



HOLLY PARK NEWSLETTER

'We support our children to be their best.'

ISSUE 13

Friday 6th December 2024

www.hollyparkschool.co.uk

PTA Christmas Fair TOMORROW!

The PTA Christmas fair is on **Saturday 7th December 12-3pm** The PTA will be welcoming all families and friends for some Christmas fun. Of course, Santa will be visiting too!

Please do come along and support this event and join in with the festive fun!



Festive Book Fair run by The Muswell Hill Children's Bookshop

Thursday 12th December

3.30pm

The School Hall

Are you looking for the perfect gift, stocking filler or just a lovely treat? We are delighted to say that we have invited The Muswell Hill Children's Bookshop in to host a book fair. They'll be selling a selection of books for children of all ages! Additionally: £1 of every book sold is donated back to the school so please come along, buy some books and help the school in the process.



Christmas has Arrived!

On Friday last week, every child in school from nursery to Year 6 made a Christmas decoration to hang in the dining hall. This is a Holly Park tradition and helps to make the school look festive. On Wednesday, the children were SO excited to come into the dining hall and see all of the decorations hanging there. The hanging of the decorations in the dining hall always marks the official start to the festivities at Holly Park. This year the theme was Winter Wonderland - ranging from: snowflakes in nursery, Christmas trees in Reception, different kinds of Santas in Year 1 and Year 2, penguins in Year 3, snowflakes in Year 4, origami Santas in Year 5 and snowmen in Year 6. Well done to Mr Llewellyn who co-ordinated this.



Miss Sarah Iglesias - Pupil Support Officer

Our last appointment to replace Mrs Needham as Pupil Support officer had to step down due to personal circumstances. I am delighted to have appointed Miss Sarah Iglesias as our new Pupil Support Officer. Miss Iglesias has worked for the Metropolitan Police Force, worked as a teaching assistant in a primary school and is currently working at the Barnet Pupil Referral Unit. Miss Iglesias has teenage children at a local school. She will begin her new role at Holly Park on Monday 6th January.



Smartphone Free Schools

Barnet Smartphone Free Schools Campaign

I am sure that many of you have seen coverage in the press recently about the detrimental effects of smartphones on young people, particularly when available to be used both at school and at home. To quote The Guardian, "A recent House of Commons education committee report found that extended screen time had become increasingly normal for young children and teenagers... According to the report, nearly 25% of children and young people use their smartphones in a way that is consistent with a behavioural addiction."

In June of this year, seventeen state schools out of twenty in Southwark announced that they were taking collective action to shift away from pupil usage of smartphones. In North London, you may be aware of the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign whose website outlines some of the serious harm that comes from smartphone usage:

<https://smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk>

At Holly Park, we are fortunate enough to not have an issue with smartphone usage in school; however, I am aware that some parents will feel pressured into buying one for their child, particularly in the lead-up to Christmas or as they become an independent traveller in preparation for secondary school. As experienced Headteachers, we are all too aware of the issues caused on smartphones and the exposure to age-inappropriate material that can be accessed relatively easily. We feel the difference in our schools that even regular screen use is having on our children's development and want to ensure that we support our children's future wellbeing. To that end, we have decided (along with many other Barnet schools) to support the North London Smartphone Free Childhood campaign and work to encourage parents to delay when their child gets a smartphone. Buying a smartphone for your child while at primary school is of course entirely a parental decision but we hope that by supporting the Smartphone Free Childhood campaign, banning smartphones in school and creating a 'not yet' school culture, it will add weight to any discussions and decision making with your child at home should you feel uncomfortable with them having one.

If your child is an independent traveller or you are concerned about being able to contact them there are other 'non-smart' phone options available. A list of alternative phones to smartphones can be found [here](#).

By working collaboratively as schools and with our parent community, we hope to create a new norm in Barnet that means children will start to have smartphone access at an older age and we can reduce the negative impact that comes from having a smartphone in their pocket.

Here is the link to where parents can sign the Smartphone Parent Pact.

<https://parentpact.smartphonefreechildhood.co.uk/> .

Table Top Sale

Alex Fitzpatrick, an ex-Holly Parker is fundraising on Tuesday 10th December after school by having a Table Top Sale of homemade gingerbread men, vegan snowflakes and clay decorations. He is raising money to go to Kenya in 2026 where he will be in a team of Explorer Scouts working with Masai people to track big cats in the wild, survey grasses and other plant life and paint eyes on the bottoms of cows to prevent them being attacked by lions! Everything will cost £1, so please bring your spare change. Thank you!



Attendance

Whole school attendance for last week was 95%
Well done to Y2 Elm Class with the best attendance at 99%.

Dates

Saturday 7 th December	PTA Christmas fair
Tuesday 10 th December	Y1 Church Visit
Tuesday 10 th December	Nursery stay and play
Wednesday 11 th December	Christmas Lunch
Thursday 12 th December	Nativity Dress Rehearsal
Monday 16 th December	Y3 Nativity at 2.15pm
Tuesday 17 th December	EYFS parties
Tuesday 17 th December	Y3 Nativity at 2.15pm
Wednesday 18 th December	Y3 & Y5 parties
Thursday 19 th December	Y1, Y2, Y4 & Y6 parties
Friday 20 th December	Term ends at 1.30pm

There is facility to translate this newsletter and the whole school website at the bottom of the website home page.



WE HAVE
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