



# Parent Newsletter

## Summer 2017

### Wellies



As part of our continuous provision all pupils regularly engage in outdoor learning activities. We would really appreciate it if parents could send in a pair of wellies with your child's name written inside so that in September we can keep them in school for the whole of that year. Many thanks!

### Staffing

We have several staff leaving us this year:



Ros, our music teacher is retiring after being a part of the school for over 7 years - we are really going to miss her enthusiasm and commitment to the children and music, particularly the fabulous work she has done over the past 12 years organising the 'Search for a Special Star' events and the Special Schools' Christmas concerts at the Minster. Enjoy your well-earned retirement Ros!



Bryan Lounton, who has been teaching at Columbia Grange since the school opened, the last few years on a part-time basis is also retiring. Thank you for all your hard work and dedication Bryan and we also wish you a very relaxing well-deserved retirement!

Laura Thomson, our speech and language therapist has secured a new job in Kent and will be relocating and Laura McClennan from the Autism Outreach Team is leaving to pursue a new pathway and have more flexibility to spend time with her young daughter. We are also losing our Occupational Therapist Dawn who has been with us for the past three years, but are welcoming back Sue Stephenson, our previous OT



## Year 6 Leavers

We will be very sad to see our year 6 pupils leave us, but hope they are looking forward to the new challenges and new experiences they will face in their new secondary provisions. All pupils have been taking part in transition visits and these seem to be going very well. Good luck to all of you - we will miss you all and don't forget you are welcome back to visit at any time and let us know how you are getting on!

We have been running transition visits every Friday afternoon for our new pupils to visit the school, and for our existing pupils to meet their new members of staff and classrooms. These also seem to be going very well and will hopefully enable the pupils to settle easier in September after the summer break.

## Empty Classroom Day

Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> May was 'Empty Classroom Day' - this is a worldwide event set up to celebrate and inspire outdoor learning and play, thousands of schools around the world took lessons outside and prioritised playtime. Throughout the day all classes took their learning outside the classroom, utilising all areas outdoors and around school - splat zone, discovery park, adventure trail. This helped both teachers and pupils develop awareness and understanding of how learning does not always have to take place within the constraints of the classroom. Thank you to Dawne Taylor for her hard work in organising this event, and for all staff and pupils for taking part.





## Hall Hill Farm

On Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July our year 6 leavers took their annual trip to Hall Hill farm - and everyone had a great day! Many thanks to Derek Freeman (our vice chair of governors) and the Rotary Club for organising and funding this.



## Sports Challenge Day

On Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> July all pupils took part in a sports challenge day and took part in various sporting activities - football, fit for fun, tennis, sensory dance and gross motor skills activities. Whole school participated and everyone thoroughly enjoyed it!

Thank you to Marisol Bowman and Lorraine Skeen for organising this and all staff and pupils for taking part.





## Active PE Charter

The active PE charter is an award which schools can achieve to show they provide high quality PE, sustained competitive sport and physical activity opportunities are embedded into every day school life ensuring every child has the opportunity to live a healthy active lifestyle. Last year we achieved the award at bronze level and this year we entered to achieve silver and we are delighted to announce that we achieved gold level!

## Meet the Governor



I have had great satisfaction from my involvement with Columbia Grange over the last 20 years initially as a helper from the Rotary Club and then as a Governor and Chair of the Finance Committee. I have been involved with many OFSTED visits during this time and am pleased to agree that we are excellent.

I organise the Fenwicks Christmas visit each year courtesy of their kind hospitality and the Leavers trip to Hall Hill Farm as well as reading visits with the children throughout the year.

I grew up in Harrow and have been in the North East for 30 years where I live in Washington with my wife Edwina and our two daughters.