

Huish Episcopi Primary School

Headteacher: Tiffany Doughty Davis

North Street, Langport, Somerset, TA10 9RW

Telephone: 01458 250673

Email: office@HEPS.ppat365.org

Website: www.huishepiscopiprimary.co.uk



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Dear Parents and Carers,

I am writing to you with information from last term and for the year ahead.

Christmas events

A special thank you goes to the staff and volunteers for ensuring the children enjoyed the autumn term. Whilst we keep our learning objectives in place until the last minutes of the term, this year we: designed Christmas cards; decorated our windows and classrooms; organised and played parts in a Nativity which was watched by some of our local nursery settings and childminder children; watched a theatre performance in the School Hall; wore Christmas jumpers; had Christmas lunch, (KS2) attended the Carol Service; held a Christmas raffle where all of the children received a gift and the whole school participated in a beautiful Christingle Service. I believe it is important that whilst we are a non-denominational school, we celebrate this time of year in a respectful and joyous way which exemplifies British Values.

Community projects

I would like to thank ABP, Langport, for their support of our library fundraising project. Through a 'fun day' for friends and families of the school and Langport, ABP managed to raise over £4,000. This means a great deal as so many of our families work or have an association with this local business.

I am also thrilled to announce that ABP has donated money to subsidise the KS2 swimming lessons for this year. This is an incredibly generous donation which we know will enable all children to attend lessons.

I was overwhelmed by the generosity of so many members of our community in school and in Langport in the few weeks before Christmas in support of our community giving projects. This enabled us to support families who reached out to us at this challenging time of year. Please take joy and comfort knowing that this was the sentiment of just one of the hamper recipients: *'I can't describe how supported and held we have felt. We (...) have had to adapt to a much lower income (...) re-building our lives bit by bit. I work hard every day but it is always a struggle. Your generous gift this evening has made me cry several times.'*

Statutory testing

I can now make you aware of the newly published Year 6 attainment results for the 2024 SAT tests all state primary schools undertake. Our results show that we are performing amongst the best schools locally and nationally. Our Year 6 children placed HEPS 8th in Somerset out of just under 300 schools for their KS2 SAT results. For schools with a similar mixed socio-economic population, we came top! Nationally, this places us in the top 2% of schools across the country.

Accreditation

I am thrilled to announce that we have managed to secure the Gold History Accreditation Award. To achieve the award, our curriculum, teaching, enrichment and leadership for history must meet exacting criteria. We are most pleased to have achieved the Gold Standard which is unusual for a first-time process. We are proud to list this alongside our PE and geography accreditations.

Development and enrichment

Thank you for your support with accompanying educational visits, attending celebration assemblies, services and swimming lessons, coming in as guest speakers and assisting after school clubs. We carefully plan and balance our academic and development opportunities so they complement the education our children receive. We can only do this with your support which we very much appreciate.

Clubs are well attended with most of the children signing up for at least one club a week. I surveyed children at the end of last year and made changes to the timings of clubs with some being at lunchtimes which has increased the number of children attending clubs overall.

Opportunities for development through Digital Leaders, Sports Captains and School Council allow children to explore leadership skills. The School Council have been as busy as ever with initiating projects and holding me to account. This term the group has managed: book swaps, toy swaps, considered safeguarding in and around the school grounds, the community giving project, school disco, spring term clubs choice and a trial of wristbands for lunchtimes. We meet most weeks and have thoroughly thought-provoking sessions. The children are not timid about bringing problems to the meetings ready to be solved in a democratic manner.

Premises

Here is a reminder of our ambitious site improvement programme over the past few years which is not always easy or straightforward with an older building. It has been my pleasure to have delivered the following to date:

2018 Main building and classroom refurbishment
2019 Media Hub
2020 Window replacement across the site
2020 Hall refurbishment
2021 Cabin build: two new classrooms
2022 Boiler replacement
2023 Coronation Room refurbishment
2024 Staff Room and Preparation Room refurbishment
2024 Library

Library

We are now the proud custodians of a School Library. This was officially opened by Sarah Dyke, MP, on the penultimate day of the Autumn term. Saltmoor children had written to their MP concerned about the state of the local waterways. She was interested to hear more from our children about this and other matters.

We would like to say a sincere thank you to volunteers who have been working tirelessly to catalogue the new books in order that the children can start to use the library this term. Whilst we continue to work on this, we will be holding a special Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 Jim-jam early evening reading session early this term (more details to follow).

Inspection

As you may know, I have managed two Ofsted inspections at HEPS since January 2018. The first came in February 2018 (a few weeks after I was in post) and the second in March 2020. We are currently judged as a 'Good' school. We expect to be inspected before the end of this academic year. I hope you are able to agree that our ambitious and nurturing environment will enable our children to go far with an academically curious attitude. Your support with the inspection process, when it arrives, would be most appreciated by all of the staff.

Staff

Sarah Dyke, MP, said she felt honoured to mark the twenty years of dedicated service Mrs Lin Pengelly has given to our school. Many of you will know this valued member of staff out of school too. Mrs Pengelly continues to support, guide and nurture the children and staff at our school with the dedication other schools would envy.

Miss Chadbourne completed her NPQH (National Professional Qualification for Headship) earlier this year. We are proud to have her in our team as a talented and dedicated colleague. Miss Chadbourne completed this qualification alongside her busy roles as a Teacher, Deputy Headteacher and all whilst managing the organisation of the library.

Lastly, I would like to thank the Governors and staff for their support (and challenge) last term and for the terms ahead. This has been one of the most challenging terms since I have been at HEPS, nevertheless, I have been supported and inspired by colleagues who work hard, nurture and consistently make a difference each day to our families and children.

I look forward to seeing everyone return on Monday and wish you all a happy and healthy 2025!

Kind regards,

Mrs Tiffany Doughty Davis
Headteacher