



Normanthurst School

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HEADMISTRESS

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5 September 2016

Headmistress's Letter

Dear Parents

I hope that you enjoyed a relaxing summer break with your families. I am looking forward to seeing the pupils as they return to Normanthurst this week, or start with us for the very first time.

School begins at 8.40am on Wednesday 7 September. The day begins with assembly followed by an extended form time so that classes can be given their new routines and timetables; lessons will begin with period 2. There will not be PE for Years 5 and 6 on Wednesday morning, but there will be PE/Games for Years 1 and 2 and Year 9 after morning break and Years 3 and 4 in the afternoon.

If your child starts school this week, I hope both they and you settle quickly into the Normanthurst community. If you have any questions please feel free to email or speak to your child's form tutor; I am sure we will be able to help the transition run smoothly and we are very much looking forward to getting to know you over the course of the coming year.

New pupils joining from Year 1 to Year 6 will have a 'buddy' to help them settle in and the class teachers are available every afternoon for a brief chat when they bring the children out to meet you. As you bring your child to the classroom in the morning, you will quickly become familiar with their class teacher and routine.

The new senior pupils in Year 7 have had induction days to make friends and to get to know the school. Seniors joining other year groups will have a member of their class to help them settle into Normanthurst school life. The form tutor has a central role, so please contact the form tutor if you have any questions. Likewise, please encourage your child to talk to their form tutor who will want to support them pastorally.

Settling-in reports will be sent home for all the new pupils after three weeks and for Year 7 parents there is the opportunity to meet the teachers informally at a Parents' Meeting on Tuesday 4 October. Details of this event will be sent out soon.

Summer Holiday Work

The maintenance teams across the Oak-Tree Group have been very busy this holiday across the four schools. Normanthurst had a big building project in the summer last year; it was Coopersale Hall and Braeside's turn this year.

At Normanthurst, there have been a number of improvements and developments this summer. The school has been painted and decorated in many areas, including the front of the school and a number of the classrooms. Several classrooms have new furniture and fittings. The Early Years area has been further improved and we have two lovely teaching spaces for the Reception groups. New carpets have been laid on the landings. The back of the school hall has been re-clad.

The planned refurbishment of the Reception boys and girls toilets will take place over the half-term holiday in October.

New Members of Staff

We welcome a number of excellent new teachers and teaching assistants to Normanhurst this term, some of whom junior parents met at the Moving Up Day in June.

Miss Sulzmann, Miss Elwis and Mrs Casali join the learning support team. New junior teachers are Mr Grant in Y3 and Miss Sulliman in Y4. We are enlarging the senior teaching team: Ms Parrott is teaching Art, Miss Riley is teaching Science and Mrs Burgess is teaching Maths.

Senior Breakfast Club

I am delighted that from Wednesday 7 September we are offering a supervised senior breakfast club on site for Y7 – Y11 from 7.30-8.10am. This is available in the hall and the food will be provided by the Chartwells kitchen team. It will be a continental style breakfast including cereals, toast, pastries, yoghurt and fruit. Water, juice, tea and hot chocolate are on offer to drink.

Mrs Walledge, who is already a member of staff, will be supervising the pupils. Pupils can come to the hall from 7.30am and service will end at 8.10am. Pupils do not need to pre-book, they simply sign in with Mrs Walledge in the hall. The cost will be £3.50 per day, and parents will be invoiced each half-term.

I hope our senior pupils will enjoy using this new facility.

Instrumental Lessons: Music Booklets

We are introducing a new 'Music Practice Notebook' for pupils who have music tuition with the peripatetic music teachers. The teacher will give the booklets out in the first lesson and there will be weekly feedback from the lesson for parents, as well as information about progress and practice. We hope that parents will find this helpful. There is also space for parents to make a comment in the book.

GCSE Results

As we have grown to expect, we had some outstanding results from individual pupils in their GCSEs again this year and over the course of the last week I have been delighted to hear that many of our pupils have been accepted into their first choice sixth forms. It was lovely to celebrate with them.

A few of our pupils didn't achieve the results that we expected, but even so, we have been able to support them to find appropriate courses to go onto at sixth form.

In the light of some unexpected results, we have lodged a number of appeals with the exam boards due to concern about the quality of marking in some subjects, notably English, Science, and Music where there was an administrative error at the exam board. We won't know our final figures until the results of the remarks but we hope to have the final outcomes of the appeals soon.

Morning Routines for EYFS and Junior Pupils

Parents or carers take children from Kindergarten up to Year 6 directly to their classrooms in the morning from 8.30-8.40am. Please do not arrive before 8.30am as the teachers are preparing for the day. This is a 'drop-off' and class teachers will have activities for the children to do, the register is taken at 8.40am and the school day begins. If you arrive late for any reason, after 8.40am, please report to the school office with your child on arrival rather than going to the classroom.

On Tuesdays and Fridays the children from Year 1 to Year 6 have singing practice with Mr Henderson-Jones from 8.30-9.00am in the school hall.

Once every half-term there is a 'drop-in' morning for the children from Year 1-6, to which you are invited. On these mornings you come into the classroom and your children will show you the work they have been doing. These 'drop-ins' finish promptly at 9.00am so that the first lesson of the day can begin. We will ring a hand bell when the session is over and your cooperation in leaving promptly is much appreciated so that the children do not miss learning time. The 'drop-ins' are not times for individual teacher feedback about your child's progress. We are

aware of the sensitive nature of conversations about individual pupils, so we ask you to arrange an individual meeting with the class teacher at an alternative time if there are particular issues you wish to discuss.

Morning Routines for Senior Pupils

From 8.15am each morning staff are on duty in the playground to supervise seniors. The library is available or they may wait in the playground. Pupils may not go into the main school buildings until the bell rings at 8.40am for the start of the day. All pupils should be in school by 8.40am when registration begins. Senior pupils arriving after this time should report to the school office before going to their form room.

Senior pupils have clearly labelled bag racks where they should leave sports bags until their lesson, and school bags during assembly, lunch and break times. Pupils may also have a locker and should see Mr Beint to request one.

Pupil Absences from School

If your child is unwell and unable to attend school, please telephone the school office to report the absence to a member of the Office team or email absence@normanhurstschool.co.uk.

Try to book medical, dental and orthodontic appointments out of school time wherever possible; if this is not possible, please notify the school in advance with the appointment details by phone, email or letter.

Children are compulsory school age from Reception and should be in school every day. Any absence has to be authorised by the school, whatever the reason. Absences because your child is ill need to be confirmed by email or letter.

Requests for absence during term time for other reasons can only be approved in exceptional circumstances. If you wish to request time out of school for such a reason, please contact the Office who will give you a 'request for absence' form which should be completed returned to them; I will then confirm whether the absence is authorised or unauthorised. Requests must be made in advance.

Absence from PE/Games Lessons

If your child is in school but unable to participate in their PE or Games lesson, please send them into school with a note for the PE staff explaining the reason. Please also ensure that they have their PE kit with them because they need to wear it and go to the PE lesson with the rest of the class, even though they will not participate.

Extracurricular Opportunities

The confirmed programme of extra-curricular activities will be sent to parents this week, with the programme of activities starting in full on Monday 12 September.

There will be a number of extra classes for Year 11 after school either during the lunch break or after school from 3.30-4.30pm, with the purpose of helping students make maximum progress this year and thus achieve the best grades possible in their GCSE examinations. I ask all Year 11 parents to support us by ensuring your son or daughter attends the classes.

Homework Matters

Senior homework timetables for Years 7-9 and Years 10-11 will be sent to parents over the coming week. Extended pieces of homework will be set with sufficient time to complete, usually including a weekend. Quality of homework is a significant contributor to pupil achievement and we aim to set meaningful, challenging and helpful independent work for pupils to complete at home. Having a routine for the effective completion of this study will result in better progress for your children, so please encourage them to do homework well, in a suitable environment without distractions.

Junior parents received a welcome letter from the class teacher after the moving-up day last term, with all the details about homeworks, tests, topics and routines, so that you know when PE or swimming kits are needed. If



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HEAD OFFICE ADDRESS: 6-8 ALBION HILL, LOUGHTON, ESSEX IG10 4RA

GROUP MANAGING PRINCIPAL: MR MATTHEW HAGGER B.A. (HONS), M.ED., PGCE PRINCIPALS: MR NICHOLAS HAGGER M.A. (OXON), MRS ANN HAGGER CERT. ED.

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your child struggles to complete their homework in the time, or if there are any other difficulties, please talk to the class teacher so that we can ensure the work is appropriate for your child.

Curriculum Matters

Curriculum overviews will be sent out during the first part of the term to advise you of the work your children will be doing in class. In the EYFS and Juniors these are sent out on a termly basis, for Seniors you will have a long-term plan for the work, set out in half-termly units. I hope parents find these useful.

Open Evening Thursday 6 October 2016

The school has its main Open Day on Thursday 6 October from 6.00pm. The school day runs as usual, but many pupils will be asked to return at 5.30pm to participate. Some pupils will be in classrooms, others will be guides showing visitors and prospective families around the school. I hope pupils enjoy talking about school and sharing their experiences.

Current parents are also welcome to attend and to look around the school. Junior parents find this particularly helpful as they have the opportunity to learn more about life in the senior part of the school.

There is an additional EYFS School in Action Open Morning from 9.15-10.30am on Friday 7 October.

Contact Details and Medical Information

The school office asks parents to check that the contact information and medical details we have for your child are correct. Please log onto your parent portal and inform the office of any changes required.

New Parents' Portal Access

New parents will receive an email this week with information about how to access the parent portal. The email will contain your username and password details. Please log on to check the portal and to confirm that your details are correct. If there are any difficulties please contact the school office.

Important Dates for Autumn Term 2016

Fri 9 Sep	09:00 – 11:30	Individual photographs for pupils
Mon 12 Sep	19:15 – 20:15	NSPA Meeting
Tue 13 Sep	P1	7T MidYIS Test
	09:00 – 16:00	Annual conference for Head Boys & Head Girls - Forest School
	17:00 – 18:00	Y10 How to support your child with GCSEs
Wed 14 Sep	P1	7K MidYIS Test
Thu 15 Sep	P1	Y10 Yellis Test
	14:00 – 16:45	GCSE Drama students - Mask Workshop
Sat 17 Sep	08:00 – 16:30	Chigwell U11 Football & Festival Tournament
	Tbc	NSPA Event - Young Explorers adventure Picnic. LKG to Y2
Tue 20 Sep	08:30 – 09:00	Y1 - 6 Parents 'Drop in morning'
	15:30 – 16:45	K and Rec 'Getting to know you' parents' meeting
	17:00 – 18:00	Sixth Form Options Evening
Thu 22 – Fri 23 Sep	Both days	Y3 Overnight Camp at Oaklands
Tue 27 Sep	18:00 – 23:00	Y10 & 11 Drama trip to Threepenny Opera
Wed 28 Sep	16:00 – 16:30	Rome trip Parents' Meeting
Thu 29 Sep	16:00 – 17:30	Y3-6 Oak-Tree Schools Spelling Bee at Coopersale Hall School
Tue 4 Oct	17:00 – 18:00	Y7 Parents' Meeting: supporting your children through Year 7
Thu 6 Oct	16:00 – 20:00	Open Evening for current and prospective parents
Fri 7 Oct	09:00 – 11:00	EYFS Open Morning for prospective parents
Wed 12 Oct	19:00 – 20:30	NSPA AGM
Fri 14 Oct	18:00 – 19:30	GCSE Presentation Evening
Mon 17 Oct	All Week	Maths and Economics Week

Tue 18 Oct	08:30 – 16:30	Years 1-3 trip to Bank of England
	16:00 – 18:30	Kindergarten - Y6 Parents' Meetings
Sat 22 Oct – Tue 25 Oct	All day	Art Trip to Rome
Mon 24 Oct – Fri 4 Nov	All day	HALF TERM

I look forward with great anticipation to the forthcoming school year. I hope you and your children are also looking forward to all the exciting opportunities and challenges to come.

The Leadership Team, your child's form tutor or I are very happy to discuss any questions or concerns that may arise, so please email or contact the school office if you would like to meet with us.

With my very best wishes

Yours sincerely



Mrs Claire Osborn
Headmistress



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