



Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you all for your support at the Friends' events this term and for joining our festive celebrations. We very much value your support and involvement in school activities; we have listed our workshop themes for the Spring Term on the back of this newsletter. These are informal sessions designed to support parents when supporting their children at home and an opportunity to meet and chat with both school staff and other parents. We hope that as many parents as possible can drop in and join us.

Our three-school choir have all been performing at community events including at Homerton Hospital and the Hackney Carol Service. It is a very busy time of year for our music teachers so a big thank you to them for all their efforts. We are very proud of the commitment to music in our school and the many talented musicians we have. We will be holding our annual music festival in the summer term to celebrate the quality of our music offer across the Federation.

Instrumental lessons start again in the second week back after Christmas. If you would like your child to gain from the many benefits of learning a musical instrument, then please ask at our reception desk for an application form. Some lessons have a waiting list but learning an instrument not only brings a lot of pleasure, it also helps develop concentration, listening skills, patience, social skills and muscle memory. We subsidise all lessons with an even cheaper rate for those eligible for Pupil Premium Funding and loan instruments to allow practise at home.

Despite the many sweet treats around at this time of year, we continue to ask that if children bring a packed lunch to school, their lunch boxes contain a healthy and nutritious meal that will help them retain concentration in the afternoon. We do not allow children to have fizzy drinks, chocolate bars or crisps in our dinner hall and ask that you provide healthy alternatives such as low sugar juice, chopped vegetables and dried fruit instead. The government continues to provide Universal Infant Free School Meals to all children in state-funded schools and the Mayor's funding has expanded this, meaning free school meals are also available for all Key Stage 2 children. The Federation has ensured this offer is also available to our full time nursery children.

Children will be starting new topics in the Spring Term, and we will be sending home homework packs and activities to help them prepare for it. We have seen some fantastic research and creative homework projects made in previous holidays and hope that some time can be made during this holiday also. If you are not sure of the topics your child is covering this year, please visit <https://www.orchard.hackney.sch.uk/curriculum/teaching-learning/curriculum-overview>. Here, you can view the curriculum overview mapped out for each year group.

Please make sure that children continue to read and practise key maths and writing skills over the holidays, whether it is writing a letter to Santa or playing card games and adding up the scores. This term ends at 2:00pm on Wednesday 20th December and we will be teaching our full timetable until then. Children return to school on Tuesday 9th January 2024 at 8:55am.

We wish you all a very safe and happy holiday.

Mr Stephen O'Brien - Headteacher | Ms Rachel Davie - Executive Headteacher

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Reminders

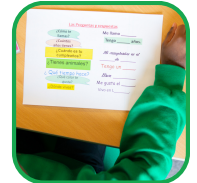
Term End and Start

Term ends on Wednesday 20th December 2023 and the Spring Term starts for children on Tuesday 9th January 2024.



Holiday Homework

Please ensure holiday homework is completed – this is sent by paper copy in book bags and is available electronically on our website.



Local Area Walk

EYFS enjoyed their local walk to Well Street Common. Along their journey, they looked and compared the features of a range of houses. Through this exercise, they were able to identify that different houses have different windows and doors, and that some have chimneys. They also were able to identify some buildings from the past.



Exploring Pitch and Sound

In Science, Year 2 recently learnt about sound. The children worked in pairs to create their own panpipes to explore pitch, thinking carefully about why the pitch may vary depending on the different lengths of straw used. After experimenting, they wrote down their observations using scientific vocabulary learnt over time.



Flax Workshop

Year 5 took part in a gardening workshop where they learnt about the different stages needed to create material from flax. First, the snatchers had to smooth out the flax, this was then broken down by the hand of the snatchers. Next, the handlers smoothed out the flax with a fine tooth comb. Finally, the spinners spun the smooth strands into a yarn.



Checkmate

Year 3 have been learning a range of chess moves in their lessons. Their focus has been to understand how to checkmate their opponent in a set number of moves. Their specialist teacher also discussed the importance of sacrificing your pieces to force your opponent to move where you need them to be.



Festive Cheer at Homerton

On Wednesday the 6th of December, we brought festive cheer to Homerton Hospital, which very kindly hosted our very large Federation choir. The children sang seven songs and felt very proud to have raised money for St Joseph's Hospice. It was a lovely concert and we hope to be back next year!



Key Dates

SPRING TERM 1 (2024)

INSET Day

Monday 8th January 2024
School closed to pupils

Children's Start Date

Tuesday 9th January 2024

Year 6 Redwood Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 18th January 2024 at 11:00am

Year 4 Laurel Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 18th January 2024 at 9:05am

Year 2 Olive Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 18th January 2024 at 10:30am

Year 6 Maple Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 25th January 2024 at 11:00am

Year 4 Hawthorn Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 25th January 2024 at 9:05am

Year 2 Willow Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 25th January 2024 at 10:30am

Work & Enterprise Week

Week beginning Monday 29th January 2024

Enterprise Fayre - Playground

Thursday 1st February 2024 at 3:30pm

Children's Mental Health Week

Week beginning Monday 5th February 2024

Safer Internet Day

Tuesday 6th February 2024

Year 6 Chestnut Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 8th February 2024 at 11:00am

Year 4 Hazel Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 8th February 2024 at 9:05am

Year 2 Rowan Class Assembly - New Hall
Thursday 8th February 2024 at 10:30am

Last Day of Term

Friday 9th February 2024
School finishes at 3:30pm

Half Term Holiday

Monday 12th February 2024 - Friday 16th
February 2024

Children Return to School

Monday 19th February 2024 at 8:55am

Coffee Mornings

Parents/Carers are invited to drop into our sessions on various themes which are held in the Flexible Space at 9:15am on a Friday. These allow you to meet with other parents as well as to learn more about what the school does and get some practical tips on how to support your child with their learning from home. EYFS Workshops are held separately. Please see the dates below.

Date	Focus
Friday 12th January	<u>Maths</u> : How can I support my child with their Maths homework? (children can attend this coffee morning)
Friday 19th January	<u>MFL</u> : What do children learn in Spanish and how can language learning be supported at home? (children can attend this coffee morning)
Friday 26th January	<u>Writing</u> : How can I engage my child to write creatively at home?
Friday 2nd February	<u>Children's Mental Health Week</u> : How can I support my child's wellbeing through developing positive connections?
Friday 9th February	<u>Online safety</u> : How can I support my child to use digital technologies responsibly, respectfully, critically and creatively? (Safer Internet Day Parent Workshop)
Date	EYFS Workshop
Thursday 25th January	<u>Speech and Language</u> : How can I use stories to support my child's language?

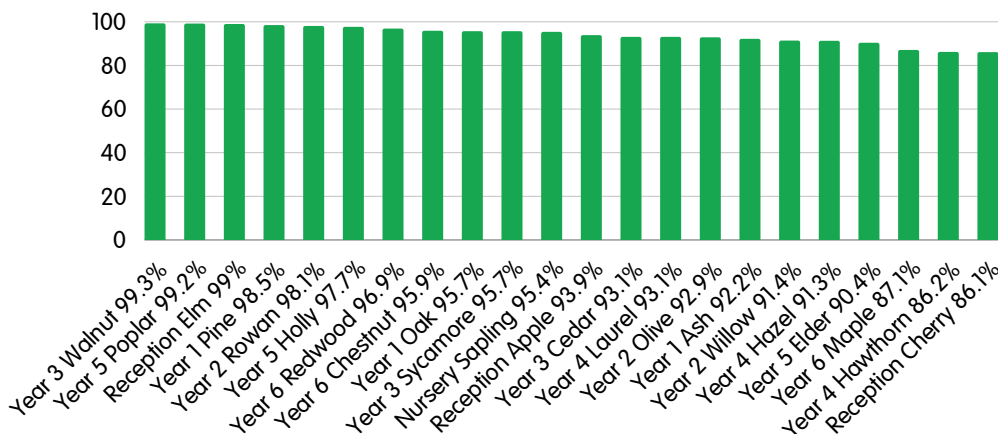
Attendance

The whole school attendance for the last week was 93.7%.

Well done to Year 3 Walnut Class, last week's winner with 99.3%.

Attending school every day makes a real difference.

Please remember that WE DO NOT AUTHORISE HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME and unauthorised absences may result in a fixed penalty notice being issued.



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