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'Rooted in God, we grow together'

Dear Parish Council Members and Members of the Public,

I am pleased to present a written update on behalf of High Halden Primary School for this year's Annual Parish Council Meeting.

As some of you may already know, in January 2023, High Halden Primary School federated with Woodchurch Primary. This federation has allowed us to operate with one governing body overseeing both schools, creating opportunities for greater collaboration and natural comparisons. The benefits of this collaboration are many: we have staff members working across both schools, including myself as Executive Headteacher, our SENCO, and our Business Manager. This arrangement provides continuity in approaches and enables shared administration and resource costs. This, in turn, ensures that more funding is available to directly benefit the education of our children.

Our students now regularly collaborate across both schools. For example, our Year 6 pupils engage with a Challenger Troop Programme early in the school year, fostering teamwork and personal development. Our youngest children also share a school trip to Hastings each year, creating lasting memories and opportunities for learning. Additionally, our schools come together for a residential trip each year, strengthening friendships and enhancing their educational experience.

Last year, we introduced our very first "Flourish Together Day," where children from both schools mixed across the two sites to learn and work together in an environment of shared learning and community spirit. This initiative exemplifies the positive outcomes of our federation, bringing our students closer and enriching their school experience.

In July 2024, we were honoured to receive the Silver Wilder Kent Award for our commitment to environmental sustainability. This award acknowledges our efforts in recycling, reusing, and engaging with nature. It is a reflection of our shared dedication to ensuring our students grow up with a sense of responsibility for the local environment.

This year, we were also excited to launch a wrap-around care programme. This service, offering childcare before school from 8am and after school until 6pm, provides much-needed support for working families. This affordable childcare provision ensures that our families have access to quality care and education throughout the day, extending the benefits of our school community beyond traditional school hours.

To gather feedback and further improve our practices, we recently asked our families to complete an annual survey. The responses were overwhelmingly positive, with key figures such as:

- 100% of families believe their child is happy at school.
- 100% feel that their child is safe at school.
- 100% are confident that their child is taught well at our school.

We are thrilled with these results, and to celebrate our successes while working towards continuous improvement, we have published the full survey outcomes on our website for anyone interested in seeing the full details.

Currently, High Halden Primary School has 102 children enrolled, and we expect this number to rise to 107 in September, meaning we will be full for the upcoming academic year. This is a fantastic achievement, particularly considering that none of the other local schools are at full capacity for September. We are proud to be a school of choice in the community and are incredibly grateful to the local residents for their continued support in helping our school flourish and succeed.

Thank you for your ongoing support, and I look forward to continuing to work together to ensure the future success of High Halden Primary School.

Best wishes and a Happy Easter to you all

Kelly Burlton.