



## Highfield Middle School

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Headteacher: Richard Oades

17<sup>th</sup> February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Half-term is upon us already and what a busy time it has been since the new year. Our pupils have given their all and we wish them a very happy half-term!

On a 'not so happy' note I have to announce that Mr Rutherford-Orrock has recently resigned from his post at Highfield. After a significant period of absence due to ill health, Mr Rutherford-Orrock has made the difficult decision to take a break from his career and focus on his own wellbeing. I'm sure you will agree that he has been an inspirational teacher, Head of Year and SENDCo in recent years. Pupils, parents and staff alike will miss him greatly - I know I will!

We wish him health and happiness and hope that he keeps in close contact with the school moving forward. Current staffing arrangements will continue for the foreseeable future, with Mrs Hook as SENDCo and Mr Burt as Head of Year 5. Please don't hesitate to contact them if you have any questions.

### **Teachers Strike**

You may know that we are expecting another Teacher's strike day to go ahead on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> February. We expect some of our teaching staff to be on strike and we respect their legal right to do so. Of course, the government stance on Teacher's pay and educational funding could change over the coming days, which could therefore influence what happens. However, we expect the day will run in the same way that it did during the first strike on 1<sup>st</sup> February. School will be closed to most pupils, with the following exceptions:

#### **School will be OPEN to:**

- Year 6 pupils
- Children with a Social Worker
- Children with an EHCP
- Children of Critical Workers (parents/carers who are have the following roles only: Frontline NHS / emergency services staff / Teachers. Places MUST be agreed in advance by emailing details to [admin@highfield.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@highfield.northumberland.sch.uk) by 12 noon on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February).

If your child is not in school on the day, but entitled to Free School Meals, they can take a packed lunch home on Monday. Please order via email ([admin@highfield.northumberland.sch.uk](mailto:admin@highfield.northumberland.sch.uk)) by 12 noon on Monday 27<sup>th</sup> February, stating your child's name and their preference for either a cheese, ham or tuna sandwich, so that we have time to organise this.

On a related note - food vouchers have been issued this week to eligible families for use over the half term break.

## **Year 6 SATs and mock SATs**

Thank you to all the parents who came to our SATS information evening on Wednesday, it was great to see such a strong turnout. As mentioned on the night, mock SATs tests for Year 6 will take place in the first week after half term, starting on Monday. Pupils will sit tests in the same conditions as the actual test week, which runs from 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> May. It is very important that attendance at school is high in the run up to SATs, and of course in test week itself.

If you missed the evening you can access the presentation and some revision resources on our school website [here](#). Also remember, revision guides are available to order in the Parentmail shop, no later than 1pm on 28<sup>th</sup> February.

## **World Book Day 2023**

World Book day will take place on Thursday 2nd March and we would like to invite you to join us in helping your child to make the most of this special occasion. The main aim of World Book Day is to promote reading for pleasure, offering every child and young person the opportunity to have a book of their own. To help get them started on their reading journey, every child receives a £1 World Book Day Book Token that can either be exchanged for one of twelve special £1 *World Book Day books*, or used to get £1 off any book costing £2.99 or more.

Encouraging children to read for pleasure is a key aim at Highfield. This term, we are hosting two amazing authors, Lisette Auton and James Nicol, as well as having a book fair and enjoying an afternoon of fun reading related activities on World Book Day itself.

**Year 5** ... are visiting *Hogwarts with Harry Potter*

**Year 6** ... will be gripped by *Michael Morpurgo Mania*

**Year 7** ... are experiencing *Horrible Histories*

**Year 8** ... will be challenging for *The Highfield Hunger Games*

All children can dress up as favourite book characters on the day - or come in non-uniform - and even bring in their favourite book! You can join us in building your child's enthusiasm for books well beyond World Book Day. Reading for pleasure is the single biggest indicator of a child's future success and is fun for all involved. You will find more information at [www.worldbookday.com](http://www.worldbookday.com)

## **Consultation on Trust Merger**

As you will know, Highfield Middle School is part of the Tyne Community Learning Trust, working closely with 8 other schools locally. Along with The Three Rivers Learning Trust (based in Morpeth), we are consulting on forming a new Trust together, to be known as Cheviot Learning Trust. Please follow [this link](#) for details of the consultation and how to respond. A parent's consultation event will be held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March, 6pm at Prudhoe Community High School.

## **Parent's Evenings**

And finally, we will be holding Parent's Evenings on Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> March from 4pm until 6pm, so please save the dates. More information will follow in advance of the meetings, along with a progress report to inform you of your child's current attainment and attitude to learning, for discussion at the events.

Have a wonderful half-term!

Richard Oades  
Headteacher