

# EXWICK HEIGHTS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Autumn Term – September 27<sup>th</sup> 2018

Website: [www.exwickheights.devon.sch.uk](http://www.exwickheights.devon.sch.uk)

## Dear Parents & Carers,

It is certainly beginning to feel more autumnal as I am writing this newsletter – the air is a lot crisper first thing and our trees are just beginning to lose their leaves... Thankfully, your lovely children have been keeping us feeling bright and I have been delighted by their positive attitudes and hard work. The start of a school year is always a shock for children (and adults!) especially as the novelty of the school routine wears off. Please don't hesitate to contact us if your child is struggling, we completely understand and will do our very best to support them. It is a real privilege to work with your children and we are already seeing them make progress as they tackle the challenges for their new year group!

At the end of this newsletter, I have attached an overview of school events for your calendar. Please also check our school website to keep yourself up to date with forthcoming events. This information can be found under the 'Parent/Carers' section of the tool bar, and is headed 'Diary Dates.' The website also contains links to each year groups' learning blogs - a key way to ensure that you are informed about what your child is learning each week and share the Home-learning set for each year group. Home learning is set every Thursday for all year groups other than our Reception and Nursery classes, who publish theirs on a Friday. Don't forget to contact your child's teacher if you would prefer to receive a paper copy of this each week.

**Lost Property:** It is inevitable that children will misplace belongings at some point over the school year. Please could I remind you to clearly label your child's belongings to enable us to promptly return mislaid items – this includes items like drink bottles and shoes!

**Mobile phones** Please can I remind parents that mobile phones should not be used anywhere within the school building, when you are visiting our school. This is part of our Safeguarding policy and is in place to protect all of our children. I have been made aware of a very small number of adults having mobile phones visible when entering classrooms in the morning to support their child's early morning work. Please can I ask you all to ensure that they are placed in your bag or pocket to prevent embarrassment – staff have been asked to approach anyone with a mobile phone visible within the building. With thanks.

Further to this, we understand that older children may want to walk home independently and carry a mobile phone for their security. However, during the school day, these need to be turned off and signed in to the class teacher. This also applies to **any device** (such as a smart watch) that can be used to take calls or photographs, even if these options are turned off. The school is unable to take any responsibility for any mobile devices.

**Harvest Festival** Each year, we celebrate this event with a special assembly for our children, which we hold on the last day of the half term (Friday 19<sup>th</sup> October). Unfortunately, this event is only for our pupils. However, we would like to invite families to share in our Harvest Festival by kindly donating a food item. These will be displayed throughout the assembly and will then be donated to the Exeter Foodbank, a local charity who make a real difference to local people in crisis. The Exeter Foodbank are only able to use non-perishable food and so we kindly ask that the school does not receive any 'fresh' goods for obvious reasons. A flyer from the foodbank, with suggested donations will be sent home via parent mail to all families in case you would like to support this super cause.

**External Toilet** We now have an external toilet, complete with changing table, for parents and carers use. This is located at the front of the main school building in the carpark. Our disabled toilet is also situated at the front of the school, but access to this is via our Reception area. As we are fortunate to now have these facilities, we politely ask that only children enter the school buildings to use the toilet facilities, parents, carers and siblings are asked to use the external toilet. This will help us to keep children safe and prevent a member of staff from having to wait in the area of the toilet whilst it is used by a visitor!

**School Dinner Tickets:** The office staff are having to deal with increasing numbers of children not providing a school dinner ticket for their school lunch. This places an additional administrative burden on the team as reminders have to be sent home and payment chased. Dinner tickets can be purchased at either office in the morning & paid for by cash or by cheque made payable to the TW MAT, (any number of tickets may be purchased). Alternatively, if you are signed up for Schoolcomms you can download the Schoolgateway app and pay on-line using a credit or debit card, (minimum purchase of £12.50 applies). In future, when five tickets become outstanding, (value £12.50), we ask that you either make payment immediately by one of the methods detailed above or provide your child with a packed lunch until the outstanding amount is cleared.

**Smoking and vaping** Our school is a no smoking site and so we politely remind all of our families that smoking and vaping are not permitted. We would also appreciate it if parents and carers could be mindful of this and stand away from the school gates when smoking or vaping to allow children to enter and leave school without having to pass through smoke. I would be very grateful for your co-operation with this.

**July '18 Questionnaire Outcomes:** I am delighted to be able to share the findings of our 2018 Parent Questionnaire. This was sent out with children's annual reports and we received a considerable return. The questionnaire required parents and carers to respond to 16 statements and indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with the statement. Please note that where a parent has ticked between the agree and disagree box, we have counted this tick as a disagree response. The table below identifies the responses given:

	Please tick as appropriate	Strongly agree/ Agree	Disagree/ Strongly disagree		Don't know	No Answer
1	My child is happy at this school.	98%	2%			
2	My child feels safe at this school.	100%				
3	My child makes good progress at this school.	99%			1%	
4	My child is well looked after at this school.	100%				
5	My child is well taught at this school.	100%				
6	My child achieves appropriate homework for their age.	94%	2%		4%	
7	This school ensures pupils are well behaved.	98%	2%			
8	This school deals effectively with bullying.	70%	1%		28%	1%
9	This school is well led and managed.	99%				1%
10	This school responds well to any concern I raise.	94%	2%		3%	1%
11	I receive valuable information from the school about my child's progress.	98%	1%		1%	
12	I would recommend this school to another parent.	98%	1%		1%	
13	This school is clean and well maintained.	100%				
14	The school provides high quality lunches.	86%	6%		5%	3%
15	Newsletters are helpful and informative.	100%				
16	The school engages well with parents and carers.	98%	1%		1%	

The questionnaire also invited parents and carers to share what they considered to be strengths and development areas for the school. This has been invaluable in helping us to identify our priorities moving forward, but is too wide ranging for me to share within this newsletter. Instead, I would like to invite anyone who would like to share their thoughts about our school to meet with the school leadership team, our next scheduled **'Coffee Meeting'** will be held on **Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> October at 3.30pm**. I would like to thank you all for your responses, it is so useful to help us to work with you to continue to improve our work.

**Parking:** As is the case with most schools, this is a challenge around our site and so frequently features in our newsletters! I would like to ask parents for support around the Peterborough Road entrance. In particular, please can I ask you all to be aware of the double yellow lines at the entrance to Exwick Lane from Peterborough Road. Please do not leave your cars unattended on double yellow lines; there may be a need for an ambulance or fire engine to get to the local residents or, indeed, to one of our children or staff on site. If you do drop a family member and your child off in this area, we politely ask you to then drive away to a place where you can safely wait and collect your passenger. The drop off zone is at the front of the school and the EY building can be easily accessed on foot from there. It is also vital that nobody parks on junctions to enable all drivers to have good visibility. Parking on a junction blocks the view of vehicles and puts our children at risk. Thank you for your ongoing support with this.

**Job Opportunity:** Are you looking for part-time work that fits in with school hours and holidays? We currently have a vacancy for a Mealtime Assistant, to start as soon as possible. We are seeking a caring individual with a genuine interest in supporting pupils during the lunchtime period from 11:45am to 1:15pm daily and from 11.45am until 3.15pm on a Friday afternoon. A job description and application form is available from the website or the school office. Application forms can be returned via email to [admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@exwickheights.devon.sch.uk) or by post to Exwick Heights Primary School, Exwick Lane, Exeter EX4 2FB

**Access to School Site:** A polite reminder that the school site is open from 8.30am daily. Access before this time is for children attending the Playclub only. For those parents using the drop-off facility on the main site, please do not queue at the vehicle gates before 8.30am as school staff beginning work at 8.30 or 8.45am need to be able to drive in to the car park. Many thanks.

**School Uniform:** I have noticed that a few of our children are beginning to be more 'creative' with our expectations of uniform! We ask children to dress appropriately for the school day to enable them to access all of the activities provided. Appropriate school dress means that fashion clothing should be avoided; this includes hair decorations which often distract children (for instance, novelty hair bands or fascinators). The wearing of shoes with heels or sling-backs can be especially dangerous and are not permitted. Sensible flat shoes, suitable for active playtimes, should be worn. Jewellery, including bracelets, necklaces and rings should not be worn in school. Small, plain earring studs or sleepers are permitted but large, decorative earrings are not. This, again, is for health and safety reasons. Nail varnish and temporary tattoos are not permitted. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

**Individual Photos:** These will be taken on Monday 15th October by Tempest Photography. Pupils in our Nursery who do not usually attend Nursery on a Monday morning are warmly invited to come into school for their photograph to be taken first thing. These children will be given a flyer with further information the week prior to the photographs being taken.

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to approach any member of staff around the school at the beginning or end of each day.

With thanks,

Mrs C. Neal  
**Headteacher**

### **Term Dates 2018/2019**

w/c 17 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	After school clubs start
Thursday 27 <sup>th</sup> September 2018	Yr 3 children to Northcott Theatre
Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Individual and sibling photos
Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Yr 5 Harvest Assembly
Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> October – Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Half-term holiday
Monday 29 <sup>th</sup> October 2018	Children return to school
Friday 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Yr 6 Remembrance Assembly
w/c 26 <sup>th</sup> November 2018	Last week for afterschool clubs
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> December 2018	Christmas dinner day
Thursday 20 <sup>th</sup> December 2018	Last day of term
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> December 2018 – Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> January 2019	Christmas holiday
Monday 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2019	Non pupil day – staff in
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> January 2019	Children return to school for Spring term
Monday 18 <sup>th</sup> – Friday 22 <sup>nd</sup> February 2019	Half-term holiday
Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2019	Children return to school
Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> – Thursday 7 <sup>th</sup> March 2019	Yr 6 London Residential
Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> April 2019	Last day of term
Monday 8 <sup>th</sup> April – Monday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April 2019	Easter holiday
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> April 2019	Children and staff return for Summer term
Monday 6 <sup>th</sup> May 2019	Bank holiday
Monday 27 <sup>th</sup> May – Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> May 2019	Half-term holiday
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June 2019	Non-pupil day – staff in
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	Children return to school
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> June 2019	Occasional day – no school for pupils or staff
Monday 1 <sup>st</sup> – Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Grenville House Residential week
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> July 2019	Last day of term for pupils
Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup> July 2019	Last day of term for staff