



# Normanhurst School

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## HEADMISTRESS

MRS CLAIRE OSBORN MSc., B.A. (HONS), PGCE

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3 December 2018

## Headmistress's Letter

Dear Parents

As you know, the autumn term finishes on Wednesday 12 December at midday, but there are a great many events taking place before the Christmas holidays begin.

### Christmas Events

**Shoe Box Appeal:** thank you for your generous contributions to the shoebox appeal. This year we collected 110 shoe boxes in the Shoe Box House Competition. Connaught were the overall winners collecting slightly more boxes than Warren, but there was a very commendable effort from both houses.

**The Early Years Festive Fun Day** took place on Friday 30 November. It was a super day for our youngest pupils! The children were once again delighted to discover that the Christmas Elf had paid a visit to my office. This year I found him hiding under my desk. He and I went to Kindergarten and Reception to spend time with a very festively dressed group of children and staff.

The Christmas card design competition winners have been announced and their designs have been printed as the official school Christmas card this year. Congratulations to our winners: Emily, John, Eva and Mia.

We have the Infant Christmas play to look forward to this week. The dress rehearsal is being performed to the juniors on Monday, before the three **Nativity performances** on Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday and Thursday morning. I am sure we are all in for a very special treat when we go to watch them. Please do order your tickets in advance.

On **Thursday the Kindergarten and Reception classes have a trip to the Dugdale theatre** for a Christmas performance and **the juniors are off to the pantomime**, which I hope the children will really enjoy.

We have **Christmas lunch and the junior Christmas party on Friday 7 December** when the juniors come to school in their party clothes.

The **Carol Service is at 2pm on Tuesday 11 December at the Parish Church on The Green**. All parents, and families are welcome to join us, and it will be lovely to share this festive event with you. The pupils will be reading, performing and taking us through the Christmas story. The whole school community will be taking part. The school day ends at normal time and After School Club will run as usual. Parents may collect their children from the church at the end of the service, or from school at the usual time. Seniors will walk back to school to collect their belongings before going home. They will leave school slightly early at about 3.15pm.

We are once again collecting new or nearly new toys for the local **Hestia Refuge Centre**, as we have done for the past two years. Malachi in Year 8 is coordinating the project for the third year running. Unwanted toys and games that pupils donate will be given to children at the refuge. The refuge looks after a number of families who have been the victims of domestic abuse, or who are in crisis and need emergency accommodation.

If you would like to bring in a toy, book, or gift for us to give to the refuge please do bring them into the school office by Friday 7 December.

The NSPA is holding a festive **Winter Walk on Sunday 9 December**. We are meeting at **11am** at school. We will go for a walk up to Connaught Waters and then return to school for drinks and festive food. Tickets are available from the school office. Please do come and join us.

The **final day of term, Wednesday 12 December will be a Charity Christmas Jumper day** when we ask pupils to wear a festive jumper instead of their school jumper and blazer and bring a donation of £1 for our school charities. School finishes for everyone at **12 noon** after a final celebration and rewards assembly.

### **Staff News**

This term we say goodbye to three members of staff. Mrs Lesley Elder has been the Oak-Tree Group ICT Manager since 2001 and she has led the IT development and support across the schools throughout this time. She leaves us at the end of term for a new venture running her own teashop business. We thank her for the wealth of help and support she has given in school and we wish her the very best for the future.

Mrs Lorraine Powell, the Office Manager and my PA, leaves us at the end of term. I am very grateful for all she has done for us over the last five years. She has been instrumental in helping communications run smoothly and we will miss her. We have appointed Mrs Toni Reid as the new Office Manager and Head's PA. Mrs Reid will be starting on Monday 3 December to ensure a smooth handover with Mrs Powell.

Mr Stephen Holder, our main caretaker is retiring at the end of term. We are very grateful for all he has done for us. Mr Mike Wickham, an experienced school caretaker, becomes the new main caretaker and Ms Tracey Deacon moves across from the Group maintenance team to be the new Assistant Caretaker from January.

### **Spring Term**

#### **Year 11 Mock GCSE Exams**

The Year 11 pupils and parents are well aware of the GCSE exam timetable which begins as soon as we return to school in January. Pupils have a full set of mock exams to enable them to see clearly how they are currently performing and to identify what aspects need to be developed before the final exams in May and June. Year 11 had a special assembly last week to focus on preparation, on how to revise effectively and how to minimise stress.

#### **Coffee Mornings with Mr Hagger and Mrs Osborn**

After the Christmas holidays, Mr Hagger and I would like to invite parents for coffee to provide an opportunity to hear your views and to discuss school life. The coffee mornings take place in the library from 8.45-9.45am on Mondays, beginning with Kindergarten and Reception parents on Monday 14 January. Dates for each year group are at the end of this letter.

#### **E-Safety Day – Tuesday 29 January 2019**

As you will be aware, we consider the protection and safeguarding of children to be of the highest priority. With the expansion of social media websites and younger children having access to mobile phones, it is essential that all members of our community are aware of the need to act responsibly when using technology.

E-Safety is an integral part of children's education in today's digital world and is embedded in their learning at school. We also want to help our parents improve their own understanding of E-Safety issues so that children can learn to use the internet and all digital media in a safe and secure way.

For these reasons, we are organising an E-Safety Day on 29 January with workshops for all pupils from Year 3 upwards. Staff will also be trained after school. The training will be run by John Woodley and John Staines (also known as the 'Two Johns'), who are both qualified Police Trainers and CEOP Ambassador trainers who trained every Youth Officer within Essex Police. They deliver training within schools and specialise in pupil, parent and teacher events.

The day will finish with a session for parents from 6pm in the school hall to raise awareness about E-Safety and so that you are aware of the content of the earlier pupils' session. We will be writing with full details in due course, but in the meantime you might like to visit The Two Johns' website <https://www.esafetytraining.org> for more information.

### **Snow and Wintry Weather**

Our aim is always to stay open even in snowy weather, unless there is a health and safety concern in doing so. The maintenance team arrive on site early to clear paths and to make the site safe, and an update will be posted on the website by 7am so that parents are informed about arrangements for the day.

### **Summer Ball Saturday 18 May 2019**

The four Parents' Associations of the Oak-Tree Group will be coming together again to organise another joint Oak-Tree Summer Ball on Saturday 18 May 2019 from 7pm until 1am in the marquee at Chigwell Hall (Metropolitan Police Club) for parents, staff and friends of the schools.

This year there will be a *Casino Royale* James Bond theme with a jazz band, DJ, casinos, cocktail bar and much more. Tickets will be going on sale shortly after Christmas, but please do put the date in your diaries as this promises to be a fun event for us all.

### **Forthcoming Events**

Mon 3 Dec	14:00 – 15:00	<b>Infant</b> Christmas Play dress rehearsal
Tue 4 Dec	09:30 – 12:45	<b>Y5&amp;6</b> Food Tech visit to Wagamama Spitalfields
	14:00 – 15:00	<b>Infant</b> Christmas Play to parents
Wed 5 Dec	09:30 – 10:30	<b>Infant</b> Christmas Play to parents
Thu 6 – Thu 13 Dec		Scholastic Book Fair
	09:00 – 15:45	<b>Y10&amp;11</b> GCSE History trip Imperial War Museum
	09:30 – 10:30	<b>Infant</b> Christmas Play to parents
	12:00 – 16:00	<b>Y1-Y6</b> Christmas Pantomime, Millfield Theatre
	12:00 – 15:00	<b>KG&amp;Rec</b> trip to Dugdale Theatre
Fri 7 Dec		<b>KG-Y6</b> Christmas Non-Uniform and Party Day
	09:30 – 16:30	<b>Y11</b> trip to Poetry Live, Apollo Theatre
Sun 9 Dec	11:00 – 13:00	NSPA Winter Walk & Mulled Wine family event
Mon 10 Dec		<b>EYFS</b> HUDL reports/Y1-10 Short reports published
Tue 11 Dec	14:00 – 15:00	Christmas Carol Service
Wed 12 Dec		Whole School - Christmas Jumpers for Charity
	12:00	School ends for Christmas break
Tue 8 Jan		Start of Spring Term: school begins at normal time 8.40am

		Y11 GCSE Mock Examinations commence
Fri 11 Jan	09:30 – 14:30	Y3-11 School Council Houses of Parliament trip
Mon 14 Jan	08:45 – 09:45	EYFS Coffee Morning
	17:00 – 18:00	Ski Trip Parent meeting
Tue 15 Jan	09:30 – 15:30	Y10 GCSE Art National Gallery trip
	16:00 – 18:30	Y8 Parents' Evening
Mon 21 Jan	08:45 – 09:45	Y1&2 Coffee Morning
	19:15 – 20:30	NSPA meeting
Wed 23 Jan	09:00 – 15:30	Y3 Science Museum trip
	09:00 – 15:30	Y1 Colchester Zoo trip TBC
Thu 24 Jan	14:00 – 17:30	Y10 Forest School Careers Fair
Mon 28 Jan	08:45 – 09:45	Y3-6 Coffee Morning
Tue 29 Jan		E-Safety Day
Tue 29 Jan	18:00 – 20.00	Safer Internet Meeting for Parents
Mon 4 Feb	08:45 – 09:45	Y7-11 Coffee Morning
Tue 5 Feb	08:30 – 15:30	Y5&6 Young Voices at O2
	08:30 – 09:00	KG-Y6 Parents' Drop In Session
	16:00 – 18:30	Y11 Parents' Evening
Fri 8 Feb	18:30 – 20:00	EYFS-Y3 NSPA Themed Disco
Tue 12 Feb	16:00 – 18:30	Y10 Parents' Evening
Mon 18 – Fri 22 Feb		Half Term

May I take this opportunity to wish you and your families every blessing for Christmas and the New Year. The Spring term begins on Tuesday 8 January at the normal start time, and breakfast club will be running as usual.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely



Mrs Claire Osborn  
Headmistress



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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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