Dear Parent/Carer

Our Vision

*Our school cares for all its pupils and encourages, supports and challenges them to be the best they can be. High Mill is a school that works to give children best learning opportunities now and for the future.*

Welcome to our May/June Newsletter. We hope everyone had a good holiday and have returned refreshed for the challenges of our final term. Reports are out and we are all looking forward to Parents ‘Night. We usually have a fantastic attendance and we hope you can all come along.

**Teaching and Learning**

- Core subjects

Almost all pupils in P2-P7 have been involved in our annual standardised Reading tests in March. Nearly all pupils show progress with most having made 12 months progress or more. Indeed, some pupils have exceeded this. Results for this test are shown as a reading age measured against the child’s real age e.g. someone might be 9 years old but score as having a reading age of 10. Overall, we have 62% of our children achieving their age or above. This result is an improvement on last year and we hope to build on the upward trend.

Our P1 pupils were also tested in March and again the majority are on track for their age. We recognise that we still have several pupils who have not acquired their reading age. They have all progressed, but we still need to ensure they are achieving their best.

We have used various strategies, refreshed and developed our Reading programme, resources and teaching and supported and challenged individuals and groups. For the final term the push and hard work continues with further interventions, supported study and home/school partnership. Spelling will be tested in May. Teachers will continue to assess Writing and Numeracy Assessments are on-going.

Raising attainment and achievement for all pupils is a major focus now and will be in the future. We do have a spread of abilities at each stage and recognise the need to ensure challenge for the most able. As you would surmise Numeracy, Literacy and Health and Wellbeing remain central to teaching and learning this term. Expectations are high, our first week back was very settled and successful and a good work ethic will be maintained throughout the term.

**Pupil Reports were sent home on 19th April, and Parents’ Night is on Wednesday 26th April. Parents’ Night appointments are aimed at discussing your child’s report and progress in the key curricular areas.**

- Other areas of teaching and learning coming up.

All classes will be involved in Money Week, World of Work, ICT, Spanish/French, HWB and Relationships, Sexual Health and Parenthood (RSHP). Leaflets outlining RSHP will be given out at Parents ‘Night. If you have any questions about this topic, please contact the school.

- P1/2 Forces: Senses and Living things
- P2/3 Living things: Senses: Forces
- P4 Germs and Diseases
Attendance
I have been looking at attendance data from the last few sessions. Last year our average attendance comes out as 90%. This was down a fraction on some previous years. Looking at the statistics now we are standing at 92% which shows an improvement. It would be marvellous if we can maintain or even improve on this over the last term of school.

Attendance is important for attainment and children need to be at school as much as possible. If you have difficulty getting your child to school, please let us know and we can work together to ensure your child feels motivated to attend.

From our information, we can identify a small number of children who have very low attendance rates this year and indeed had so last year. Let’s hope this improves over the coming months. To all the children who attend school on a regular basis and to the parents/carers who encourage this, well done.

Autism Awareness
All classes were involved in lessons about Autism during Autism Awareness Week. We also made our own leaflet and thanks goes to the parent and child who contributed their thoughts, these will be with you soon.

Book Fair
The Scholastic Book Fair will be in school from Friday 21st April until the 28th April. It will be open on Parents’ Night. As we were so successful last time, books are being sold at half price!

Swimming
P5 started swimming lessons at Carluke Leisure Centre last week. They had a great time. They will have 12 weeks tuition in total.

Zimbar
Zimbar, the Road Safety Zebra, made an appearance at assembly on April 21st. The children were delighted to meet him and pictures will be on the website and perhaps even in the Gazette. Zimbar was there to highlight the need to be safe near roads and to encourage children who are old enough to walk all or partly to school. This is very much a parental decision. The children were very able to discuss why we walk or come to school by car e.g morning schedules for working families, busy roads, very young children etc. We also discussed parking round the school and how we need to be extra careful at 3pm when everyone is leaving at the same time.

During the course of the year we have made several moves to highlight safety in and around the school. Staff do not park in Drop Off Zone, our zig zags repainted, we now have two banners about parking and Park and Stride posters and leaflets will be shared.

Thank you to the parents and carers who use the “Drop off Zone” correctly and to adults on foot who take great care collecting and dropping off their children.

Breakfast Club
Breakfast Club is proving very popular. On some days, we can have 21 children. Thank you to all parent helpers who support this service.

Lunch Club Football
Thank you to Mr Webb for running a very successful lunchtime football club. The children really enjoyed it. Currently we are looking for returns from P5-P7 for any interest in an after-school club. It starts soon so please get your letter back. If numbers are an issue those who missed out first time round will get a chance.
Badminton Club
Thanks also go to Mr Martin for the Badminton club he ran before Spring Break. The children loved this. This club is now finished.

Afterschool Clubs
All teaching staff are involved in afterschool clubs this term. They will send out letters and set up a register for each club.

Residential Outing
24 of our P6s and P7s will be going to Wiston Lodge on 10th May. They stay one overnight and have one and a half days of activities. Mrs Welsh, Mrs Naismith and Miss Harrison will be going with them and these teachers reported very favourably on last year’s outing. Bus leaves at 9.15am and returns on Thursday at 2.30pm approximately.

Mrs Girdwood will be working with the remaining children in P5, P6 and P7. They will hopefully have an educational outing on 11th May. More details and costs to follow. Mrs Campbell will be teaching P4 while Miss Harrison is away.

As you can appreciate organising such ventures relies very much on staff being able and willing to provide pupils with such opportunities. It also sees an impact into timetabling and general school organisation and it felt more sharply in a smaller school. My thanks go to all teaching staff and office staff for supporting this outing. We are hoping to run something similar next session and will be looking for notes of interest and a £20 deposit in mid-June. Details to follow.

Pupil Equity Fund
As mentioned in our last newsletter the school has been awarded a sizeable sum of money from the Scottish Attainment Pupil Equity Fund. This is based on our number of registered free dinners and is strongly aimed at raising attainment and ensuring fair opportunities. It is one of the interventions arising from The Scottish Attainment Challenge which is about achieving equity in educational outcomes, with a focus on closing the poverty-related attainment gap. It focuses on targeting improvement in numeracy, literacy and health and wellbeing.

We need to be aware of where our gaps in attainment lie. We need to know the picture for High Mill and choose wisely what interventions can work best and where money from the fund can be targeted. We must always keep in mind that this money is closely tied to the children in most disadvantaged areas whether this is financial or a combination of barriers to learning. We have a School Budget which will buy all our usual materials and resources. The PEF allows us to be creative not only in buying resources, but more importantly in considering how this extra money can be targeted to enhance learning opportunities for our pupils in most need. These are some examples:-

- **Supported Study**
  This term Mrs Gray and Mrs Vecino will run small supported study groups for 10 sessions on Phonics, Reading and Numeracy. Letters will go out to parents/carers of these children very soon. The children are expected to be in school from 3-4pm on a Tuesday and Wednesday for 5 weeks. We will set clear targets they should achieve and these will be shared with parents. Parents/carers will be invited along to an early session so as they understand the learning being undertaken and can support their children. Parents/carers need to collect their child from school at 4pm.

Please note these are important interventions. We need parental support to make this work. We might run other supported groups in the new session.

- **Staffing**
  Next session we hope to employ a teacher for one day a week. This will be to give class teachers a rota where they can hold quality learner conversations with their pupils. This could also involve parents/carers. They can share together learning targets, catch up on small learning steps ensure that the child is feeling positive about school and their learning, set appropriate and challenging next targets and ensure planning and resources fit the child’s needs. We also hope to employ an additional Support Worker. This Support Worker will have a very clear remit and be associated with the individuals and groups we are aware of. Mrs Vecino has had a complete change of timetable
to work on a Phonic strategy called the 5-minute box. We will consider this pilot and if successful the PEF Support Worker may use part of their timetable for this kind of activity thus allowing Mrs Vecino to work with other children.

- **Facilities**
  We are considering the possibility of hiring a hall at the John Cumming Stadium for three afternoons. This would allow us to timetable P.E for all stages with more ease and meet the HWB needs of our pupils. Our school hall would still be timetabled, but with more scope for a full, quality 2 hours of P.E. This would also allow us to consider structuring Numeracy time differently. Teachers have highlighted that in delivering the curriculum they often have a wide range of abilities in their classes, especially in the middle and upper stages in school. While we would expect different ability groups in any class we are currently looking at the possibility of bringing groups of similar abilities from different classes together for Numeracy time. This would most likely apply to children in oldest three classes. We are still very much at the planning stage, but if this were to work these Numeracy classes could have 4 morning uninterrupted Numeracy sessions and quality P.E lessons.

When consulting pupils and teachers about how we can use our extra funding to motivate pupils one answer they all shared was to have more playground equipment. We do have a small playground and the children do well co-operating, sharing space and the equipment we have. Children need to want to be at school, have fun, enjoy their free time so in answer to this we will let children of all stages consider small equipment suitable for our playground and Orchard. Teachers and children also wish to be involved in more Outdoor Learning. Teachers are very inventive with our limited school grounds and do use them to the full for Science, Number. The point being made is the access to Outdoor green areas. This is something we need to consider further.

- **Resources**
  Our School Budget covers our day to day needs and basic materials that children need for learning. It also steadily supplements and replaces core resources such as Numeracy and Reading materials. Again, through consultation teachers highlight that additional reading resources, a second 5-minute box and perhaps more for this series, T-Jay maths resources for key areas and digital devices as a tool and further strategy for learning would be worthwhile. These are resources we will buy with PEF.

This is a flavour of what we have thought of. We have other ideas too but we need to research them further. We also need to ensure that interventions, practices, resources have a clear purpose and are aimed at raising attainment in the key areas of Numeracy, Literacy and HWB and can be evaluated. I hope that you think these measures over and an opportunity for feedback or further suggestions will be available at Parents’ Night. Perhaps in particular you might consider FAMILY LEARNING.

**Classes and staffing 2017-18**
There is a lot of planning and organisation happening now about classes and staffing for next year. This happens both in school and at authority level. It would seem likely that we will have 5 classes, probably all composite and we may have a core of teaching staff remaining. However, changes can happen. We may have to change our class make-up right through the holidays and beyond and staffing may not totally be decided till then too. We have been extraordinarily fortunate in staffing this year with very few absences and a dedicated, hardworking group of teachers and support staff. They have served the children, their families and the community well. At this moment, our roll for next year stands at 117.

**Gala Day**
Gala Day will be on Saturday 10th June. Our Parents Gala Committee have got underway on the preparations and we showed the children some of the Minecraft costumes that have been made. There may be some other children who now want to take part. We wish our Gala Maids Abbie Cairns and Jasmin Todd the best of luck. Have a great day and hope to see you all there. Thank you for your continued support

Marion Girdwood - Head Teacher
## Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APRIL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April 26th</td>
<td>Parents Night - if you cannot make appointment please let us know and another will be arranged. Book Fair open.</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 27th</td>
<td>P6 and P7 Rugby CHS 12.30 start early lunch or bring packed lunch.</td>
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<td>April 28th</td>
<td>DRESS DOWN DAY-£1-monies go to School Funds Last day for Book Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 1st</td>
<td><strong>May Holiday</strong></td>
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<td>May 4th</td>
<td><strong>In-service day - no children to attend.</strong></td>
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<td>May 9th</td>
<td>P7 CHS Maths am Meeting for P7 and parents Kirkton School 6.30pm-7.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 10th</td>
<td>WISTON LODGE RESIDENTIAL OUTING leave at 9.15am back on 11th May</td>
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<td>May 23rd</td>
<td>Autism Parents Supporters Group 5pm-6.15pm School Parents Council 6.30pm-8.30pm</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 24th</td>
<td>Triathlon  P5 – P7</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 26th</td>
<td>HOLIDAY WEEKEND</td>
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<td>May 29th</td>
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<td>May 31st</td>
<td>P1-P3 Football John Cumming Stadium 12.30-2.30-early lunch or bring packed lunch. Need P.E kit. <strong>P7 INDUCTION DAY AT CARLUKE HIGH SCHOOL</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>June 1st</td>
<td><strong>P7 INDUCTION DAY AT CARLUKE HIGH SCHOOL</strong></td>
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<td>Pupils to go straight to the High School in the morning</td>
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<td>June 8th</td>
<td>Sports Day John Cumming Stadium - parents and family welcome. 10am till 11.30am</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 9th</td>
<td>Inter House Quiz</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 10th</td>
<td>Gala Day  - have a great day everyone!</td>
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<td>June 13th</td>
<td>Girls Football team to Hamilton - am</td>
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<td>June 16th</td>
<td>GOING FOR GREEN ASSEMBLY - 1.30pm</td>
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<td>June 20th</td>
<td>PRIZE GIVING 10am</td>
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<tr>
<td>June 21st</td>
<td>Swimming  - last day</td>
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<td>June 27th</td>
<td>CLOSE at 1pm</td>
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<td>August 17th</td>
<td>CHILDREN RETURN TO SCHOOL  8.55am</td>
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<td>August 29th</td>
<td>School Parent Council AGM-all parents and guardians welcome. You will hear a report from the Chairperson and HT and a new council will be elected. No-one is put under any pressure but it would be good to going committee.</td>
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### RECIPE BOOK FOR CANCER RESEARCH

Our pupils were asked by a local parent who raises money for Cancer Research to draw pictures for a Recipe Book. We are pleased to announce that Kye Adam has been awarded 1st place for High Mill Primary. Well done Kye! Demi Cronin came 2nd and Brooke Allan came 3rd.