

A NEWSLETTER
FROM



MS ELBOURNE-
CLOAD



HEADS UP

13

FRIDAY 09 JULY 2021



As we come to the last full week of term, I have been reflecting on our last 2 academic years and what a roller coaster it has been. I think we would all agree that the difference from this time last year is a definite Covid Fatigue and a wish for life to get back to what we are used to! Provisional guidance from the government is already looking so much more positive for the Autumn term so fingers crossed going forward the term 'bubbles' will only refer to soap-sud creations!

Once again, I have been so impressed with the resilience of all our children – one parent commented to me that they think the children have coped with the cancellation of activities far better than the adults. This year they have jumped from school to home and back to school again for their learning, and they have just accepted the status quo so I want to say a massive congratulations to the children for all their positivity.

I also want to thank parents for being patient and especially for all the hard work during home-learning. I know, as a parent myself, how frustrating it has been and also a worry as our children are naturally social beings on the whole, and to my mind being away from their friends was the hardest part and that couldn't be replicated at home.

Another big vote of thanks goes to our school staff - throughout this time they have been amazing. Changing our practices following last minute government directives, organising online learning with less than 24 hours' notice and working hard to keep the children in good spirits and supporting their learning. At times, the frustrations with the situation have inadvertently been offloaded to staff. They have stayed calm and been understanding, and have done their best to find solutions.

Our school PTAs have also worked really hard through the year to keep the fundraising going by thinking outside of the box. I would like to commend them for their great achievements and thank them for their determination to keep going when it got increasingly tricky. I'd like to give a particular 'shout out' to Adeline Boucher and Florine Aulas, the PTA Chairs. If anyone would like to attend the PTA AGM on Wednesday 14 July @ 8pm please contact the office for the Zoom login details.

I thank all our governors - the role of governor can be a hard one to understand unless you are on a governing body. As a voluntary role there is an awful lot of responsibility – schools can only be judged as having good or outstanding leadership if that is also reflected in the governing body. They work tirelessly, often behind the scenes, to be our critical friends to monitor our school practices and ensure that the children are getting the best education we can provide. On a personal note I would like to say a heartfelt thank you to Rondi Allan our Chair of Governors. Rondi is my listening ear, my voice of reason and the person who will challenge me to give my very best – thank you for all that you do and especially in these last two particularly challenging years.

Staffing Changes

Junior School

Mr Miller will be retiring at the end of this year after 27 years teaching in the Junior School. He has been a fantastic asset to the school for many years and we now have several parents at the school who were taught by him. He will be keenly remembered for his guitar club and his choirs and for teaching countless Year 6 cohorts the 'Moving on' Song. Two of our TAs, Mrs Millen and Miss Morrissey are also leaving the Juniors to further their careers. Miss Fox will also be going off on maternity leave at the end of term (or maybe before!) but will be back with us next year.

We are welcoming Mr Harrison as a class teacher, Miss Ryan as a Behaviour and Learning Mentor across both schools, Mrs Jones as a Teaching Assistant and Mr Cunningham will be our new caretaker.

Infant School

Mrs Caramelo is leaving as a Year 1 teacher and going to teach at another school. Our TA Mrs Fredricks leaves us for a position closer to home and Mrs Mcgrath has joined the Visual Impairment Team, and although no longer a school member of staff, is still working with us to support a student.

We will be welcoming Ms Harding who will be the class teacher in Purple Class. Mrs Walker-Smith is also going off on maternity leave, and we have Miss Boylan joining us in Silver Class. Mr Nicholson who was at the Junior School for several years will be joining to do PE/PPA cover. Miss Guy has started with us as a Teaching assistant.

We wish our leavers all the very best in the future and welcome our new staff to our schools.

Is football coming home?

So, Sunday is the big night for the final of the European Championships, and I know that lots of our Federation families will be watching the game. Now normally this wouldn't be something that would affect schools, but as this is already a historic event (55 years since an England men's football tournament final), and it has been a pretty dismal year, we understand that more children may be staying up late on a school night. Therefore, although Monday morning will be a normal school start and lessons will start on time, we will leave registers open a bit later and so children will not be marked late until 9.30am. If there are any children who do come in a little later than their usual start time, then we ask that they go through the front door (side gates will be locked as usual).

Reports

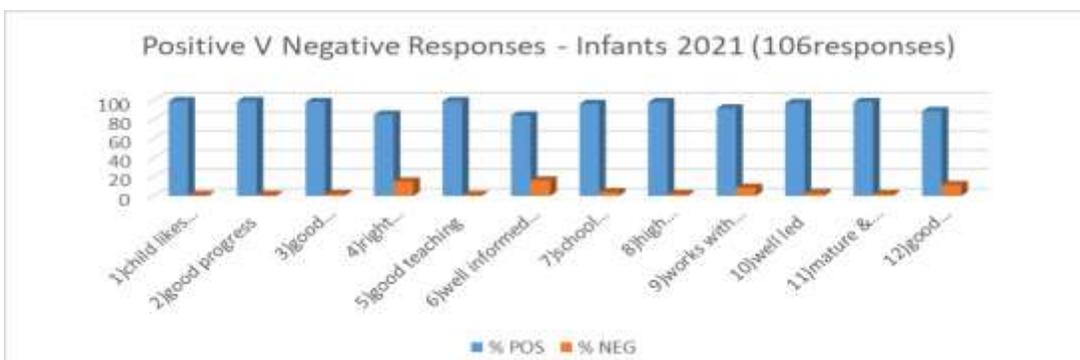
Reports will be sent via ParentMail this year. This is an automated send out and should get to you some time after 4pm today. Year 2 parents will also receive a paper copy of their Phonics screening test results on Monday. If there are any technical issues with the reports (or you don't receive one) please email admin@cunninghamhill.herts.sch.uk.

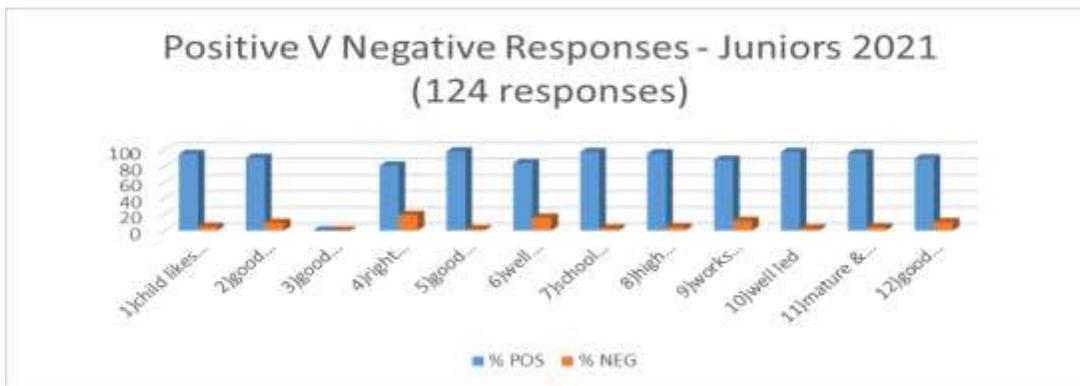
Report query consultations

We don't anticipate many parents to need this consultation, but if there are any specific queries with the reports that you want to speak to the teachers about, we have changed the 'drop in' Consultations on Wednesday 14th (Tues 13th For Gold Class) to 5 minute telephone calls. If you would like to book a call with your teacher please email the relevant school (infant@cunninghamhill.herts.sch.uk or juniors@cunninghamhill.herts.sch.uk) with your child's teacher's name in the subject box and this will be arranged.

Parent Questionnaires

Thank you to those parents who responded to the parent questionnaires that went out before half term. We had 106 infant and 124 junior replies. The vast majority of responses were positive for most areas. However in both schools the amount of homework, being kept informed, the schools working closely with parents, and the range of enrichment clubs all had less positive responses. The Juniors also had more negative response for the children making good progress.





Following the analysis of the comments we have deduced the following:

Homework: Infants – most of the comments were for children having less homework in the Infant school. Juniors – most of the comments were for getting more homework – several of these were from year 6 parents

Being well-informed: Both schools – feeling that consultations once a term is not enough. Many want more regular feedback.

School works closely with parents: Several comments still focus on individual feedback. Others do quote Covid as having been the issue.

Providing Enrichment activities: Both schools would like to have more activities but again many mention Covid.

My child makes good progress: The comments for the Juniors were mainly based around year 6 and being pushed in maths

As a Federation we are looking at what steps can be made to address these areas and we will feedback next term. There were also many lovely comments that praised the hard work by both schools, and I want to thank those parents who took the time to write these. It is very easy as a leadership team to focus on what we need to do better, so it was lovely for us to take a pause and reflect on the things we are getting right too.

Last day of term

As usual, school will finish early on the last day term (**Tues 20^h July**).

The collection arrangements will be as follows:

Infant school	Collect using one-way system between 1.05 and 1.15pm
Junior school	1.15pm for Year 3 and 5 usual gates
	1.20pm for Year 4 and 6 usual gates

We know the children sometimes like to give their teachers a little gift at the end of the year. If possible, could the children bring those with them in the morning so that we avoid a bottleneck when leaving the gates. The teachers will walk their children to the gate so you will have an opportunity to say a socially distanced goodbye.

Obviously, this will also be the last day for our children who are in Year 6 and for some individual children in the schools who are leaving at the end of the term. We wish you all the very best as you move on to your new schools and look forward to you coming back to let us know how you are getting on next year.

Our Year 2 children may be leaving the Infant school, but as we are looking for lots more opportunities to work closely together across the schools, we know there will be many chances for the children to see the infant staff in the future.

Finally, it only leaves for me to wish you all a lovely end of term and a fantastic summer! If I don't see you between now then, I hope you are able to enjoy your break and we look forward to seeing you in September!