

# HOT TOPICS

## Diary Dates for Spring Term 2012

### January

3 <sup>rd</sup>	INSET (School Closed)
4 <sup>th</sup>	Back to School
9 <sup>th</sup>	PTA Meeting - 7.30 p.m.
10 <sup>th</sup>	The Snow Queen Production for Key Stage 1
11 <sup>th</sup>	Maths Evening – 3.20 p.m. to 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
13 <sup>th</sup>	New Reception Parents' Reading Meeting – 2.30 p.m.
24 <sup>th</sup>	Football 'B' Team v Howe Green (Home) Netball 'B' Team v Howe Green (Home)
26 <sup>th</sup>	Lime Class trip to War Horse

### February

1 <sup>st</sup>	Young Shakespeare 'Hamlet' Workshop for Year 6
2 <sup>nd</sup>	'Great Fire of London' Workshops for Key Stage 1
7 <sup>th</sup>	Parent Consultations – 2.30 p.m. to 6 p.m.
8 <sup>th</sup>	'Hercules' Drama Workshops for Key Stage 2 'Robin the Ringmaster' Drama Workshops for Key Stage 1 Parent Consultations – 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
9 <sup>th</sup>	Football v Takeley (Home) Netball v Takeley (Home)
10 <sup>th</sup>	Break up for Half Term
20 <sup>th</sup>	INSET (School Closed)
21 <sup>st</sup>	Back to School Football v Hatfield Heath (Home) Netball v Hatfield Heath (Home)
24 <sup>th</sup>	Race Night – 7 p.m.
27 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 Parents' Viewing of Sex Education Video – 2.30 p.m.
28 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 Sex Education with School Nurse Football v Howe Green (Home) Netball v Howe Green (Home)

### March

8 <sup>th</sup>	Football v Rodings (Home) Netball v Rodings (Home)
13 <sup>th</sup>	Football v Hatfield Broad Oak (Home) Netball v Hatfield Broad Oak (Home)
21 <sup>st</sup>	Chestnut and Ash Class visit to The Tower of London
22 <sup>nd</sup>	Football v Great Easton (Home) Netball v Great Easton (Home)
30 <sup>th</sup>	Break up for Easter

### April

16 <sup>th</sup>	Back to School
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## TheGivingMachine

We are delighted to confirm that Little Hallingbury have registered with TheGivingMachine. TheGivingMachine is a not for profit website set up in 2006 to raise money for UK schools and charities. There are already over 2,500 schools currently raising money via TheGivingMachine and to date over £280,000 has been raised.

Every year online shops pay £millions in sales commissions to other websites to direct shoppers to them. TheGivingMachine enables shoppers to generate these sales commissions and convert them into donations for the schools and charities of their choice - all at no extra cost.

With the continued growth in Internet shopping in the UK, this is a great, free way that our supporters can give more to our school.

- Parents, teachers, governors, friends and family join [www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk](http://www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk) and choose to support our school.
- Then every purchase you make with your usual shops such as Amazon, ebay, John Lewis, in fact over 360 of the UK's leading shops, triggers a free donation from the shop to our school. It doesn't cost any more, and we're not asking people to buy what they wouldn't normally buy. Just keep shopping online as you do already, via [www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk](http://www.TheGivingMachine.co.uk) , and at the same time raise money for Little Hallingbury School.
- It really is that easy!

## Easyfundraising

Easyfundraising is an online shopping site where retailers will make donations to Little Hallingbury School every time you make a purchase from them. **Amazon, Play.Com, Comet, John Lewis, M&S, Toys R Us, HMV, Tesco and many others** are all supporting this activity, as well as many other companies for anything from books, travel to wine and food.

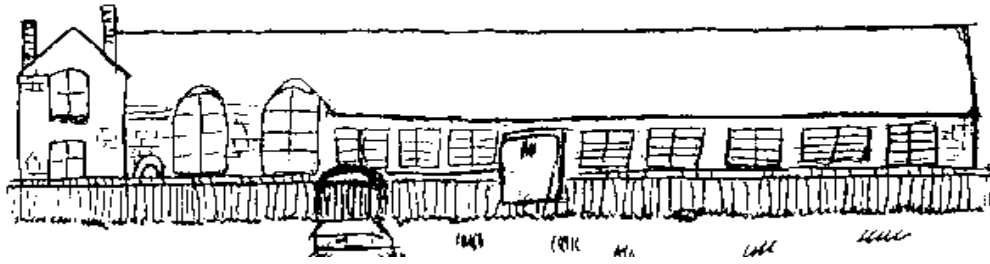
### **What do you have to do?**

1. Please visit the website ([www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk)) and click on **Register as a User**.
2. From the Charity/Organisation drop down locate Little Hallingbury C of E Primary School. Continue to fill in your name, email address and create a password.
3. Click on **Accept and Register**.
4. Add [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) to your favourites.

When you wish to go shopping on line simply go to [www.easyfundraising.org.uk](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk), log in with your given email address and password. Once logged in you will have your own welcome page stating that you are supporting Little Hallingbury C of E Primary School. Your welcome page will also detail how much you have raised for us.

Once you have registered, please remove any current shopping links on your favourites to remind you to use the Easyfundraising as a link. If you purchase an item from these stores in another way, Little Hallingbury School will lose out on your donation!

It really is that simple, no additional cost to you and raises money for us - happy shopping and thanks in advance for your support, don't forget 'every order counts'.



**LITTLE HALLINGBURY C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

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**Mrs Barbara Coates B.Ed NPQH - Headteacher**

22 October 2009

Dear Parents

**“There is never a good time to take your child on holiday during term time.”**

The Education Welfare Officer has recently analysed our school attendance figures and there has been a disappointing rise in absences. During the last academic year more than 350 days were taken as holiday during term time!

Term time holidays should be avoided for a number of reasons:

- Monday in school will often set the scene for the week. New themes/projects may be introduced which is important for your child to know so they can relate to what's going on. Returning later in the week or after a holiday may leave them feeling confused or left behind. The beginning of the week may also contain chances to consolidate learning from the previous week or to continue with the next stage of learning in a sequence of planned activities.
- It is important for your child to experience taking part in school events such as sports day, school plays and concerts so they feel what it is like to be part of a team and to take responsibility for group efforts. Holidays in the summer term and just before Christmas can often lead to children missing these events.
- Children who are absent at the start of term will miss the settling in process, particularly at the start of a new academic year.

We recognise that parents' circumstances (financial position, working commitments etc) vary enormously, but you should ensure that your child only misses school if it is absolutely unavoidable. There is no right or entitlement to take a child out of school for the purposes of a term time holiday.

Our present policy has given the Headteacher discretion to authorise holidays of up to 10 days in term time and this has enabled holidays to be authorised in an understanding way. The majority of authorisations have been for 1 or 2 days but more and more parents are requesting longer and more disruptive periods out of school.

In conjunction with the Education Welfare Service we must endeavour to reduce the amount of absence by at least 50%. We believe that absence, whether this is a one off or repeated occurrence can seriously disrupt your child's continuity of learning, and your child may be at risk of under achievement.

To assist us with this aim the Governing Body feels that it has no alternative but to follow the County guidelines and introduce the Essex Code of Conduct on Penalty Notices. This will also bring us into line with other local Essex schools.

All Leave of Absence requests for holidays to be taken after 5<sup>th</sup> January 2010 will be subject to the new guidelines. We attach the full "Guidance to Essex Schools on Pupil Holidays in Term Time" and this provides you with guidance on what the Headteacher must consider when making the decision to grant permission for a "Family Holiday".

Should the Headteacher not agree to grant leave and parents take their child on holiday in spite of this, it will be counted as an unauthorised absence – this is the same as "truancy". If a term time holiday is taken without the authority of the Headteacher then parents may be issued with a penalty notice. Penalty notices can be issued if there have been at least 5 days of unauthorised absence and can be issued to each parent in respect of each child.

As Governors, our responsibility is to provide the best possible conditions for a child to reach their potential and we are of the opinion that term time holidays can be disruptive. We will, however, ensure that all Leave of Absence requests will continue to be considered on an individual basis in a sensitive and understanding way by the Headteacher.

It is important that all parents are fully informed and aware of this change of policy, and I would therefore ask that you sign and return the slip below to the School Office on **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November**.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Lynn Petts  
Chair of Governors

**Leave of Absence Policy Change With Effect From January 2010**

Child/ren's name(s)..... Class(es).....

I have read and understood the change in policy regarding Leave of Absence requests at Little Hallingbury School.

Signed..... (Parent/Guardian) Date.....

## GUIDANCE TO ESSEX SCHOOLS ON PUPIL HOLIDAYS IN TERM TIME

Parents do not have the right to remove their children from school for the purpose of a family holiday, but need to seek the permission of the head teacher. Under the Education (Pupil Registration) Regulations 2006 permission for leave of absence for a family holiday should only be given in special circumstances and the head teacher has the discretion as to whether the circumstances warrant leave of absence on this basis. The regulations allow schools to authorise up to 10 days for a family holiday and only in exceptional circumstances should this be exceeded.

Each request can only be judged on a case-by-case basis and head teachers should use this discretion sparingly and not fetter this discretion by applying policies which might suggest that each application has not been considered on its individual merits. (e.g. blanket bans or bestowing a right of 10 days absence for this purpose).

The DCSF publication "**Keeping Pupil Registers**" provides guidance on what to consider when making the decision to grant permission for a family holiday

### ***"Family Holidays***

*Schools may agree up to 10 days "holiday leave" in special circumstances such as:*

- a. for service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education; and*
- b. when a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.*

*Holidays which are taken for the following reasons should not be authorised:*

- availability of cheap holidays;*
- availability of the desired accommodation;*
- poor weather experienced in school holiday periods; and*
- overlap with beginning or end of term. "*

Essex EWS will consider any requests from a school to issue a penalty notice to parents when a head teacher has refused to authorise the absence and the parent wilfully removes the child from school for a holiday.

It is vital that schools ensure parents are aware of the possibility of a penalty notice being issued, which could lead to prosecution if they fail to pay. This information must be included in school literature, such as school prospectus, home-school agreements, holiday request forms, newsletters, attendance and behaviour policies and web sites.

The decisions whether to authorise a holiday or not should be justifiable and any reasons for rejection recorded and conveyed to the parent(s) in writing. A letter refusing a request should explain that the reason for the request is not deemed to be a special circumstance and that a penalty notice may be issued if the holiday is taken without the school's permission.