

Newsletter



Newsletter 11

4th February 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Again, the term seems to have flown by, and it has been a pleasure to see the fantastic work, and positive attitude of the children (and staff!). We are looking forward to sharing this at the forthcoming Parent Teacher Consultations, and although we are disappointed that we will not be able to meet face to face this time, we are optimistic that it won't be long before we can welcome you back to all of the usual events.

As this will be the last newsletter before half term, I wish you all a relaxing and enjoyable break.



Parent Teacher Consultations – Technical Tips

For most people, the process has been very smooth, however, some have had a few technical hitches. This could be due to the web browser being used – these are the ones recommended:

- iPhone/iPad: Safari, Chrome Note: there is a known issue joining video calls using iOS 14.2. Please upgrade any iOS 14.2 devices to iOS 14.3, or use a different device.
- Android: Chrome, Firefox or the Samsung Browser
- Windows: Chrome, Firefox or Microsoft Edge (Chromium - download here)
- Mac: Safari, Chrome or Firefox
- Linux: Chrome or Firefox

There is also further advice here: <https://support.parenteveningsystem.co.uk/article/801-video-parents-how-to-attend-appointments-over-video-call>

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us. If things go wrong on the evening, please call school and we will do our best to help, and if all else fails, arrange another suitable time with you.



Sporting Success

Our children have been representing us brilliantly at the recent inter school sporting events which have taken place. Year 2 won Bronze medals in the Rapid Fire Cricket competition, and Year 4 won silver medals, although they were having to compete in the big schools category. Year 5 won silver medals in the Handball competition. Our fantastic senior football team finished as

runners up in the County finals, after a very hard-fought series of matches on a cold Saturday morning! Congratulations to all of our teams.

We wish our runners the best of luck for the Hertfordshire Schools Cross Country Running meet which takes place at Westminster Lodge tomorrow morning. Thank you to Mel who organises our sports teams, and to parents and staff for their support.



PTFA

Thank you very much for supporting the PTFA Big Breakfast, which raised over £400! Thank you too, to our fantastic PTFA team who worked really hard before, during and after the event. We are extremely grateful to the Pack family for donating the delicious bacon!

Our next meeting is on March 3rd at 7 p.m. All parents are welcome to join us!



Birdwatch

Here is a message from Miss Grainger:

The Eco Team and I hope you enjoyed taking part in the 'Big Garden Bird Watch' last weekend. Did you know as land development has increased, bird populations have decreased? As many as 100 other bird species are now considered endangered or threatened. While you can't stop progress, you can help support wild bird populations by creating an attractive habitat for them in your back garden.



Why not make this simple bird feeder to encourage birds into your garden?

You will need: A pine cone, lard, birdseed string and scissors

1. Find a pine cone from your outdoor area. Prepare a bowl with a teaspoon of lard and smother your pine cone with it. This will be messy!
2. Put your pine cone in the fridge to let the lard set. While you're waiting, put some of your birdseed onto a plate. After 30 minutes, remove your pine cone from the fridge and roll it in the birdseed to cover it.
3. Cut a piece of string about 8 inches long. Ask an adult to help. Tie the string around your cone and hang it on a tree or bush outside.

Look out for more interesting, educational and fun facts and ideas from the Eco Team in the next newsletter!!

know how important attendance is for children's learning and social relationships. However, we have all had to adapt and work even more closely together, acting on even the smallest signs of illness to make sure everyone is safe to be in school.

Due to the amount of school missed, for unavoidable reasons, there is now a national focus on reducing time lost for unauthorised absences. The Education Secretary Nadhim Zahawi has informed local authorities that they are required to use their full range of legal powers to address absences. Currently, if children are of statutory school age (from the term after they become 5), action can be taken if they have 7 ½ days or more of unauthorised absence. Parents can be issued with a fixed penalty notice, which is £60 per parent, per child, rising to £120, if paid after 21 days, but within 28 days. After this, court proceedings take place.

I would not wish any parents to be in this position through not being aware of the rules. I can only authorise absences for wholly exceptional or compassionate reasons. Examples of this have been where a child has attended a ceremony where their parent has received a Police bravery award, and when a parent had to organise holiday time around receiving ongoing medical treatment. The term dates are published on the school website to help with holiday planning, and we will shortly be agreeing the INSET days for 2023-2024 to give you as much notice as possible to help with holiday planning. If you are planning on taking your child out of school during term time, please contact me as a matter of urgency, so that I can advise you of any implications.



E-Safety Day – 9th February

Our children are growing up in a world of ever-changing technology. There are many positive aspects of the use of IT, but also associated risks. As well as teaching the children about e-safety throughout the year, we also hold an annual e-safety day, when the whole school focusses on ways of being safe, and acting safely with technology, in an age appropriate way.

We understand that much of our children's use of the internet will occur at home, away from the school filters. At the end of the newsletter is a list of links which you may find helpful when navigating online safety at home.

Most social media apps such as Instagram have an age limit of 13. However, parents may not be aware that the age limit for WhatsApp is 16 – we are aware of children who are on WhatsApp groups currently. If you have any questions or concerns regarding online safety, please do not hesitate to contact Mr Browne or me. Mr Browne is also able to advise people regarding appropriate settings for internet access.

Thank you for reading this newsletter. Please remember I am always happy to discuss any issues with you.

Liz Pollard
HEADTEACHER

Community News



St. Giles Coffee Shop & Church Café

St. Giles Church has now re-opened its Friday morning coffee shop in the Peace Memorial Hall, and would like to invite parents, grandparents - anyone, really - to come in for a cuppa and cake. Pre-school children are also very welcome. The cafe is open 9.00am - 12noon every Friday morning.

St. Giles Cafe Church happens in the PMH on the first Sunday of every month. This is a fun time for families as well as those without children. There are age-related activities, songs, an informal short talk or reflection, and some prayers. Breakfast pastries and drinks are available from 9.30am, with all-together activities beginning around 10.30am. Next Cafe Church is this Sunday, 6th Feb with a winter Olympic theme and the question: "Who's in the driving seat?"



Junior Bake Off

Applications for the 8th series of Junior Bake Off have opened! The Channel 4 team are looking for young budding bakers between 9-12 years old. Filming will take place from July 2022 - applications close on Sunday 13th March 2022.

Interested bakers can apply online at www.applyforjuniorbakeoff.co.uk

Online Safety Links

Thinkuknow <http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk>

Thinkuknow is an education programme from the National Crime Agency's CEOP Command. Since 2006, it aims to ensure that everyone has access to this practical information – children, young people, their parents and carers and the professionals who work with them.

Internet Matters <https://www.internetmatters.org/advice/esafety-leaflets-resources/>

A comprehensive web resource with a wide array of tips and advice on how to navigate the online world with your child. Some of their guidance we attach below but you can find even more by visiting the link.

National Online Safety <https://nationalonlinesafety.com/resources/platform-guides/>

National Online Safety's mission is to make the internet a safer place for children. They aim to do this by equipping school staff, parents and children with the knowledge they need to understand online dangers and how best to react should an incident arise. The link above provides up to date information about a wide variety of social media apps and platforms your child might be using.

NSPCC <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/share-aware/>

The NSPCC are the first to admit that the internet is amazing. Children can play, learn, create and connect - opening up a whole world of exciting possibilities. But with the digital world changing all the time, how can you make sure your child's staying safe? That's where the NSPCC come in. Whether you're an online expert or you're not sure where to start, their tools and advice will help you keep your child safe.

Childnet <http://www.childnet.com/parents-and-carers>

Childnet International is a registered UK charity that aims to make the internet a safe place for children and young people. Packed with resources it is a great resource for parents.

CEOP <http://ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>

Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) is part of the National Crime Agency and their website can be used to report if you are worried about online abuse or the way someone is communicating online.