

Commonswood News on the Ninth



September 2018

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Welcome back & welcome to all of our new families! I hope that you and your children have had an exciting and lovely break from school and are ready for a busy term ahead. It usually takes just a few days to get back into the daily routines and by now the children will have settled back into their usual patterns but are probably very tired by the end of the week. A very busy term lies ahead as you will see from the diary section and I am certain that it will be enjoyable and successful once again.

New teachers

I am sure you will join me in welcoming our newly appointed teaching staff Mr Hughes, Mrs Stewart, Mrs Moss, Miss Jones, Miss Cole, Mr Marshment and Ms Johnson who have all been busy over the holiday preparing their classrooms and lessons. Mrs Wadsworth, Miss Ramsay and Mrs Holding have also joined our support team.

School gate

You will have noticed that an additional gate has been installed at the junior end of the school as requested by parents in the previous school survey.

Heating replacement work

Work to replace the school's heating system has been taking place over the summer and will continue into the Autumn term. While any building work in term time is a nuisance, the work is necessary as the current heating system is very antiquated. The new system will be far more cost efficient which of course is hugely important in these times of budget restraints. All infant classes and central areas have been completed in the school holidays. Junior classes will be completed over the coming week which will lead to children using the hall room and modular building as their classes are completed. (Parents of children in Years 3,4,5 & 6 will be notified in advance).

Do check out the school's website for regular updates on the building work.

Attendance

Good behaviour and attendance are essential to children's educational prospects. Parents of children of compulsory school age (aged 5 and over) are, by law, required to ensure that their children receive a suitable education through regular attendance at school or otherwise. The Department for Education collects each pupil enrolment's overall sessions missed and number of possible sessions available to them, where a session is equivalent to half a day of school. The Attendance Improvement Officer monitors this and punctuality on a termly basis



together with evidence of the work carried out to bring about improved attendance for those causing concern.

Please:

- ensure that your children arrive at school on time, appropriately dressed and ready to learn
- instil in your children an appreciation of the importance of attending school regularly
- impress upon your children the need to observe the school's code of conduct
- take an active interest in your children's school career, praising and encouraging good work and behaviour
- work in partnership with the school to resolve issues which may lead to non-attendance
- notify us if your child is absent. **This should be done on each day of absence as it forms an important part of our safeguarding procedures.**
- avoid arranging medical/dental appointments during school hours
- avoid booking holidays during term time
- Provide a written **request** for absence making it clear why the absence is an exceptional, unrepeatable circumstance
- ensure that the school are informed of any changes of contact details

Research shows that in general the higher the percentage of sessions missed across the key stage, the lower the likely level of attainment at the end of KS2. Demands on standards for each year group is now greater than ever. It is imperative therefore, that children meet their milestones as they progress through school. Parents are notified of how their children are doing through parents' meetings and in the end of year report.

Punctuality

- Any pupil arriving after 8.45am should report to the school office. Parents must sign their children in stating the reason for lateness.
- A record of lateness is recorded. The expectation is that this will be addressed by parents with a rapid improvement in punctuality.

The importance of being on time:

- gets your day off to a good start and puts you in a positive frame of mind, so that you can make the most of your learning opportunities.
- sets positive patterns for the future. Habits are formed very early in life and in the long term you can't expect to keep a job if you're always coming in late;
- leads to a good attendance record and means you don't miss vital early morning opportunities;
- leads to better achievement because you attend the WHOLE of all of your lessons
- leads to understanding that school is important, and education is valuable;
- helps you develop a sense of responsibility for yourself and towards others and is a sign of good character.

Commonswood Primary & Nursery School rewards good attendance weekly for cohorts of children from Y1 – Y6 through the presentation of attendance cups and attendance prizes.

A huge well done to all of the pupils who earned their **100% attendance trophy at the end of the summer term!**

Penalty Notices

At Commonswood Primary & Nursery School we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. Persistent failure to send children to school is a clear sign of neglect. If a pupil has more than 15 sessions (half day= 1 session) unauthorised absence in two

consecutive terms (including unauthorised holidays) the Local Authority will issue a Penalty Notice in accordance with current regulations following one warning letter. The penalty is £60 if paid within 28 days of receipt of the notice, rising to £120 if paid after 28 days but within 42 days. Applications to issue a penalty notice must be received within 10 days of the final absence cited to ensure the penalty notice is issued quickly. If the penalty is not paid within 42 days the LA may prosecute the parents for their child's irregular attendance.

Uniform

Our school uniform comprises:

- Smart, plain grey short or long trousers (not sportswear, leggings, jeggings, chinos or jogging bottoms except in Nursery)
 - Sky blue polo shirts or shirts
 - Plain grey skirts or pinafores (or pale blue gingham dresses in the Summer term)
 - Navy blue sweatshirt or navy blue cardigan (preferably with the school logo)
 - Black, navy, grey or white tights or socks
- Socks/tights **must** be worn for hygiene purposes
- Black shoes or plain black trainers – no laced shoes in Reception.

PE Clothing – Please ensure that children bring their PE kits and trainers into school every Monday and bring them home every Friday

All pupils are expected to participate in PE / Games lessons. Children need to dress safely for PE. They should wear plain, **close fitting**:

- Shorts – **blue**
- Tee shirt - **white**
- Trainers
- **No watches or any other jewellery**
- A loose fitting sweatshirt (preferably not school uniform) and jogging bottoms, may also be useful during the colder, winter months when some PE / games lessons take place outside. **Children should not wear replica kits or expensive branded clothing.**

Healthy Packed Lunches

We know that it quite a challenge to be inspired when providing packed lunches every day. However, the school council reps worked hard last year to teach the children about healthy swaps to encourage less salt and sugar in lunches. Please refer to our school packed lunch guide.



School dinner payments

School lunches provided by Herts Catering Ltd must be paid in advance via the gateway app. If payment cannot be made please provide your child with a packed lunch at the start of the day. If you think you may be entitled to free school meals, please visit <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals> and follow the online instructions.

Appointments with teachers

If you would like a message to get to the class teacher before school, please contact the school admin team who will pass on any urgent messages. If you would like to speak with the class teacher, please call the office to make an appointment.

Reading Books

Please check your children's bookshelves (and under beds) for any school books that need to be returned to school. Our shelves appear to be rather depleted!



School Councillors

At this time of year, pupils across the school will be setting their own classroom rules. They also go over the playground rules and wet playtime rules and take responsibility for sticking to them. They also elect their school councillors, who pass on any concerns, ideas for school improvements and organise and run community events.

Skern Lodge

Year 6 children will be heading off to Devon on 1st October when they will be taking part in climbing, abseiling, canoeing, surfing, high ropes, mammoth zip wires, archery, tunnelling.... The list could go on and on. It's a very intense but extremely rewarding experience.

Harvest festival

Once again, the children will be taking part in our annual Harvest festival assembly. On **Monday 8th October** we will be celebrating seasonality and recognising how fortunate we are to have such varied and nutritious foods.

We will be building a mountain of donations with the children bringing their contributions into the assembly ready to be collected by the local food bank. If you can contribute, children will need to bring their food donation to their

classroom first thing in the morning.

Some examples of donations are: dried foods such as pasta and rice, tea, coffee, tinned food – please ensure all food is within the best before date.



Clubs

Not only are these after-school clubs fun, but they also help boost children's self-esteem and self-confidence. We all want happy, self-confident children therefore we aim for all children from Y1-6 to join at least one club in each academic year. 92% of our children from Year 1 to Year 6 took part in at least one extra-curricular club last year. We do have many children who have attended as many as 5 or six clubs over the last year which is fantastic!



By offering after-school activities our children get the chance to succeed in a range of different areas. Please encourage your child to join up to at least one club this year.

After school clubs are now live to book via School Interviews - <https://www.schoolinterviews.co.uk/> - event code 3md8h. Clubs start w/c 17th September 2018.

Clubs this term:

Year 1	Gymnastics Street dance Dodgeball Football	Monday Wednesday Thursday Friday
Year 2	Gymnastics Street dance Dodgeball Football	Monday Wednesday Thursday Friday
Year 3	Speed Stacking Street Dance Choir	Monday Tuesday Thursday
Year 4	Speed Stacking Street Dance Badminton Choir	Monday Tuesday Wednesday Thursday
Year 5	SchoolFootball Team Netball Street Dance Girls Football	Monday Tuesday Tuesday Thursday

	Tag Rugby	Friday
Year 6	School Football Team	Monday
	Netball	Tuesday
	Street Dance	Tuesday
	Girls Football	Thursday
	Tag Rugby	Friday

Homework

Homework will be **sent home on Fridays** and collected in on **Tuesdays**. This provides children with plenty of opportunity to speak with their teacher if they are unsure of any aspect of the work. Teachers will keep records of homework and contact parents if homework is not completed.

Fox Club

We are delighted with our refurbished Community Building which is home to our Breakfast, Lunch (for our Nursery pupils) and After School Clubs. Our children absolutely love it - 'This is great! Can I come every day?' Parents love it too - 'My children absolutely love Fox Club and get cross when I come to pick them up!'



We offer:

- ✓ School staff who have enhanced DBS checks and are Emergency & Paediatric First Aid trained.
- ✓ Flexible wrap-around care that your child will enjoy - delivered with a nurturing ethos.
- ✓ The same members of staff each day.
- ✓ Lots of space to play – both inside and out.
- ✓ Full use of the school facilities including the adventure playground, field and forest school.
- ✓ Integration into school enrichment including cooking, chicks/ducklings, sport, crafts, computing, imaginative play and construction.
- ✓ Homework help if required.
- ✓ Exclusivity for Commonswood pupils.
- ✓ Competitive prices
- ✓ Ad hoc bookings accepted
- ✓ Fun and exciting activities suitable for both Infant and Junior aged children.
- ✓ Staff qualified at Level 3 – Safe Food Supervisor

Healthy light supper included, all dietary needs catered for, we accept childcare vouchers.

Opening times

Breakfast club	After school club	
7:40am – 8:40am	3:10 – 5:10pm,	3:10 – 6:00pm
£3.50 per session	£7 per session	£10 per session

For further information on how to book your child's place, please contact our Admin team: 01707 880420 or by email to admin@commonswood.herts.sch.uk

To book outside office opening hours please call or text the team directly on 07849 716798

Safety Reminders



Smoking - it is against the law to smoke on any part of the school site, so please avoid doing so here or in the immediate vicinity of our gates where young children can suffer harm from passive smoking.

Dogs – are not permitted on the school site.

Cycles/Scooters - please dismount before entering the school site and leave cycles securely in the bike sheds and scooters in the scooter pods.

It is a parents' responsibility to look after children while on site. Please keep young children with you. They are not permitted to be on the field or play on the play equipment before or after school. Children are not permitted to play on the main entrance railings or climb any fences or trees.

Gates open at 8.30am unless attending breakfast club. No children should be on site until this time.

Unless attending an after-school club, all children must leave the premises by 3.30pm when the gates will be locked.

Photos - it is not possible to take photographs on the school site whether inside or outside the buildings. This is designed to protect the small number of families affected by domestic violence or child protection concerns. This includes the use of mobile phones.



Parking - Please do not block driveways and garages as this can be a major inconvenience to our neighbours.

Parking at the Woodside Centre is prohibited and could lead to vehicles being clamped.

Please take care if parking at the church.



The school operates a VOLUNTARY one-way system in The Commons (keeping the school on the left-hand side) at drop off and pick up times. Please be aware that strangers to the road may not be aware of this.

Secondary School Applications

Parents of Year 6 pupils will have received the 'Moving on 2019' booklet. The online system is now open for September 2019 secondary school applications. Further details and details for open evenings can be found online at www.hertsdirect.org/admissions. All applications need to be made online and received by 31st October 2018.



Commonswood School Family Support Worker

Would you like support regarding your child's learning, development or well-being? If so, please contact Sian Mills, Family Support Worker at Commonswood School, who can support with:

- Behaviour
- Attendance
- Signposting to relevant services

Contact Sian Mills on 07753 471712 or email s.mills@commonswood.herts.sch.uk or complete the form overleaf in confidence and drop it into the school office.

Vacancies

Could you be a Mid-Day Supervisor?



We are looking for a friendly, enthusiastic, and sociable person with a sense of humour to engage with our children while they eat & play at lunchtimes.

If you are reliable, patient and able to work well as part of a team please call into the office for an application form.

Hours of work are from 11.30am – 12.50pm Monday – Friday

All appointments are subject to a full Disclosure and Barring service and ISA clearance

Diary Dates

September	
	Swimming starts for Maple and Magnolia Classes (Year 4)
October	
1 st – 5 th	Year 6 Skern Lodge residential trip
8 th	Harvest assembly –collection for the WGC food bank
10 th	Parent Forum 2.30pm – focus school's website
11 th	School photos
23 rd	Flu vaccination for reception- Year 5
23 rd	Parents' evening 3.30pm – 5.30pm
25 th	Parents' evening 3.30pm – 7.30pm
26 th	INSET staff training day – children do not attend
29 th – 2 nd	Half term
November	
9 th	Remembrance Assembly – children are permitted to wear their youth organisation uniforms for the day.
12 th	Anti-Bullying week
19 th	Last week of clubs
December	
3 rd	Occasional Day – children do not attend
14 th	Final Year 4 swimming lesson
21 st	End of term 12.30pm
January	
4 th	Term commences

Twitter Why not follow what's happening at school through Twitter.



Commonswood Primary & Nursery School is a Safeguarding School

'All schools have a clear responsibility placed on them by the Children Act 1989 and by guidance from the Department of Education to safeguard the welfare of all their pupils. In doing so schools are expected to consult with Social Services if they believe there is a possibility that a child may be suffering from abuse or neglect.'

If you have any concerns about children please contact Mrs Seymour, Mrs Manning or Mrs Scatchard via the school office.

**Mrs G Seymour (Designated Senior Person), Mrs S Manning (Deputy Designated Person),
Mrs N Scatchard (Deputy Designated Person) & Mr S Burt (Deputy Designated Person for eSafety)
Chair of Governors Mrs Julie Noakes**