold sensory trail
- * Meditation & singing
- * Whittling
- * Sawing & Drilling
- * Making instruments; Sistrums & Jingle Sticks
- * Fire lighting—“Dragon sneeze” (flint and steel) to light a spark
- * Learning about the fire triangle: Fuel, Oxygen and Heat
- * Make our own ‘damper bread’ and eating it with a cup of hot chocolate
- * Crafting; autumn garlands, leaf crowns, clay figures, blackberry painting
- * Creating bug hotels; exploring insect life & microhabitats



Forest School has been a rewarding journey for Elm Class and a joy for the staff too. Magical days that will be remembered by us all. We look forward to welcoming every child in Year One and Year Two to Forest School sessions this year. Next up... Oak Class!



"We have found spiders eggs! No wait! They are centipede eggs! Look in the book they're the same!"



"I love worms sooo much!"

"I love the sound it makes! It sounds like the birds are tweeting!"



"Forest School is the best! I don't want it to end!"

If you are interested in supporting and joining in your child's forest school sessions please get in touch with Claire Daniel via the school office. Your support means everything to us and ensures these sessions are able to go ahead. Thank you.

Toilet Update

Work to refurbish our toilet block started in the half term holiday and has recently been completed. These toilets are used by our Year 2 classes throughout the day and all of the children at lunchtimes. The new toilets are bright and modern and are looking amazing!



Weather Alerts and School Closures

In the event of extreme weather we will always attempt to open school to avoid any unnecessary disruption to learning. There are some rare occasions when the school may be closed, for example in the eventuality of extreme weather, damage to the school site or disruption to power or water supplies. We have also been advised by West Sussex County Council to close the school if a red weather warning is issued for hurricanes, storms or extreme heat. There may be occasions when the school is able to open but we may need to make some changes to our arrangements, for example using a different entrance to access the school or adjusting the times of the school day. If we do have to close the school, we will always aim to make a decision as early as possible in the morning. We will use the following ways of communicating the decision to families:

- * **ParentMail** – an email will be sent to all families. We encourage families to check their inboxes before leaving for school if there is bad weather forecast.
- * **Text Message** – we may send a text message to families if a decision is made at short notice.
- * **Local Radio Stations** – we do inform BBC Sussex of any closures. School closures are announced on the radio and often listed on the BBC Sussex website.
- * **Facebook** – We will use the school's Facebook page to communicate any closures.

We do encourage parents to check these sources before contacting the school office.

West Sussex Mind

West Sussex Mind is an independent local charity which offers free, recorded webinars to help parents and carers support their young person's mental health. Topics include attachment, aggressive behaviours, anxiety, self soothing and emotionally based school avoidance. These webinars can be accessed at <https://www.westsussexmind.org/training-courses/mental-health-training/training-to-support-young-people/training-for-parents-and-carers/webinars-for-parents-and-carers>

Sleep

Quality sleep is essential for children's growth and development. A decent night's sleep will help them to cope better at school, allow them to react more quickly to situations, have a more developed memory, learn more effectively and solve problems. It will also make them less susceptible to colds and other minor ailments and will improve their mood. There are so many different factors which can affect children's sleep. The Sleep Charity offers information and advice on topics such as sleep problems, bedtime routines, relaxation techniques and night terrors here: <https://thesleepcharity.org.uk/information-support/children/>

Training for parents from Reaching Families:

Training

Autumn 2024

(2nd half-term)

Reaching Families offer a range of free training courses and workshops to parents and carers of children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in West Sussex



Training Workshops

November

Understanding Demand Avoidance	Thursday 7th	7.30pm
Making Sense of Education Health & Care Needs Assessments & Plans (EHCPs)	Wednesday 13th	10.30am
Understanding Autism in Girls	Thursday 14th	10.30am
Understanding Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)	Tuesday 19th	7.30pm
Making Sense of Behaviours that Challenge (age 2-11 years)	Tuesday 26th	7.30pm
Making Sense of Disability Living Allowance (DLA)	Friday 29th	10.30am

December

Making Sense of Wellbeing: How to improve your mood	Tuesday 3rd	7.30pm
Understanding Sensory Processing Differences	Thursday 5th	10.00am
Making Sense of Adult Life: Moving on (15+)	Wednesday 11th	7.30pm

All training above will be delivered via Zoom



SCAN ME

All our workshops are free of charge, for more information or to book a place, please visit our Eventbrite page or scan the QR code.

<https://reachingfamilies.eventbrite.com>



Reaching Families

www.reachingfamilies.org.uk

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