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Purwell Primary School

6th September 2016

Thought for the day: "And suddenly you just know...It's time to start something new and trust in the magic of new beginnings" - Meister Eckhart.

☺ Welcome back to a new school year ☺

We hope you all had a lovely break, during a hotter than expected summer, and are ready to go this term. May I, first of all, thank you for such a beautifully turned out group of children, pristine in their uniform. They really look the part and, I am pleased to say, they all settled very well into their new classes. Some parents, of the many new pupils to Purwell School, have commented on how welcoming the other children have been to them, which is lovely to hear.

Mr Cano celebrating 10 years as Headteacher

It is difficult to believe that a decade has passed by since I became Headteacher at Purwell. Looking back, the Autumn of 2006 seems not that long ago and, although the building is the same, as are some of the longer serving staff, the school *feels* very different, and I mean that in a really good way.

It is often said by those in a position such as I find myself, when reflecting back on a period of service, but it is true to say that it has been an honour and a privilege for me to have been part of the Purwell story. I have had the opportunity to work alongside some inspirational staff, to get to know some terrific children and their families and I am proud of the wonderful journey of progress that we have all made together.

I hope to be part of that journey for a few more years to come, yet, but to those that have supported me and the school, thus far, along the way, I simply want to say thank you.

Contact details and curriculum information

Next week, you will receive an envelope with details of the Autumn Term curriculum. You should also receive a copy of the contact details form we hold for your child. Please check this form, amend as appropriate, sign and return to school as soon as possible.

Take One Artist

As a change to the usual whole school picture topic, which we traditionally begin the year with, for the first two weeks of the term, all classes will be taking part in **Take One Artist**. Classes have been studying various artwork linked to their creators. Acorn - Van Gogh; Holly - L.S. Lowry; Willow - Doug Hyde and Cezanne; Beech - Claude Monet; Maple - John Constable; Aspen - Leonardo Da Vinci; and Oak - Jackson Pollock.

New faces for 2016-17

At the start of this new academic year, we welcome our new members of staff to Purwell.

You will be aware of some of the new staff, already. We have new teachers, Miss Twitchett with Maple Class and Mrs Stanbury with Year 5. Miss Twitchett will be working alongside a new Teaching Assistant, called Miss Moss.

Mr Melhuish has begun work this term, as our new Caretaker.

Mr McWilliam will be our new IT apprentice.

Other new appointments include two new Learning Support Assistants, Mrs Read and Miss Dickerson. Also, I am delighted to announce that we have finally found two additional Midday Supervising Assistants, in Rachel Swainson and Emma Tozer.

On sadder news, Mr Edwards has decided not take up the post of Sports Coach with us, in order to pursue employment elsewhere. Instead, our new Sports Coach will be Lewis Tavernier. Mr Tavernier has experience with working as a Sports Coach in a school in Stevenage.

Zoolab and Zootropolis

From next week, Monday assemblies will make reference to something called Zooper Learning Power.

We will be discovering how we learn best, and link some of the learning to the characters in recent Disney film, Zootropolis (PG). In preparation for this, on Thursday and Friday, children will be shown the film in the school hall. However, if you wish to withdraw your child from seeing the film, please can you inform the school office, or the class teacher, before Thursday. This also coincides, neatly, with a visit from our friends at Zoolab, who will, once again, be bringing a selection of minibeasts and reptiles for us to see. All the children will have the opportunity to have a workshop with Zoolab and to experience these amazing creatures close-up.

Register for Universal Infant Free School Meals

ALL families with children in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 need to register for Universal Infant Free School Meals (UIFSM) online at www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals as soon as possible after the start of the new term. It is a quick and easy process. If you are in receipt of any benefits, your child may also be eligible for Free School Meals (FSM), which is based on family income, and should not be confused with UIFSM. Eligibility for FSM opens up to you a further range of benefits, including free school milk and FSM for any older children you may have. In addition, the school attracts a sum of money, called Pupil Premium Grant, for each child eligible for FSM. This funding is used to offer extra tuition, activities and enrichment opportunities for children in receipt of FSM.

Please register your child for UIFSM at your earliest convenience, but definitely by Friday 23rd September, so as to ensure that you do not miss out on any benefits, and the school can fund further opportunities for relevant pupils.

Morning Reading and Maths for Acorn, Holly and Willow Classes

Parents are, again, invited to come in and share learning with their children, each Wednesday from 8.50 to 9.15am. These sessions will begin next week.

After-school clubs

Next week, you will receive a letter regarding clubs provision for this term. Please read and respond promptly to the letter, to avoid disappointment. You will need to speak with your children with regards to which clubs they are interested in committing to for the term, before returning the reply slip as soon as possible afterwards.

PSA dates for the diary

The first PSA meeting of the new school year will be held on Thursday, September 15th at 8pm in the Millstream. Please go along to find out about and share in plans for the year ahead and to get involved.

The PSA will be holding a coffee morning on Friday 16th September in the Community Room from 9-11am. There will be tea, coffee, cake and biscuits and things to keep little people entertained, so please come along. It's a great opportunity to meet other new parents or for a catch up.

The PSA would also like to invite you to attend the AGM on Thursday 6th October at 8pm in the Community Room.

Help us to continue to improve attendance

For the fifth year running, school attendance has improved. We would like to thank parents for helping us with our ongoing drive to improve school attendance, which remains slightly better than national averages.

Please remember that parents who choose to take their children out of school in term time for holidays or extended family visits will have the time recorded as unauthorised. See term dates at the end of this newsletter. Furthermore, should the overall attendance of the child, including

sickness, be less than satisfactory i.e. less than 95%, then it will be brought to the attention of the school's Attendance Improvement Officer and may lead to a penalty fine. Worst cases may escalate to court action. I am sure you will support us in our attempts to continue to improve our pupils' attendance figures.

Water bottles

We have a stock of water bottles with the school logo on. These bottles, which have sports caps, are available from the school office, at a cost of £1.00 each.

School meals

School meals now cost £2.35 per day, £11.75 per week. Cheques should be made payable to *Hertfordshire Catering Ltd.*

Don't miss out on the latest. Get e-connected

Copies of the newsletter can be sent by email. If you would like to be added to the list, please send an email to admin@purwell.herts.sch.uk. By doing so, you will be automatically added to our 'snow closure' list. Also, you can keep up to date with what's going on via Twitter. As it is a closed group, you will need to contact the school, with your Twitter user name, in order to be accepted.

Dates for Autumn Term 2016 - please transfer dates to diaries and calendars at home.

Monday 3 rd October	Braiswick in for individual photos
Wednesday 5 th October	Beech Class out on museum trip
Thursday 6 th October	PSA AGM - 8pm in the Community Room
Wednesday 19 th October	Parent Consultations
Thursday 20 th October	Parent Consultations
<i>24th-28th October - Half term</i>	
Friday 2 nd December	School Closed for INSET Day
Wednesday 14 th December	EYFS/Key Stage 1 production Christmas (family) - Afternoon EYFS/Key Stage 1 production - Evening
Thursday 15 th December	Key Stage 2 production Christmas (family) - Afternoon Key Stage 2 production - Evening
Wednesday 21 st December	1:20pm Christmas assembly and certificates Last day of term. <i>Term ends at 2:00pm</i>

Rest of academic year - 2017

Spring Term 2016

Thursday 5 th January	School Closed for INSET Day
Friday 6 th January	Pupils return to school for start of Spring Term
<i>13th - 17th February - Half term</i>	
Friday 17 th March	School Closed for INSET Day
Friday 31 st March	Last day of term. <i>Term ends at 2:00pm</i>

Summer Term 2016

Tuesday 18 th April	School Closed for INSET Day
Wednesday 19 th April	Pupils return to school for start of Summer Term
<i>29th May - 2nd June - Half term</i>	
Friday 14 th July	School closed for INSET Day
Friday 21 st July	Last day of term. <i>Term ends at 2:00pm</i>
Monday 24 th July	School closed for Occasional Day