



# **Tanners Wood School**

## **School Prospectus 2015**

We Care – We Challenge – We Learn  
“A school for thinkers”



## Tanners Wood JMI School,

Hazelwood Lane, Abbots Langley, Herts, WD5 0LG

Tel: 01923 262229

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Interim Headteacher: Mrs Jenny Morley

Dear Parents, Carers and friends,

Welcome to Tanners Wood JMI School!

Thank you for requesting more information about our school. We hope you find the brochure both interesting and informative and that you take the opportunity to visit us if you have not already done so.

The brochure can give only a flavour of what life is like at Tanners Wood but we hope that our care, enthusiasm and high expectations shine through the words of pupils, staff and parents included in the text.

We have done our best to present the most up-to-date information we can but where queries remain please feel free to ask at the school office.

We see the relationship between school and home as a key factor in ensuring that children thrive in school and develop into happy, well-rounded, and confident young people.

We are very proud of our school, what it stands for, and what it has achieved over the years. We look forward to meeting and working with you and your children over the coming years!

Jenny Morley  
Interim Headteacher

Deborah Wain  
Chair of Governors

## Quotes from the School Council.

The children from the school council thought you might like to hear about their views of the school.

At Tanners Wood we all enjoy learning and thinking together in fun-packed educational lessons (Daisy Year 5).

Literacy is fun at Tanners Wood School. We love writing (Tia Year 2).

Learning is fun at Tanners Wood School (Ned Year 2).

At Tanners Wood School we are healthy and we play lots of sports such as cricket, football and netball. Scott comes in to help our year 5 football team win! (Daniel Year 5).

I like Tanners Wood because there are lots of sports activities. For example we play House Cricket Tournaments and we have Sports Day. The way we learn is a challenging way to be educated. We all enjoy playing on the football pitches. (Lara Year 6).

Everybody is nice here. We play games and the teachers are helpful (Ethan Year 6).

At Tanners Wood we play football, netball, cricket and rounders. Everybody is nice at Tanners Wood. We welcome new people so that they have friends. I enjoy Science, we are learning about robots! (Josh Year 5).

I like the way the teachers always make events fun e.g. Red Nose Day. Adults are firm but kind. We are sporty, positive, kind and helpful (Lucy Year 4).

Teachers respect children and make sure we are safe. Children play nicely and work together as a team. When learning, adults make lessons fun (Ruby Year 2 and Connie Year 6).

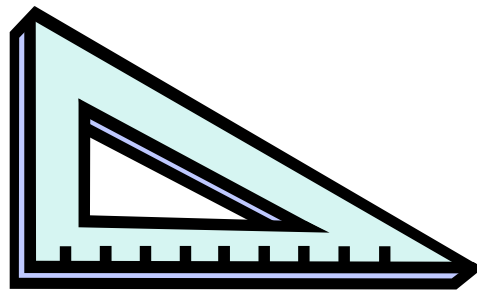
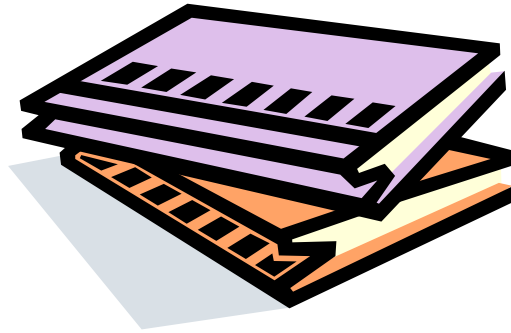
I love Tanners Wood because of all the active sport. We are given challenges in Maths which help us to work as hard as we can. I really like the behaviour system because everyone starts the day on sunshine at the beginning of the day and if we try really hard we move up to rainbow or even achieve a pot of gold! (Harry Year 4).



Money raised by the school council helped to pay for the gazebo in the playground.

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## **Vision Statement**

'As a caring school, we will continue to challenge children to achieve the highest standards of learning through creative experiences and quality teaching, making it the school of choice for local people.'

## **Motto**

**We Care - We Challenge - We Learn - We are a school of thinkers**

## **Mission Statement**

Parents and carers are active partners in all aspects of school life.

Creativity and independent thinking are taught, are valued and are central to developing our children as successful, life-long learners.

We aim to develop responsible citizens through meaningful links between children of different ages and backgrounds within the school, and between schools at local, national and international levels.

An understanding of environmental issues plays an increasingly important role in children's life and learning.

## **Aims**

Our broad aims can be summarised briefly as follows:

- To help all children to develop intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually to their full potential
- To foster a love of learning for its own sake by providing teaching and learning opportunities of the highest possible standards
- To enable children to develop and sustain lasting relationships based on mutual respect
- To create an ethos where both academic success and children's efforts in other aspects of school life are valued, recognised and rewarded
- To create a learning culture in which all members of the school community and their contributions are valued, and in which bullying of any kind is not tolerated
- To prepare children for life at secondary school and beyond, recognising the rapidly changing world in which we now live

## **Objectives**

Informing and supporting this broad framework of Aims are the many more detailed objectives to be found in school policies, schemes of work and curriculum guidance documents kept elsewhere.

If you are particularly interested in any aspect of the school not included in this brochure, please ask at the office where we will try to answer your queries.

## About the school- History and Environment

The building we are now housed in dates from the early 1950's when it was known as Hillside Junior School. In 1982 the school amalgamated with the nearby Hazelwood Infant School with the name Tanners Wood JMI being adopted in 1989.

The present school has approximately 412 pupils and includes a nursery on site. The vast majority of pupils leaving our nursery join our reception classes and continue through to Year 6, after which they leave for one of the several excellent secondary schools in the area.

The school site is extremely spacious and includes extensive Junior and Infant fields and playgrounds, each with its own 'trimtrail' and playground equipment. A smaller area attached to the infant end of the building provides a dedicated outdoor learning and play area exclusively for our year one children. All the outdoor areas are constantly monitored, improved and developed. Improvements to safety surfaces beneath the higher 'trimtrail' apparatus have been completed. New play equipment for KS1 children was installed in the Summer Term 2014.

Cycle storage and a seating area for KS2 children are recent additions.

The building has undergone recent extensive refurbishments and decoration and the purchase of laptop trollies and interactive whiteboards for all classrooms. In September 2012 we opened a new foundation stage unit, which provides three new high quality classrooms, as well as a well resourced music room and kitchen.

The dining hall has been completely re-furnished, a new roof laid and a new entrance installed complete with improved security system. Ramps to the main entrance and nursery have further improved disabled access.

The spring and summer of 2007/08 saw the complete remodelling of the front entrance for visitors including the addition of a new reception area, community room and disabled toilet. The installation of new double glazed doors and windows to the whole school was completed in the summer of 2009. A particularly important development in October 2010 was the opening of a new Children's Centre and independent pre-school on the Tanners Wood site.

## The Buildings

The school comprises one main block, together with the new foundation stage unit. All classes from year 1 to year 6 are housed in the main block.

The front entrance leads to the administration / staffroom area which itself leads on to the school hall and dining room. Children may choose to eat a hot dinner in the dining hall whilst packed lunches are eaten in the hall, dining-room or outside areas dependent upon the weather. The hall at other times is used for all the usual 'large group' activities such as assemblies, PE and dance, visiting drama /music productions and school performances.

The Entrance of Tanners Wood School

The New Foundation Stage Unit

## SCHOOL PERSONNEL

### **School Governors**

Mrs D Wain (Chair)  
Mrs J Morley (interim Headteacher)  
Mrs H Mudd (staff)  
Mr. L Gatland (parent)  
Mr T Frederick (Community)  
Mrs. Sarah Cunnane ( Community)  
Mr D Eddleston (Community)  
Mr P Fuller (Parent)  
Mrs A Huggett (Parent)

### **Teaching Staff**

#### **Mrs J Morley ( Interim Headteacher)**

Mrs H Mudd (Deputy Headteacher)

<b>Teacher</b>	<b>Class</b>
Mrs Kerrie Barnes	Nursery – Apple Group
Mrs Rachel Mead	Ash
Ms Natalie Schofield	Beech
Mrs Liz Coe and Mrs Karen Arthurs	Cypress
Mrs Sara Dean	Elm
Mrs Shejal Radia	Fir
Miss Sara Morris	Holly
Mr Andrew Taylor	Juniper
Miss Rebecca Hollis	Larch
Miss Lisa Herbert	Maple
Mrs Corrina Crocker	Oak
Mrs Tracy Johnson	Pine
Mr Andrew Harris	Rowan
Mrs Liza Craggs	Spruce
Mrs Sarah Gregory	SENCO
Mrs Paula Leonard	INCO / Family Support Worker
Mrs Moana Redmond	PPA cover
Mr Scott Sansom	PPA cover and Sports Assistant

### **Office staff**

Mrs S Burke (Office Manager)  
Mrs H Hicks (Head's PA)  
Mrs L Davis  
Mrs K Cousens  
Mrs J Beecher



**Learning Support Staff**

Mrs L Gill  
Mrs M Franks  
Mrs J Whelan  
Mrs K Hurst  
Miss G. Lovelock  
Mrs K Green  
Mrs C Forester  
Miss A. McGeever  
Mr B Dunham  
Mrs K Cheshire  
Mrs L de Groot

Mrs L Collins  
Mrs K Keating  
Miss C Penwright  
Mrs F Packman  
Mrs L Chapman  
Mrs H Burke  
Mrs M Markham  
Mrs A Wilson  
Ms L Davidge  
Mrs L Brinkley

**Midday Supervisors**

Mrs L Collins – Lead MSA  
Mrs C Forester  
Mrs A Wilson  
Mrs K Green  
Mrs L Perry  
Mrs K Hurst

Mrs K Ryan  
Mrs. L. Brinkley  
Mrs. C. Pack  
Mr B Dunham  
Mrs M Markham

**Caretaker and Cleaning Staff**

Mr. A Gair (Caretaker)  
Mrs R Asim

Mrs. N. Gair  
Mr. M Crook

**Friends of Tanners Wood**

Mrs. L. Collyer (Chair)

## The School Day

The school day for all children starts when the classroom doors open at 8.50 am finishing at 3.15 for infants and 3.20 for juniors. Nursery children attend from 9.00 - 12.00 am. We are currently looking at offering a lunchtime club and top up afternoon sessions for Nursery children.

Infants are provided with a free piece of fruit or vegetable in the morning and juniors are encouraged to bring something for a short mid-morning 'fruit break'.

Morning playtime runs from 10.35 to 10.50 with lunch being from 12.00 until 1.00. Slight variations to the start of play /lunch may be necessary from time to time or, more generally with our very youngest children. Infant children also have a break in the afternoon from 2.10-2.30pm.

Assemblies are held at different times during the week with a Whole School assembly being led by the Head teacher or Deputy Head teacher each Monday morning.

There are a range of clubs held both before and after school. Occasionally clubs are held during lunchtimes. Where children opt to attend before/after-school club parents are required to make it absolutely clear how they are going to go home and by whom they will be picked up. Unless the school is instructed otherwise no children will be allowed to go home by themselves unattended.



We have extensive grounds for the children to enjoy

## Class Organisation

Tanners Wood has fifteen classes including a nursery group. The admission number is currently 60. All classes are mixed-ability with staff ensuring work is pitched at the correct levels, and taught at the appropriate pace, by careful 'differentiation' of the curriculum.

In **Key stages 1 & 2** The National Curriculum provides the basis for all subjects taught (apart from RE where the locally agreed syllabus is followed), and a range of 'schemes of work' and curriculum guidance is used to inform teachers' long, medium and short-term planning.

Where children need provision very different from the majority of their peers we have a high level of adult support staff and structures are in place to ensure their needs are met. We have an increasingly varied and interesting range of clubs and extra-curricular activities to cater for children with particular interests and abilities, including a junior choir, tag-rugby and Tai Kwon Do.

We have a nursery running one session in the morning. In **The Foundation Stage** (Nursery and Reception) pupils follow a curriculum informed by the DfE publication 'Early Years Curriculum 3-5'. Increasingly, Nursery and Reception classes are being seen as two phases of the same stage of development and are, as a natural consequence, co-operating more and more on a range of curricular issues.

## Admission arrangements

Children are admitted in line with County Council admission rules to be found in a range of Hertfordshire CC publications.

The school 'admission number' is the number of children the school is allowed to have in any one year group. The current admission number is 60. Parents applying for a nursery place are reminded that there is a requirement to apply the following year for a place in Reception. This is the same for all schools in Hertfordshire.

## New Pupils and their Parents

We want you to be clear about what it is your children are going to learn, and how they are going to be taught and their progress assessed. Parents of all new pupils, regardless of the children's ages or the time of the year, are welcome and encouraged to make an appointment to walk around the school accompanied by the Headteacher. This is best done during the school day when pupils and staff can be seen doing day-to-day work. Parents of nursery and reception-aged children are further invited to more formal evening meetings at which they are able to learn more about the Foundation Stage curriculum and classroom arrangements, ask questions on anything related to the school and meet teaching and support staff, including the Headteacher.

'Home visits' are offered for children starting in our nursery. These are very well-received and are beneficial for staff, children and parents alike.



## "Safeguarding: Child Protection, Health and Safety"

The importance of keeping children well and safe whilst they are at school cannot be over-emphasised. At Tanners Wood we have robust and well-established procedures to ensure

that all staff and visitors are suitable to work with children and CRB checks are made as appropriate. The school's policy on child protection is known to staff and is easily available for consultation. Tanners Wood will also adhere to the newly introduced prevent duty.

We need to make sure that children leave the school and arrive home safely. In the infants it is vital that any changes to the normal 'pick-up' arrangements are conveyed to the teacher beforehand. Children will not be allowed to leave the school if there are sudden or unexpected changes about which we are unhappy. In the juniors we would not normally expect children to go home unaccompanied until they are in Year 6.

Children are not 'entitled' to take holidays during term time and the Headteacher is not permitted to authorise except in exceptional circumstances. If this is the case, parents must apply in writing to the Headteacher **prior to any holiday plans being made**. The Department for Education guidelines clearly state that reasons of cost or a family treat are not an acceptable reason for a holiday request. Should your holiday request not be granted these sessions will go on their school record as unauthorised and this information passed to the Attendance Improvement Officer.

We have simple and easily understood school rules for children designed to minimise the risk of pupils coming to harm during the school day.

As regards the physical environment the school's site staff monitor the buildings and grounds on a regular basis and other staff report issues as they arise. The governor's Premises Health & Safety committee meets three times a year and fire drills are normally held termly.

Occasionally, matters are brought to the school's attention which cause staff to have concerns for the safety and wellbeing of pupils. If such concerns warrant it the Headteacher (the Designated Senior Person for Child Protection) may need to liaise with outside agencies including the local Social Services. It is not always possible to tell parents beforehand although, naturally, all steps are taken to minimise the need to make such referrals.

## The Curriculum at Tanners Wood

We aim to offer children rich and varied learning from the time they join us to the time when they have to move on. We are working to develop a more creative curriculum which includes a greater emphasis on opportunities to learn 'outside the classroom'.

The emphasis is on achieving high standards within a context of enjoyable and active learning experiences. With these principles firmly in mind the school's curriculum is planned to meet the needs of all our children taking into account their particular strengths and interests wherever possible.

The main framework for learning is the National Curriculum, translated into a range of schemes of work, which are then used as the basis for much of (but not all) planning for lessons. In the spirit of the DfE's 'Excellence and Enjoyment' document we retain some flexibility in our planning to allow for themed weeks (such as Arts, Science or Health-focus weeks), visiting drama or music performances, school trips and the like.

Below are brief descriptions of the major curriculum areas at Tanners Wood:

### English

English is a 'core' National Curriculum subject which is at the centre of all learning. We recognise that the quality of learning and teaching in English has a direct impact on pupils' overall success at school. Planning from The New National Curriculum provides a framework that ensures an appropriate balance between Speaking and Listening, Reading, Writing, Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar.

*Speaking and Listening* - We place great importance on a child's ability to listen to others and express themselves clearly, since it is through talking and discussion that children share ideas and experiences and clarify their thinking, all of which helps to develop understanding.

*Reading* - Our aim is to develop confident, independent readers, who have an enthusiasm for reading, including:

The ability to interact meaningfully with a range of texts

The ability to make judgements about what they read

Knowing different types and styles of books

Children are encouraged to read for both pleasure and information

We see parents / carers as important partners in developing children's early reading skills and ask that they support their children in all stages of their reading development. Children take books home regularly that they have chosen from a selection of books suited to their stage of reading, with the expectation that they will read to an adult at home.

*Phonics* - The teaching of sounds is essential in developing children's reading and spelling and is taught through daily lessons from Foundations Stage through to the beginning of Key Stage 2.

*Spelling* - We use an excellent programme for children from Year 2 onwards (RWI) which includes daily activities and practice of spellings.

*Writing* - We aim to offer children the experience of writing for a range of different purposes, e.g. lists, labels, instructions, letters, stories and poems. Children are taught to develop an awareness of the range of audiences and purpose for writing across the whole curriculum. Through planning, drafting and editing children are given the opportunity to present their best work.

*Drama* - Drama and role play provide opportunities for children to engage both as participants and as members of an audience and play an important role in developing children's expressive and creative skills.

*Handwriting* - A cursive handwriting style is taught throughout the school. This begins in Reception where correct letter formation is modelled and practiced. This then leads to practicing handwriting in common letter strings. The aim is for each child to develop a fluent cursive handwriting style.



## **Maths**

Maths too is a 'core' subject taught both as a single subject and, where appropriate, through cross-curricular topic work. We use the Herts for Learning block planning to help us plan our lessons.

All teachers have access to a wide range of resources. We aim, right from the start, to foster a love for the subject by placing an emphasis on practical tasks, problem-solving, investigation and games. We also emphasize the role of mental calculation, discussion of mathematical language and concepts, and we utilize ICT wherever it can be used to develop skills and deepen understanding.

Children in nursery experience maths mainly through sorting, matching, counting, and comparing sequences and patterns; whilst doing these activities they learn the use of correct mathematical language. In Reception maths is integrated with a range of other activities and is also taught as short focussed sessions which get longer as the year progresses.

As the children move through the school lessons become longer with Junior-aged pupils participating in daily lessons lasting an hour.

The majority of lessons from Year 1 onwards follow a similar pattern of:

- short mental and oral 'starter'
- followed by the main body of the lesson comprising teacher explanations and pupil activities
- finishing with a short 'plenary' session to draw together the main points of the lesson and /or to extend the learning a little further.

We also include a daily 'fluency' session to improve children's mental calculation skills and knowledge.

In maths there will be times when the whole class works together (e.g. in the starter /plenary sessions) and there will be other times when children complete work according to their abilities. A range of differentiated activities is offered for every session. The class will be supported by a teaching assistant.

We try to make the work stimulating, challenging and interesting. The final word goes to one Year5 pupil who said: 'Our work is interesting and fun. We get help when we need it but I like to try it myself first!'

## Science

At Tanners Wood we want to stimulate children's natural curiosity in finding out how and why things happen the way they do. We emphasise and teach methods of enquiry and investigation to stimulate creative thought. Also, children learn to ask scientific questions and appreciate both the way that Science influences their present day lives and how it will affect their futures.

As much as possible, Science is taught through direct and practical learning experiences. In support of this, each year we hold a Science focus week including visiting technologists/scientists and plenty of practical workshops in which children participate. The Wildlife area at the bottom of the field will allow us to expand and diversify our approaches to Science teaching, especially in the study of living things.

Our hands on approach is supported well by an enthusiastic Year three boy who says: *'my favourite part of Science Weeks was when we changed pitch by putting different levels of water in tubes and blowing on them'* and a Year 3 girl told us *'I enjoyed looking at parts of a bike to find out what the purpose of them was!'*



Experimenting during 'Science Week'



## Computing

ICT is a critical key area for children of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Each classroom has at least one PC and all have interactive whiteboards. There are two laptop trollies as well as iPads . ICT is taught both as a discrete subject and also very importantly as a medium through which skills and knowledge can be developed across the rest of the curriculum. At every stage 'E-safety' (protecting children from unsuitable material in software and on the internet) is a top priority with a combination of protocols and software filters ensuring that this happens.

In addition to computers children learn about, and sometimes use for themselves, other electrical items including cassette recorders, digital cameras and remote-controlled programmable machines.

Children clearly enjoy and value the role of Computing in their school lives as evidenced by the following comments:

'I like using computers, using the internet and playing educational games' (Year 5 boy)



## Personal, Social & Health Education (PSHE) and Citizenship

SEAL (Social and emotional aspects of learning) is of our PSHE programme of study. The SEAL lessons give our pupils the opportunity to identify their own feelings and those of others. They learn strategies to deal with arrange of emotions and difficult situations. SEAL highlights the gifts and talents of each child to raise their self esteem as we believe a happy, confident child will be more motivated to learn and achieve more.

PSHE and citizenship help to give children the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to become confident, healthy and independent learners. It prepares them well too for life at secondary school and beyond and teaches them what it is to be a responsible member of society.

In common with English and Computing, for example, we believe PSHE is best taught through a combination of 'discrete' (eg Circle Time) and a more cross-curricular approach where issues are explored as they come up during the school day or within particular subjects (eg a discussion on 'anger' in a lesson on poetry). The wide range of extra-curricular activities and clubs also allow children to develop their own abilities (musical, sporting and so on) leading to high self-esteem amongst the vast majority of our pupils.

Similarly, the opportunity to represent others as a member of the School Council, to be a playtime helper in the infant department, to be on the Eco Committee or to take food parcels to a local project for homeless people all help to re-enforce the feeling of belonging to and contributing to the community at large. We are now developing our international links and have gained the Intermediate International School Award.



We are an accredited 'Healthy School' and hold an annual Healthy School Week in which the focus is on being and staying healthy. We have a salad bar at lunchtime and fruit is encouraged as a snack in both infants and juniors.

We provide a well-established Sex and Relationships Education programme appropriate to the age and maturity of the children being taught, a similar approach being taken in the teaching information to do with drugs and medicines.

This what some year 5 and 6 children say about PHSE and citizenship at Tanners Wood

'In Y4 we went to Hazard Alley in Milton Keynes. We learned all about staying safe-it was great fun and I still remember it!'

'I was so excited when I was voted to be School Council rep-my mum and dad were so proud.'

'Doing my cycling proficiency was great-I feel much more confident now.'

'I loved being monitor in my little sister's class!'

'I like being able to talk about my feelings and know my friends feel like that too.'

## **Sex and Relationships Policy**

### **Ethos**

Tanners Wood School aims to create a healthy, safe and caring environment where both children and staff feel confident, secure and valued.

### **Definition**

Sex and Relationship Education is lifelong learning about physical, moral and emotional development. It is about the understanding of the nature of marriage, civil partnership, relationships outside of marriage which combine to form key building blocks of community and society and their importance for family life. It is about stable and loving relationships, respect, love and care. It is also about the teaching of human reproduction, sexuality and sexual health. Sex and Relationships Education should contribute to promoting the spiritual, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at school and to preparing pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experience of adult life.

### **Aim of Sex and Relationships Education**

To provide a stimulating and supportive learning environment in which all pupils can develop their feelings of self worth and confidence especially in relation to others. This will include the following skills: valuing themselves as unique individuals, keeping themselves and others healthy and safe, communication, decision making and assertiveness, knowing how and where to gain information and support, and participating in society.

The outcomes will be that our children are healthy and safe, enjoy and achieve, make a positive contribution and achieve economic well-being.

## Art and Design

The children at Tanners Wood enjoy art and relish every opportunity to show their creative side. 'I like everything about it'.....'I love finding out about real artists'....'Art is fun!'...and...'It would be horrible and boring without it' give an idea of what children here think about the subject! Wherever possible it is linked to other subjects, enhancing children's understanding and enjoyment. Where this is not appropriate the subject is taught in 'blocks' focusing on particular skills or themes. Bi-annually we will also hold an Arts Week in which children work alongside visiting specialists in dance, drama and music ably supported by existing school staff. The 'Welcome' mosaic which can be found in the front entrance hall is the product of a whole school art project -designed by one of our junior children and made by every child from nursery to year 6 working alongside a visiting art specialist.



## Design and Technology

We agree with James Dyson when he says, 'Design and technology is about making things that people want and that work well. Creating these things is hugely exciting: it is an inventive, fun activity!'

At Tanners Wood we aim to give children challenging practical problems that will require them to identify a need, design and make a solution. This is followed up with an evaluation of the final product, by both the maker of the item and other people concerned with the project.

D&T is largely topic-based with children investigating, for example, playgrounds, moving monsters, torches, slippers and puppets. Within these topics children learn the skills and vocabulary they will need for the individual tasks. At all times the importance of working safely with equipment, tools and materials is made very clear to all pupils.

Last word goes to two children in KS2:

'I really enjoyed making the slippers because I was able to do lots of different sewing stitches.' and 'D&T is great fun because you get to design and make something for a particular purpose or person. We made moving books for reception children and the little ones loved them!'

## Geography

Variety is a hallmark of geography at Tanners Wood with children studying a wide range of topics and themes during their time at school. Starting close to home and their own personal experiences children in nursery through to year 2 study aspects of the subject which relate directly to them and their families' lives. As they move into Key Stage 2 the focus broadens to consider people and places from further afield including other parts of the UK, Europe as

a whole and the world, including the developing world. In addition, children are taught about the world's climates and the delicate balance between human activity and The Environment. Children's ICT skills are honed in pursuing investigations into a range of local and international issues including, for example, questions relating to developments (real and imagined) in green areas.

Each year group undertakes trips out of school which allow children to see their world through different eyes.

Geography is a truly cross-curricular subject and is described by children at Tanners Wood as 'exciting' and 'really fun' with 'the chance to learn about other countries'.



## **History**

The study of history plays an extremely important part in children understanding the way that we, and other peoples around the world, live and see the world today. At Tanners Wood we aim to make history 'live' through the use of drama, visits to places of historical interest, and the involvement of outside speakers and agencies. In the infants the emphasis is on understanding underlying historical concepts such as 'past and present' and the life stories of famous people that have made an impact on life today. The history of children's own families and the local area, coupled with a study of 'holidays' and 'toys' through the ages, for example, help engage children's interests in things that appeal readily to our youngest pupils. On transferring to the juniors pupils are introduced to a larger historical canvas with major historical events, themes and personalities being brought into focus. Throughout the school we encourage children to 'find out for themselves' using methods that we hope makes history both fun and informative. Here is what some children said:

"History is fun to learn. I like the work we do. I really liked learning about famous Roman people",

"We really enjoyed the visit from Charlie's nan..... being told what it was really like in World War II was excellent as his nan was actually there",

"I really liked the History homework which was making a Tudor galleon over half-term".

## **Music**

Music is incorporated in a variety of ways within the school curriculum and seeks to provide children with ways to develop an interest and appreciation of a wide range of musical styles. The children have weekly singing sessions as well as regular opportunities to develop their own musical skills in creative sessions which support topics taught in the classroom.

Recorder lessons for small groups also take place weekly and a school choir is established for Foundation and KS1 to help provide further musical opportunities for these children. Visiting music teachers provide opportunities for individual children to learn the saxophone, violin, piano and drums should parents wish to pay for lessons during the school day.

Occasional performances and workshops from visiting musicians help to raise children's awareness of the wide range of styles and traditions that exist beyond the school gates. Drumming was a very popular workshop with the children and a visit from a group of very talented musicians from Kings Langley Secondary School is always a great favourite.

The children themselves certainly recognise the benefits of music within their own lives as they feel that : *'music is something that everyone can do'..... 'it makes you feel good' .....* and *'it calms me down and makes me happy inside'.*



## **PE and Games**

We recognise and believe that physical education is a crucial and enjoyable part of a child's experience at primary school. It helps them to lead a full and active life supporting a healthy body and promoting positive qualities such as perseverance, determination and the ability to work as a team. A full range of activities, ranging from dance and gymnastics to netball and football are taught at various times of the year. Additional sports are also represented in after-school clubs. Competition is not discouraged and competitive games form a regular part of a child's experience at school. At the same time we recognise that not everyone is destined to be the next sporting superstar and believe that enjoyment and participation are critically important too.

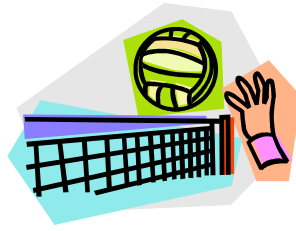
Swimming is taught in Year 3 only and is a statutory part of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2. We cannot opt not to teach it and neither can pupils opt not to take part. As we do not have a swimming pool, we have to take children by coach to the nearby Woodside Leisure Centre swimming pool in Garston where they receive lessons from a suitably qualified instructor. We believe that the ability to swim is a critical skill in this area of canals, rivers and lakes and will continue to support children in their attempts to learn as long as parents continue to support us in this respect.

Pupils clearly enjoy PE and games as the following comments illustrate:

*We all get to take part and no-one misses out (Year 4 girl)*

*I've loved learning how to catch and throw properly (Year 2 boy)*

*It's fun to do PE and games at school because I don't get the opportunity to do these activities at home (Year 6 girl)*



## **RE**

In our teaching of RE at Tanners Wood we aim to reflect and inform the caring ethos we so value at the school. In line with the locally agreed syllabus children will learn about the six great religions of the world including Christianity, Hinduism, Judaism, Sikhism, Islam and Buddhism with the study focusing on both the similarities and differences which exist between them.

By the time children leave us children will have had the opportunity to learn about and from a range of religions and to reflect upon their own beliefs. We hope through their study of RE they will learn to understand and respect the beliefs and religious practices of people from within a religiously-diverse society. Reflecting upon their RE lessons here is what two children said; 'I like learning about lots of different religions and about new people I never knew about before' and ' I like hearing stories that help you understand how to share and be kind'.

## **Home Learning**

Home learning is seen as an important aspect in supporting children to become independent in their learning. It reinforces what has been learned in class and allows children to research topics and subjects in ways which are limited during the school day. Of particular importance is parents' guidance to children on the completion of homework and especially their involvement in helping children to read.

As a general rule home learning increases in volume and complexity as children move from infants to juniors and especially during the final two years, in preparation for transfer to secondary school. Each class-dependent on the children's ages, level maturity and overall ability- will have its own detailed approach to homework reflecting the general principles which may be found in the school policy document.

## **Extra Curricular Activities**

We believe that learning should not be, and is not, confined to formal lessons. We provide a wide range of clubs and after-school activities that should appeal to children with a whole variety of interests, talents and abilities. Although attracting a small fee, prices are kept to a low level in order to encourage wide participation. The precise list will vary from year to year and from season to season but has included, amongst others: the choir; singing; wildlife

club; running club; gymnastics; Tae Kwon Do; football; netball; drama and dance. In addition, children can opt to learn ukelele, guitar, recorder, piano or drums with a visiting music specialist. (These are charged-for activities and are subject to certain age /maturity restrictions.)

We also participate in a number of other local events (eg Abbots Langley Carnival; The Tough Ten road race) and have an increasing number of links to other organizations (e.g. Abbots Langley Cricket Club and Kings Langley Secondary School- as part of their specialist 'Arts Status').

## **Equal Opportunities and Inclusion**

At Tanners Wood we believe everyone is entitled to be treated 'equally' regardless of differences in gender, abilities, ethnic or cultural background, or religious beliefs. We strive to provide an inclusive educational experience in which the differences between individuals are recognised and valued for bringing diversity and interest to the school community. Bullying or discrimination on the grounds of any of the above is not tolerated and will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively, and with regard to the feelings of the individuals concerned.

## **Assemblies and Collective Act of Worship**

Children attend daily 'assemblies' including one Whole School assembly and an infant or junior assembly every week. Included in this weekly programme are an infant or junior singing practice, a talent/ sharing assembly, and a classroom-based assembly in which issues pertinent to individual classes may be opened to discussion.

The majority of assemblies will reflect the broad traditions of Christian beliefs but as Tanners Wood is a non-denominational school a variety of beliefs will be represented at assemblies during the year.

At most assemblies children will be invited to reflect on moral or ethical questions and, occasionally, a prayer may be said or, for example, a religious carol sung. In our experience most parents feel happy with this arrangement but parents are able to exercise their right to withdraw their children from the collective act of worship (or from lessons in Religious Education) if they so wish.

## **Assessment and Reporting to parents**

In order to provide the best for your child he or she will have their educational progress and development monitored and assessed on an on-going basis. This 'teacher assessment' will be in the form of teachers' informal notes and jottings, periodic tests including spellings and table facts, reading to teachers and support staff, and marking of both classwork and that done at home. In addition to this we have more formal testing arrangements at various points during the school year. These, when read alongside the other information gathered during the year, allow your child's teacher to report on their progress and attainment during the year. The

Foundation Stage Profile is used for reporting during the Foundation Stage and children are assessed formally at the end of Year 2 .At the end of Year 6 children sit their Key Stage 2 SATs tests.

Parent -teacher consultation evenings are currently held in the autumn and spring terms with the final Pupil Report going home to parents at the end of the summer term.

Towards the start of each term we aim to provide a broad outline of each class's work planned for the term. This is to enable parents to support their children over the term, especially when particular projects have been planned.

In addition to the above arrangements the school has an 'open door' policy with respect to discussing any areas of concern relating to children at the school. **Wherever possible we would ask you to make appointments for all but the briefest of discussions and we would ask parents to avoid, wherever possible, taking up staff time at the start of the day when children are coming into class.**



## **Special /Additional Needs Provision**

All children have their own individual needs. Sometimes these needs fall outside those of the majority of children and require different or additional provision. At Tanners Wood we have are justifiably proud of our support for all children's learning and have well-established structures in place to ensure all children are provided for according to their needs.

Our Senco (Special Needs Co-ordinator) and Inco(Inclusion Co-ordinator) liaise with children, staff and parents throughout the school year to ensure adequate support is provided for children deemed to require additional help or direction. SEN Support Plans may be drawn up to guide staff and parents towards identified goals, the plan being a key document in discussions between parents, teachers and children themselves. For some children additional individual or group 'intervention' work may be provided by teaching or support staff, whilst for a smaller number the advice and expertise of outside agencies may be required.

## **School Governors' Policy on Charging**

The school provides all statutory elements of the National Curriculum free of charge and tries to keep any extra costs to a minimum.

Most classes have several visits a year, most requiring coach hire and many the payment of an entrance fee. In order for us to provide these important and enriching experiences we are bound to ask parents for voluntary contributions to help pay the necessary costs. **Without these contributions we would not be able to offer children these opportunities and, in extreme cases, would need to consider cancelling the trip despite the cost to the school in doing so.**



Similarly, we occasionally request voluntary contributions (of about £2-4 per pupil) to pay for workshops, for example, held at school.

On other occasions we pay for such visits entirely from school funds or approach the Friends of Tanners Wood for support (e.g. for Science Week).

Where parents have real financial difficulties we are more than willing to see what we can do to ease the burden e.g. by allowing parents to pay in instalments (as they do each year for the annual Y6 school journey) or by helping parents seek financial support from trusts or charities. Pupil Premium children are also helped with financial support for residential trips.

We would ask you to continue to support us in providing the very best and rich curriculum we can for your children in their time at Tanners Wood.

## **Governing Body**

The governing body is a group of 12 individual people, each with the interests of Tanners Wood at heart. It comprises parents of children at the school and staff members, as well as members of the local community. Each governor brings their own strengths and interests to the group with their over-riding aim being to support the school in what it does well and to help it to develop where improvements are necessary or desirable.

Full governing body meetings happen six times a year with additional meetings for each of the committees. Individual governors are encouraged to visit the school during the school day at least once a year and play an important 'critical friend' role in informing the school's self-evaluation process. The majority of governors have no link to education in their working lives so bring a different perspective to discussions relating especially to the longer term view of 'where the school should be going'. If you would be interested in knowing more or even in being a governor either here or at another school please ask at the office for guidance.

## **Friends of Tanners Wood School Association (FTW)**

Tanners Wood School is fortunate indeed to have an extremely active and supportive parent-teachers association.

Over the years the FOTW has worked closely with the school in providing a huge range of resources and materials and has funded events and visitors too numerous to list.

Suffice to say, recent acquisitions and projects include a new stage for the hall, decoration of the hall and classrooms, materials and equipment for Design & Technology, and the funding of a music and dance day. Annually, the FOTW raise in the region of £10,000 for the school—a fantastic amount by any standards.

The FOTW, however, is much more than a fund-raising organisation. It represents a vital and vibrant link between parents and staff for the good of the school's children and the wider



community. The numerous events including quiz nights, dances, summer and Christmas fairs and fashion shows bring together members of the local area in fun and imaginative ways, promoting the school and its work in the process.

All parents are deemed to be members of the FOTW by virtue of the fact they have children at the school. We would like to invite you to play an active part in the FOTW - this is what some of our present members say about their experiences of being part of the group:

'It's very fulfilling and rewarding to be involved in your child's school and a great way of making new friends';

'Being part of the FOTW has enabled me to help my child enjoy a full school life, whilst raising money for new resources';

'Choosing a school for your child is always a difficult decision. I was attracted to Tanners Wood not only for its academic achievements but also the close involvement of parents with the school through the FOTW. Being involved with the FOTW's social events is always enjoyable and I continue to be amazed with the generosity of parents. We have raised tens of thousands of pounds, which all goes to benefit our children.'



## Parents and the School

As stated elsewhere, the relationship between the school and its parents is a vital one. We regard the education of your children as a close partnership between school and home and we believe that good communications and relations are key to ensuring success.

We are very fortunate in the level of everyday support that we receive from parents /carers and grand-parents happy to assist in and around the school in a variety of ways. Of particular importance are those helpers who offer to hear children read regularly, others who cut, paste and sew in preparation for school productions, and those who accompany classes on trips or sporting visits. This support greatly enhances what we are able to offer your children and helps make Tanners Wood JMI school the exciting and invigorating place it undoubtedly is.

For a whole range of reasons we often find it works much better when parents support classes other than those where their own children are. Although there are sometimes exceptions to this rule please do not be offended if you are asked to help in another class.

# Informing Parents

## *Letters*

We aim to keep parents informed about most aspects of school life. A key medium of communication is the Newsletter which goes out every week via ParentMail. In this publication the Headteacher and staff endeavour to update parents on developments in the school focusing on items which we feel would be of particular interest or importance to parents in general. We also include regular reminders of key dates and update these in the event of additions or amendments. The school has adopted using ParentMail an electronic mail system which is used to send home letters and information sheets to participating families.

Parent noticeboards (both school and FOTW) are situated outside the Reception class and near the covered way to the 'demountable' and usually display the latest information for parents.

We also send home regular information on the curriculum /topics to be studied in each class over the year or term and these are published in the school website.

In addition, of course, a range of other letters and information sheets too numerous to itemise will come home during the year. We are well aware of the amount of information that parents are sometimes required to absorb and do our best to keep this to a necessary minimum.

## *Website*

The school has a website which can be visited at [www.tannerswood.org.uk](http://www.tannerswood.org.uk) .

We also have a Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/TannersWoodSchool](http://www.facebook.com/TannersWoodSchool)

## *Parent-teacher consultation meetings*

These happen in the autumn and spring terms. Parents are able to ascertain their child's attainment and progress over the year so far and discuss any plans made for the remaining terms. In the case of a child with special educational needs there will be additional opportunities to discuss SEN Support Plans with either the class-teacher and, in certain cases, the school's special needs co-ordinator. Parents of children with statements of SEN will be invited to a range of planning and review meetings during the year.

Where parents feel that there is a need to discuss their child's progress and attainment at other times during the year we will do our best to comply with their request. Occasionally, the teacher may instigate this process and invite a parent in to talk about particular issues or concerns.

## *Reports*

Once a year, in July, we send home a full report detailing how your child has done during the year. We report on effort and attainment in all subjects and comment on general progress over the year.

## *Parental surveys*

From time to time the school likes to survey parents on a range of subjects- recent examples are: journeys to school; design of school reports. We value what parents feel and try, when possible, to incorporate ideas and opinions into policy and practice.

## Speaking to staff

At Tanners Wood we have an 'open door' policy as regards parents wanting to speak to school staff. Parents needing to speak to the Headteacher should make an appointment at the school office; often, but not always, this is possible at the time of request.

The start of the day is not a good time to speak to teaching staff about anything which may require discussion time. Consequently, may we respectfully request that 'classroom door' conversations are reserved for relaying important but short bits of information only. **If parents (or staff) have issues that need longer it is better to make an appointment to speak at a mutually convenient time- normally after school.**



## Concerns and Complaints

In any large and complex organisation there will be times when things go wrong, and in this respect Tanners Wood is no different from anywhere else.

In general, concerns and complaints are dealt with quickly and satisfactorily through discussions with teaching or office staff, or with members of the school's senior leadership team. However, where difficulties persist the school does have a 'Complaints Procedure' which follows guidelines laid down by Herts CC. A copy of the procedures is available from the school office and on the school website.

If after speaking to the head teacher you feel your concern has not been resolved you may contact the chair of governors via the school office. Where a resolution still cannot be found parents may have recourse to the local Authority's Conciliation and Advice Service available on 01992 555827.

Such difficulties are rare at Tanners Wood whereas occasions for celebration or congratulation are many- so please let us know when we have done things right too!

## Anti-Bullying

Bullying, under any guise, is not tolerated at Tanners Wood. The school policy clearly indicates what is considered inappropriate language and behaviour towards other children and instances of bullying, although infrequent, are dealt with swiftly and decisively. Normally the perpetrator is made to recognise what he or she has done is wrong, apologise to the other person concerned, and atone for their behaviour in some way.

Our strong PHSE curriculum ensures that children understand very clearly the importance of treating others with care and respect, and that they know any transgression will be dealt with as described.

## **Listening to children – The School Council**

The school has a well-established elected School Council at Tanners Wood drawn from the infant and junior classes. Elections are held twice a year with a child being elected for a tenure of six months at a time. Class representatives meet about once a month with the Deputy Headteacher with the council being the channel through which pupils' ideas, opinions and complaints can be heard formally. A variety of issues are brought to the meetings ranging from requests for additional playground equipment to ideas for improving arrangements at lunchtime- and everything between! The results of any discussions are posted on dedicated noticeboards in the dining-room and classrooms.

We believe the council is a valuable mouthpiece for pupil opinion which allows the children at Tanners Wood to learn the importance of speaking and listening to each other, the fundamentals of the democratic process and their role in the way the school operates. Increasingly, teacher subject-leaders are using 'pupil voice' surveys and interviews to ascertain children's understanding or approach to learning in the whole range of subjects taught.

## **Behaviour**

The behaviour at Tanners Wood is normally very good and results from a clear and understood expectation that it will be so. Class and school rules are kept to a minimum and are there to ensure children remain healthy and safe and that everyone is afforded maximum opportunities to learn effectively. All members of the school community-children, staff, parents and visitors- are expected to behave in a courteous and considerate manner, with adults having a particular responsibility to behave as good role models.

The current school rules (which may be amended from time to time) include:

- Try hard to do our best
- Listen to others and show respect
- Be honest
- Be caring, kind and helpful
- Look after our school and keep ourselves safe

A range of rewards and sanctions are employed to encourage and support good behaviour using the 'Sunshine' Behaviour approach introduced in the summer of 2012.

The exact details of these will vary depending on the age and maturity of the children in question but all will be underpinned by the general Aims of the school and consideration of the rules outlined above.

In rare cases where it is felt that a child is not responding to the usual menu of rewards and sanctions external advice may be sought and the parents involved. This is in the anticipation that the behaviour will be brought back into line with the school's expectations. In very rare cases 'internal exclusion' or 'exclusion' from the school premises may be used as a last resort.

## Illnesses and difficulties during the school day

We are fortunate in having a large number of staff with First Aid training and we ensure that their training is updated regularly. When children fall ill during the day, or when other difficulties arise, they are normally brought to the 'medical room' and an assessment made of the situation. Where we feel it necessary we will contact parents so that a joint decision can be reached as to the best course of action. **On a practical note it is vital that contact details (names, addresses and phone numbers) are accurate and up-to-date. This is especially true in the case of 'mobile' numbers and when parents move house.** We also need current information on children's medical needs, particularly where there have been recent changes.



## Attendance and Absence

Attendance at Tanners Wood is above the national average. The school endeavours to maintain and where necessary improve attendance and we expect parents to work with us to address attendance problems. We encourage good attendance by rewarding classes with a 'Prize Cup' which is awarded in assembly each half term and is followed by a treat for the class. This small but regular event reminds children that we value their presence at school and that they need to be here in order for us to teach them! Appointments for routine medical/dental purposes should be made outside of school hours wherever possible.

Obviously, we do not expect children who are ill to attend school until they are fully fit and well. If a child has been sick either at home or at school, please keep them off school for 48 hours to help prevent the spread of the illness. If an absence is known in advance please inform the school as soon as possible. Where children are ill and unable to attend school parents are expected to inform the school as soon as possible -preferably before the start of the school day. Where teaching and office staff do not know where a child is all efforts will be made to contact parents in order to establish the whereabouts of the child. Occasionally, owing to an oversight on the school's part, parents do tell the school of an absence and are still contacted during the morning asking for an explanation. Whilst we

accept that this can be irritating we hope you will agree that it is a small occasional price to pay for ensuring the safety and well-being of your child.

When your child returns to school it is helpful if they bring a short note explaining why they have been away.

At Tanners Wood we share the official line that children are not 'entitled' to take holidays during term time except in extreme circumstances. Where a child's attendance is a cause for concern the school will inform a parent who may be invited to discuss the situation with the Headteacher or other member of staff. Where no satisfactory resolution is reached the school may refer the case on to the attached School Attendance Improvement Officer who may decide to visit the family in person and work with them towards an acceptable solution.

## School Uniform

Boys - grey trousers, white or red polo-shirts,  
red Tanners Wood sweatshirt

Girls - grey skirt, pinafore dress or grey trousers,  
white or red polo-shirt, red Tanners Wood  
sweatshirt or school cardigan, white socks

During the summer girls can also wear red/white checked dresses/skirts.

Please note: school fleeces are considered 'outdoor' wear and should not be worn in class.

Children should change into a pair of clean, black indoor shoes on arrival at school. They may wear their own choice of footwear to and from school.

### **P.E. Games Kit (Reception - Year 6):**

black shorts, green Tanners Wood t-shirts,  
black jogging bottoms (KS2 only)  
green hooded top (KS2 only)

We do not currently keep a 'school kit' for all matches (apart from Junior football teams).

Children chosen to play in our cricket, badminton and other teams will use their school games kit.

Uniform items can be purchased from our supplier at: [www.your-schooluniform.co.uk](http://www.your-schooluniform.co.uk)



