

Croftlands Junior School

October 2017



Dear All

In many ways this half term has passed in the blink of an eye and yet both staff and pupils are definitely ready for a half term break. I sometimes think we underestimate the challenges faced by children at the start of the academic year. They have to get to know their new teacher, their new classmates, a more challenging curriculum and, in the case of our Year 3 children, a completely new school! It is no wonder that we are all so tired...

Almost all parents of children in Year 6 have applied for their child's secondary school place. The deadline is **31st October** so, if you have not done it yet, it is now urgent. We have already been advised by UVHS that they are likely to be oversubscribed this year so there is no guarantee of a place. Late applications are allocated a school place at a secondary school but usually not at a school of choice.

I was delighted to see so many of you at school last week, meeting with your child's class teacher at our Parents' evenings. I hope you have been as impressed as I have with how hard the children have worked and the amount of work that has been done in a few short weeks. These meetings are important and I would like to thank you all for your support.

The second half of term is **very busy** so we would appreciate it if you would take particular note of the dates on the back page. The school office is having a lot of problems at the moment with parents not reading letters or messages from school, not ordering school lunches, not contacting us when a child is off school, not returning reply slips etc. For example, some children were given up to **four** copies of the recent Vindolanda letter and we still had to text and phone parents the day before the trip. This adds a significant amount of work to an already extremely busy office. **Please check your messages, emails and your child's school bag and respond where appropriate.**

Many thanks to all of you who contributed to our Harvest Appeal. We were able to send several bags of donations to the Foodbank and Barrow Blind Association. It is so good for the school community to share with those in need.

This year's Christmas production will be 'Bethlehem', presented by the Lower School (Years 3 & 4). Scripts are being sent home during half term so that children can practise for the auditions which will be held when we return. The children need to decide whether they would like a speaking part, a non-speaking part, a singing part, a dancing part or a backstage role. There will be two performances, one during the afternoon and one in the evening. Tickets will be available to parents of children in the Lower School during the week before the performances and are initially restricted to two per family until everyone has had an opportunity to buy them. All Lower School children will be involved in the production in some way or another so it is important that they are available for both performances. Please make a note of the dates on the back of this newsletter.

Many thanks for all of your support and I do hope you all have a good half term holiday. I look forward to seeing the children return refreshed and ready for a busy few weeks.

Miss Cathy Styles, Headteacher

Do you know what your child accesses online? Does your child use online gaming?



At Croftlands Junior School, we actively promote safe use of the Internet and we monitor the sites and resources the children access, with the help of our filtering system. Cyberbullying is becoming an ever-increasing problem due to the variety of mobile phones, tablets, laptops and games consoles children now have at their fingertips. The legal age for an account on Facebook, Twitter, MySpace, Google or YouTube is 13 because younger children do not have the emotional maturity to understand the consequences of what they may upload or post.

Please help us to reduce the risk of cyberbullying by monitoring what your child accesses online at home. You can find further advice at <http://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre> or you can always ask at school.

New building

The new building plans went to the Cumbria County Planning Committee on 20th September but further details were requested and the committee met again on 16th October. We are awaiting their decision but it is hoped that the contractors may be on site in the New Year. We will not know when we are likely to be moving in until the work starts.



Road Safety and Parking



I would like to remind parents that they should not be parking in the school car park at the beginning or end of the school day. The car park should only be used by staff, registered taxis or blue badge holders. Many thanks to those of you who have supported us by parking away from the school or using the lollipop man. You are setting a good example to the children and helping us to keep all of the children more safe on their journeys to and from school.

Using the school car park or parking on the yellow lines or yellow zigzags remains dangerous for the children and we would ask you to make safety your priority rather than convenience. There have been a couple of 'near misses' because of bad parking or dangerous manoeuvres since the start of term and we do not want there to be an accident before drivers change their habits.

Please show consideration for our neighbours and park legally and responsibly.

Contacting School



Many of us now use technology to communicate and it has certainly made life easier in many respects. However, we had several incidents during the summer holidays of parents attempting to contact school staff about school related matters through their personal social media accounts, texts etc.

This is unnecessary and inappropriate as school emails are checked almost daily during school holidays and the answering machine is checked at least once every week.

Our teachers work very long hours during the school terms (at least 10-12 hours a day, sometimes more, and several hours over the weekend) and are entitled to their time off. Staff are required to report any contact to the Headteacher or Governors. We would appreciate it if parents would respect the privacy of staff and their right to a personal life.

School Attendance

We would like to thank parents for all their support in ensuring that children get to school on time and every day and also those of you that telephone or leave a message for us if your child is not going to be in school.



We do need to know why your child is off school so that we can enter the correct code in the register. If your child is unwell, we also need to know what is wrong with them. This is for Health & Safety reasons so that we can monitor any potential outbreaks of illness in the school or in particular classes. It is **not** because we are being nosy!

Non-urgent medical, dental and optician appointments should be made outside school hours. We have a few children who seem to be missing registration or lessons unnecessarily due to routine check ups.



Christmas Shoebox Appeal

Hopefully you already know that each class is going to put together some shoeboxes for two charities - Operation Christmas Child, linked to a Christian charity who distribute the boxes across the world, and Boxes of Hope who send shoeboxes directly from Cumbria to Romania.



We would appreciate any contributions of facecloths, toothbrushes, toothpaste, soap, hairbrushes/combs, colouring books, pens, pencils, crayons, small toys, hats, scarves, gloves, non-chocolate sweets. Please do not send in aerosols, liquids (bubbles, shampoo, shower gel), sharp items, novels, war related toys (guns, tanks, soldiers) or medicine.

Any families who want to contribute a shoebox of their own can collect a leaflet with the information from the school office.

The boxes will be collected in November so we really need all contributions by **Friday 10th November** at the very latest. Both charities have websites if you want further information about their work.



Just a quick reminder to parents of children in Year 6 that we need the deposits for Robinwood after half term. Although it is a residential trip, this is a significant part of our school curriculum and part of the National Curriculum so we expect every child to take part. If you were unable to attend the meeting, Mr Cross does

have a DVD he can lend parents.

Some financial support is available for those who need it; you just need to contact Miss Styles.

Did you know ... just registering your child for Free School Meals means that the school gets extra money?

Register now to make sure we don't miss out

The Government is giving money to schools to help children from lower income families do their very best. This funding is called 'Pupil Premium'.

For every child registered, Croftlands Junior School received over £1300 last year. With this money we provided more classroom support for children to help them achieve and in some cases 'catch up', subsidised trips for all pupils, paid for sports coaches to work with classes and provided enriching curricular activities. If you are registered for Free School Meals you could also get support towards the cost of school trips, including residential trips, music lessons and swimming lessons.

Your child does not have to take the meal if they do not want it. We still get the funding as long as they are registered and the funding lasts for 6 years, even if your child was registered for one day.

Please register online in the Schools area of Education and Learning at www.cumbria.gov.uk/childrenservices.

Parent Governor

We had one nomination for Parent Governor, last year's Chair of Governors, Louise Shaw. Ms Shaw has been duly appointed as a Parent Governor and re-appointed the Chair of Governors for the next 12 months.

Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal

As usual, we will be supporting the Poppy Appeal during the two weeks after half term, before Remembrance Sunday on 12th November.



School Councillors will be bringing the boxes around to classes once a day for the children to make their donations. Last year the British Legion provided us with a School's Box which had a variety of other items including friendship bracelets, rulers and wrist bands with suggested

donations of at least 50p to £1 depending on the item. Please make sure your child is able to donate enough money if any of these are available.



Children in Need

We will be supporting Children in Need again this year on Friday 17th November. Further details will be sent out after half term.

Term Dates for 2017 & 2018

Please note, we usually follow the Local Authority's suggested term dates which are published **two years in advance** on the County Council website—www.cumbria.gov.uk.

However, in 2017-18, to support parents, we have moved some of the term dates to fit in with changes to the dates at UVHS. You have already been notified of this.

Autumn Term 2017	Wednesday 6th September—Tuesday 19th December
<i>Half Term</i>	<i>Monday 23rd October—Friday 27th October</i>
Spring Term 2018	Thursday 4th January—Thursday 29th March
<i>Half Term</i>	<i>Monday 12th February—Friday 16th February</i>
Summer Term 2018	Monday 16th April—Friday 20th July
<i>May Bank Holiday</i>	<i>Monday 7th May</i>
<i>Half Term</i>	<i>Monday 28th May—Friday 1st June</i>

Under the revised Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations the Headteacher is **no longer able to authorise absence** from school for holidays in term time. Authorisation for absence in term time can only be given in exceptional circumstances. **If you need to take your child out of school for any reason other than medical appointments, you should arrange an appointment to discuss the matter with the Headteacher.**

An unauthorised absence from school is any absence that is deemed not to be an acceptable reason for missing school. Unauthorised absences from school carry the risk of prosecution under section 444 or 444(1A) of the Education Act 1996. In accordance with Cumbria County Council's School Absence Enforcement Policy, parents may be issued with a penalty notice if a leave of absence is taken without permission.

In 2018, Year 6 test week is the week beginning 14th May.

Current Dates For Your Diary

Tuesday 31st October	Lower School swimming re-starts
Saturday 11th November	Weekend Walk for Y5 & 6
Thursday 16th November	Sportshall Athletics competition at UVHS—Y5/6 team
Friday 17th November	Children in Need Day
Friday 24th November	Choir to sing at Booths from 5:30pm for arrival of Father Christmas
Thursday 28th November	Last swimming session for Lower School
Thursday 30th November	Nasal 'flu immunisation—Y3/4
Tuesday 12th December	Lower School Production in the evening – Bethlehem
Wednesday 13th December	Lower School Production in the afternoon – Bethlehem
Thursday 14th December	Lego League competition at Furness College –Y6 team
Thursday 14th December	UVHS Panto for Years 5 & 6 during the afternoon
Thursday 14th December—	Year group Christmas parties every afternoon
Tuesday 19th December	
Tuesday 19th December	Last day of term
	Spring term
Tuesday 9th January	Swimming starts for Lower School
Wednesday 7th February	NSPCC workshops for the Upper School
Thursday 22nd February	Key Steps Gymnastics competition at UVHS
Wednesday 7th March—	Robinwood for Year 6
Friday 9th March	
Monday 19th March	Parent evening week starts
Friday 23rd March	Sport Relief
Thursday 29th March	End of term
	Summer term
Monday 16th April	Term starts
Friday 25th May	Sports Day in the morning

Office Hours

During term time the school office is open for enquiries etc from 8:30am to 4:00pm each day. Outside these office hours, the phone is unlikely to be answered but messages may be left on our answering machine. Please do leave a message.