



WOOLGROVE SCHOOL

Special Needs Academy

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Headteacher

Mrs Lisa Hall



20th December 2016

Dear Parent/Carers

As my first term as head teacher here draws to a close I would like to thank everyone involved with the school for all their hard work and support over the past few months. Parents, carers, pupils, staff, governors, and Friends of Woolgrove have all worked to make our school a wonderful place to be. As we approach a new term and a New Year our aim is to continue to improve and to provide the best education and support for our pupils that we can.

Christmas plays

Our recent productions were a roaring success. A couple of weeks ago the junior children delighted and entertained us with their amazing performances of "Shine, Star, Shine" with wonderful singing, dancing and story telling. Yesterday it was the infant department's turn to share the Christmas story with us with their Nursery Rhyme nativity. I am sure you all felt as proud as we did seeing how confidently the children performed and the obvious enjoyment they showed. Thanks again for all the adults who have supported these productions with costumes, practising words and songs, scenery, props and lighting.





e-safety

Keeping children safe online is a key priority and attached with this letter are copies of the latest Herts for Learning (HfL) e-safety newsletters for Autumn 2016 and Spring 2017. Next term we are planning to hold an information session for parents/carers on this important topic - more information to follow.

Operation Christmas Child

We received a letter recently thanking the school for their contributions of shoeboxes for their appeal. Thank you to everyone who contributed items to this very worthwhile cause.

Christmas Celebrations

On Sunday 11th December St. Paul's Church in Letchworth held a service for children from local Letchworth schools and we were invited to take part. A big thank you to three of our pupils, Sophie Chryssafi, Rhys Gabbitas and Reece Connor, who attended the service with their parents and performed a couple of songs in front of a congregation of about 200 people. They sang beautifully and were a credit to the school.

There have been a variety of class outings too towards the end of term all with the theme of engaging the children and learning through fun. Class 3/4T had an energetic morning at Fun Zone in Hatfield.... some of the staff felt their age the morning after so I was told! The infant classes have been to Santa's Grotto in Stevenage to meet the man himself... and he even came into school today to see all the children before the end of term party.



An ongoing project for some of Year 6 has been the first term of their year-long Bronze Arts Award scheme. This culminated in them performing in front of other schools in a superb production a couple of weeks ago. The scheme is a wonderful opportunity for the children to explore a number of art forms centred round a theme. This term's theme was Africa and the children looked at the music, art and culture and have all thoroughly enjoyed the experience and are greatly looking forward to seeing what next term has to offer!

School Closures

At this time of year we have to consider the possibility of the school having to close due to severe weather. The decision to close the school is made only when it is considered too dangerous for the children and staff to travel to the school or the site itself is not safe. In the event of the school closing a Closure Message will be sent informing local radio stations and Hertfordshire Council and the information will be available on the Council website. Once we have Parent Mail up and running next year we will be able to send out personal notifications but we will let you know when this facility is available.

Parent Mail

Last week you should have received an email asking you to register with Parent Mail. We currently have 105 of you signed up to this but if you have not received a message, do not have an email address or are unsure of what to do please contact John or Jo in the office. Our aim is that we will have it up and running very soon and a separate letter about this will be sent out at the beginning of next term. As well as sending out this paper copy of the newsletter we are also sending it out electronically to those of you who have already registered with Parent Mail. Moving to a paperless system will save time, money (and paper!) as well as being far more efficient. Copies of newsletters are also published on our school website (www.woolgrove.herts.sch.uk).

Staff Changes

This term we say a fond farewell to two of our teachers who are leaving us to take up new posts at other schools. Mrs Marie Nelson is going to teacher years 8 and 9 at the Valley School in Stevenage. As many of our children move on to the Valley in Year 7 they will have a chance to meet her again in a few years time. Mrs Louise Howe, Outreach Coordinator, is also moving on to secondary at St Luke's School in Redbourn where she is going to be a Key Stage 3 teacher. We would like to say a big thank you to both teachers for their commitment to the school over a number of years and wish them all the best for the future.



We are welcoming back two teachers who have previously worked at Woolgrove - Mrs Abbie Carpenter and Ms Amelia Ginsberg. From January they will be job-sharing in 4/5N and we are delighted to have them back in the team.

Notification

Please ensure that if there are any changes to your personal circumstances (address, phone number etc.) you inform the school as soon as possible. It is really important that we have the most up to date details in case we need to contact you.



<u>Key Dates</u>	
Wednesday December 21st	Term Ends - finish at 1.45pm
2017	
Thursday January 5th	Term begins (children back to school)
February 13 th - 17th	Half term
Friday March 31st	End of term - finish at 1.45pm
Tuesday April 19th	Summer term begins (children back to school)
May 29 th - 2 nd June	Half term
Friday July 21st	End of Summer term - finish at 1.45pm

Thank you for all your cards, gifts and kind words. On behalf of all the Woolgrove staff I wish you all a happy and safe Christmas break. Just to remind you that the we are finishing at the earlier time of **1.45pm tomorrow** (Wednesday) and that the children return to school on **Thursday 5th January 2017**.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lisa Hall
Head Teacher