

A NEWSLETTER FROM



MS ELBOURNE-CLOAD



HEADS UP

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Wednesday 23th March 2022

With next week being the end of the Spring Term, I thought it would be good to catch up on a few things before many of us tuck in to a chocolate egg or two!

Returning to School and Covid measures

We understand that as from the 1st April (assuming no last minute changes), Covid guidance will be updated. Early signs suggest that the government will encourage the general public to use their own judgements for living with Covid and that people should follow the same measures as with any other infectious illnesses such as colds and flu. There will also no longer be free symptomatic and asymptomatic testing. Hopefully, absences from school will be able to revert back to pre-Covid days of children being off school only if they are too poorly to attend. As with every other school in the country, we have seen the huge impact of Covid on our school attendance even now, two years on. Our schools' annual attendance rarely fell below 97% in years gone by and currently both schools are struggling to keep above 90%. We hope that with the nicer weather and more opportunities to be outdoors, the transmission of not only Covid, but also the other illnesses that have come back with a vengeance this year, such as stomach bugs, chicken pox and usual coughs and colds, will taper off considerably.

Parentmails Sent Home

We have had several parents comment on the number of Parentmails that are sent home in a week and ask if these can be reduced. We find ourselves in a tricky position, as on one hand we try to send all dates, etc out as early as possible so parents can have plenty of notice, but then know that many find the reminders helpful. However, going forward next term we are going to trial a new approach. As far as possible all dates that are known, will be sent out on a newsletter at the start of term (some dates aren't set until later in the term). These dates will also be on the school website calendar. On a Friday there will be one email that will give messages and reminders for the week to come. Any other notices will, as far as possible, be only to inform of short notice changes, such as a club cancellation etc. At the end of next term we will canvas parents and see which approach they prefer.

School Uniform

I have noticed over the last year there has been some relaxation on the wearing of full uniform by some children. I have not focused too heavily on this whilst we were having extra ventilation and Covid allowances, but I do feel it is important children wear full school uniform for a whole raft of reasons. Therefore, from the summer term, could I ask parents to ensure their children do follow the school uniform policy (as outlined on the school website). In particular, this means no: school boots instead of black school shoes, long sleeved t-shirts under polo-shirts, and nail-varnish.

Cunningham Hill 'Lollipop' Lady Retirement

We are very sad to announce that after 40 amazing years of service, Carol Sandvoss, our crossing patrol (lollipop lady) will be retiring at the end of the month. We are hoping to invite her in for a farewell assembly at the infant school on Monday 25 April. It would be lovely if we could present her with a token of all our appreciation at this assembly, and if any parents would like to make a contribution towards her collection, please do so via Parentmail by Friday 22 April. Hertfordshire school crossing patrol are hoping to advertise for her replacement in the next couple of months.

Parent Questionnaires

Towards the end of next week we will be sending out the parent questionnaires via Parentmail. We find these questionnaires very useful to gauge what is working well and what we can do even better. If you are able to add written comments to explain your answers that helps even more as in some cases the same answer has two polar opposite backgrounds e.g 'Do you think there is the right amount of homework?' - traditionally we get half of parents wanting more and half wanting less so it is helpful to know more details. If we could have all questionnaires completed by the start of the summer term that would be really helpful.

Contacting School

Just a reminder that there is a lot of information available on our Federation website and this would be the best place to go to answer general questions or check dates in the first instance. You can also contact the schools via:

admin@cunninghamhill.herts.sch.uk for both schools

juniors@cunninghamhill.herts.sch.uk for the juniors

infants@cunninghamhill.herts.sch.uk for the infants.

Any emails for teachers or other staff will be forwarded from here - please put FAO and the staff member's name in the subject box. Communication from school will usually come in the form of a Parentmail so please ensure we have the correct contact details for you and that your alerts are enabled on the app. Please do not use the learning platforms (Google Classrooms/Seesaw/Tapestry). Teachers will respond when they are able, however if you have an urgent communication it is better to phone the school or talk to the teacher at collection time.

Clubs

We have sent the clubs letter out for both schools for children to sign up to. Unusually, all teachers in our schools run two clubs over the academic year, free of charge and from their own planning time. We are very grateful for the time that they give up to run these clubs, as we wouldn't be able to offer such a range to so many children without their time. We are also very pleased that our Year 6 and 5 pupils run a variety of clubs in the infant school through our Young Leader Programme, and this ensures that lots of different opportunities are available at lunchtimes.

Lastly, it was lovely seeing so many of you at the consultations and performances in the last couple of weeks; finally school is starting to feel more normal. I wish you all a lovely Easter break and hope everyone has a well-deserved rest in (hopefully) some warmer weather.

Ms Elbourne-Cload