



## Laying the foundations for a bright future

Website link: [www.htpfederation.co.uk](http://www.htpfederation.co.uk)

### A little note from Mrs FitzGerald...

Well, the end of term is upon us I cannot believe how quickly the last few weeks have flown by, we are now exactly half way through the academic year!

The whole school has been celebrating Lent this afternoon with children working in their colour teams, learning about Lent and how it is a special time in the Christian calendar. They then took part in activities focusing on: **Temptation**, thinking about things they have been tempted by (chocolate was a big theme). Lots of fun was had with pancake races for the **Shrove Tuesday** activity. The children had a chance to think about any behaviours they might like to change for **Ash Wednesday** and created ash crosses. Finally for **Mothering Sunday** the children took time to think about important women in their lives and created a beautiful bouquet of hands with messages for these women. It was wonderful to see the older children supporting and encouraging the younger ones in all of these activities.

I hope you have a lovely half term and we look forward to welcoming all the children back on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February ☺

Warmest regards, Mrs FitzGerald

### SEVERE WEATHER

As is always the case, every effort will be made to keep the school open in severe weather. The school would only close if it is not safe for staff and pupils to travel to / from school and/or be on site.

There was much concern this morning with the heavy rain overnight and localised flooding in our locality. Please be assured we will continue to monitor the weather, river levels and flood alerts in our locality and be in touch if we need to make any decisions linked to safety and risk factors as soon as we can.

We recognise that it is important that our school remains open so parents are able to work and pupils can continue to learn. Therefore, we will make every effort to prepare for severe weather and share information as soon as possible.

Information about school closure will be posted:

- Class Dojo
- ParentMail
- Via the Suffolk County Council website: <http://schoolclosures.suffolk.gov.uk>
- Facebook
- Local radio

## **UNITY SCHOOLS PARTNERSHIP TWO-WEEK OCTOBER HALF TERM**

We have recently heard that the consultation regarding the extended half-term holiday for October 2024 had been concluded and the decision was to go ahead again. On behalf of the Federation and in view of parent's feedback our Chair of Governors has contacted Mr Coulson again:

Dear Mr. Coulson

Thank you for your response to my email and I apologise that our response to your consultation was not received in time to be considered before your decision was made. The timescale for the consultation was actually very short; after your email was received in mid-January, our next Governing Board meeting when we were able to discuss our response was not until 7<sup>th</sup> February. We then had to collect and collate views from parents.

We are extremely disappointed with the decision to go ahead with the two-week half term break and feel that the arguments presented in its favour are very weak. In particular, the data is meaningless as no context or meaningful comparisons are provided and it only covers a six week period. It is always easy to find raw data to support an argument. It is very worrying that this data has been provided to parents, other stakeholders and the media. No governing body, local authority or Regional DfE Director would accept data in this form without significant challenge.

Our Governing Board would be grateful if you could provide the following information so that we can share the rationale behind your decision with our stakeholders, particularly parents. We also think this data should be presented to the parents of pupils attending Trust schools, stakeholders and the media:

- Absence data for 2021-22 and 2022-23 across the Trust and by phase compared with the National data for the same periods
- Absence data for pupils entitled to Pupil Premium for 2021-22 and 2022-23 across the Trust and by phase compared with the National data for the same periods
- Absence data for SEND pupils 2021-22 and 2022-23 across the Trust and by phase compared with the National data for the same periods
- Details of other strategies to improve attendance that were taken by the Trust in 2022-23 and their impact
- Staff absence data 2021-22 and 2022-23 across the Trust and by phase
- Details of other strategies employed to reduce staff absence in 2022-23
- Clear data that demonstrates improvement in staff recruitment and retention for 2022-23 compared with previous years.

2021-22 was very much the 'post-Covid' period, a time when parents were encouraged to carefully consider whether their child should be sent to school with a symptom that may be Covid. The advice changed in 2022-23 and parents were encouraged to consider the importance of good attendance over Covid-risk.

In terms of parental response, what percentage of the total parent body across the Trust does the figure of 2929 represent? In addition, in view of our concerns about more vulnerable children and young people, of your respondents:

- What percentage of parents whose children are entitled to Pupil Premium responded in favour of the scheme?
- What percentage of parents whose children have SEND responded in favour of the scheme?

We look forward to hearing from you with the explicit information requested.

Kind regards

Val Phillips, *Chair of Governors*  
*Hundon and Thurlow Primary Federation*

## FORTHCOMING EVENTS

### SPRING TERM 2024 continued...

**Friday 1st March ~ Butterflies Class Family Celebration Presentation at 9am**

Parents of children in Butterflies Class only are invited.

**FRIDAY 16TH FEBRUARY ~ END OF HALF-TERM**

**HALF-TERM HOLIDAY**

Monday 19th February ~ Friday 23rd February

**Thursday 7th March ~ World Book Day** ~ see details on Class Dojo

**Monday 11th March to Friday 15th March ~ British Science Week** ~ more details to follow

**Tuesday 19th March ~ PARENT CONSULTATIONS for Butterflies Class & Bumblebees Class**

**Wednesday 20th March ~ PARENT CONSULTATIONS for Otters Class & Hares Class**

Find out how your child is doing in class with their academic targets.

**Thursday 21st March ~ World Poetry Day** ~ more details to follow



**OWL DISPLAY**



**Get up close with owls**  
Presented by Hawkeye Falconry UK.  
Show lasts one hour.  
Money raised goes to St Peter's Church restoration Fund.

**Choose your show**  
Date: 2 March 2024  
Venue: St. Peter's Church  
Little Thurlow CB9 7JQ  
Display times: 10.30am and 12pm  
Ticket price: Adults: £10  
Children : £5 (12years & under)

Contact us  
01440 783228/ 07957196628

Email  
biddybigland@gmail.com

|