



**HALTON LODGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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**NEWSLETTER 15**

**11<sup>th</sup> December 2020**

### The Secret Is Out!

Today we revealed the contents of THE SECRET MISSION to the staff at our school – and I must say a HUGE ‘THANK YOU’ to everybody who responded. I also know that a great number of families have thought of other ways to show their gratitude and appreciation to the teams and individuals who have supported their child(ren) over the last 12 months – and especially since the school reopened in September. It has been lovely to hear (and read) your comments.

The ‘Thank You’ and ‘Christmas Wishes’ messages have been put on display for the staff to read during the remainder of the Autumn Term. If you are still in the process of making a card, these can be added to the display at any time – it’s not too late to take part!



### Forest School Survey – for parents and pupils

Over the last 4 months, we have ensured that every child in our school has taken part in Outdoor Learning (Forest School) sessions with Mr Thorpe on a Wednesday. We were able to extend our association with Edsential for Mr Thorpe to work in our school by an extra term, as our Summer term plans were interrupted. This is because we were keen to have the three full terms of Outdoor Provision that we had planned last year, to inspire and motivate our children to deepen their knowledge and extend their learning opportunities.

To help us to evaluate the impact of these sessions, Mr Thorpe has put together two short (5 minute) surveys. One for parents and carers, and a second one for any children who would also like to share their thoughts and comments.

If you – or your child - have the time to complete either of these, your feedback would be much appreciated:

Parents/Carers Survey:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=grXFeOicbEydeBhmZ9fnSG1SFVSp2pEglliOOxsDk9UMFhGMEK3UjBBRU9VQzdNWWVBRUtMNUUyTyQIQCN0PWcu>

Pupil Survey:

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/ResponsePage.aspx?id=grXFeOicbEydeBhmZ9fnSG1SFVSp2pEglliOOxsDk9UNzY1VUXMREtTQ0c3WFZGVkhGMkICVUozVyQIQCN0PWcu>



### School To Stay Open All Of Next Week

You may have seen some news headlines about schools closing early for Christmas.

However, I am pleased to confirm that

Halton Lodge Primary School will remain open up to, and including, Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December 2020 (as planned). We felt that it was too late for parents and carers to arrange childcare and change their arrangements at such short notice – and it would have been unfair to end the children’s time in school when they will have so few opportunities to socialise outside of school under the current restrictions.

*This proposal was sent to schools this week as the DfE recognise that schools are integral to the track and trace system and wished to avoid asking school leaders to remain contactable and ‘on call’ up to, and including, Christmas Eve.*

However, as this statement suggests, we do need to put into place arrangements, should a member of our school community test positive for COVID-19 after Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December.

**Firstly, it is vital that you have the Studybugs app downloaded and working, as we will use this to contact you should there be a need for your child to self-isolate.** We know that any message requiring your child to self-isolate will have an impact on your plans for the Christmas period - but we must be prepared to put the health and safety of others above everything else. *Please keep checking the app for the first 6 days of the holiday (up to and including Christmas Eve). The government anticipates that after six days we will not need to contact you regarding self-isolation - as any school contact of those that have tested positive will have been traced before then. NHS Test & Trace will be able to trace key contacts, without the support from schools, from Christmas Day onwards.*

**During the holidays, if your child has any of the following symptoms:**

- 1. A high temperature**
- 2. A new continuous cough**
- 3. A loss of taste or smell**

you **must** take them for a Coronavirus Test (and all members of the household must self-isolate until you receive the test result).

**If your child was to test positive and their symptoms started before 3.30pm on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December, you MUST inform the school via an email (to [head.haltonlodge@halton.gov.uk](mailto:head.haltonlodge@halton.gov.uk)) or through a Studybugs message immediately.** This is so that we can inform the relevant authorities, advise the parents/carers of any children who have had direct close contact in the previous 48 hours and identify anybody else who will need to self-isolate.

As always, in such circumstances, the school will follow the advice of the Local Authority and Public Health.

If your child does test positive at a later date – and you are sure that their symptoms did not arise until after 3:30pm on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December, it is important that you still message us (via email or Studybugs); especially if this also means that they will not be in school at the beginning of the new term. In such circumstances, the Department for Education and Public Health England are clear that families should use the normal national track and trace system (rather than the school) to make contact with other individuals who may have been exposed to Covid 19.



**A Message From David Parr – Chief Executive - SMART 'Lateral Flow' Tests Available In Halton From Monday**

This week, we have at last been able to see a light at the end of what has been a very dark tunnel in 2020, with the start of the COVID vaccination roll out.

This is great news and we hope that in the coming days, older and vulnerable Halton residents will begin to receive the vaccination.

However, until vaccines can be rolled out across the whole population, it is important that we continue to do all we can to keep infection rates under control.

One of the ways we will be doing this, is by using SMART testing – “SMART” testing refers to Systematic, Meaningful, Asymptomatic, Repeated Testing using rapid tests – called lateral flow tests – the same tests that have been used in Liverpool, which has seen rates of infection dramatically reducing across the city.

The tests are used to identify people who do not have COVID-19 symptoms but who are infectious and could unknowingly spread the virus to others.

Halton and the other areas of the Liverpool City Region, have initially received 10,000 of the lateral flow tests, with a subsequent weekly supply - enough to test 10% of the Halton population.

In Halton, we have two fixed no symptom test sites, located at Grangeway Community Centre, Runcorn and Ditton Community Centre, Widnes.

With the support of the Army, our staff have been trained in how to deliver the testing and the two sites are now set up and ready to go.

**The sites will go live to the general public from next week, on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December.**

The test is done with a swab to the nose and throat, which you do yourself. It takes about 10 minutes, with results received within 30 minutes to 2 hours later.

The more people we can test, the better we can fight the virus in our local area, especially as we head towards Christmas when more people will want to be together.

While a negative result does not give a green pass to not follow guidance, it will reduce the number of people in our community who are spreading the virus without knowing it.

It will also help us to protect our more vulnerable communities through regular testing of those who may come into contact with them.

If we all take up this opportunity and encourage our friends and family to do the same, we have a real chance to get the better of this virus. If we can bring infection rates right down we will be in a much better position to put forward a case to Government to move down to Tier 1, where the easing of restrictions, brings us closer to living a normal life and doing the things we enjoy.

If you would like to know more about this type of testing, including how it works, how regularly you can be tested and what to do if you get a positive test result, please read the FAQs on the HBC website: <https://www4.halton.gov.uk/Pages/health/smartfaq.aspx>

We have got through this pandemic by being a strong team and I encourage you again to show that team spirit by getting tested. Thank you.

**Reminder: The children (and staff) are invited to wear a Christmas Jumper to school – instead of their school uniform – on Wednesday. This is the day that we will be having our Christmas Dinner in school. *They can also wear 'their own clothes' with their Christmas Jumper.***



**As soon as we have finished recording the Christmas Nativity Plays and have uploaded these to the school website, Tapestry and/or Seesaw, we will let you know. We aim to have this done towards the end of next week.**

**Reminder: On the final day of term – Friday 18<sup>th</sup> December – we will be closing at:**

**1:30pm for the children who start school at 8:40am (Year 1, Year 2, Year 4 and Year 6)**

**1:45pm for the children who start school at 8:55am (Reception, The Fawns, Year 3 and Year 5)**

**The children will exit the school from their usual entrance/exit point.**

