

Newsletter



Newsletter 18

9th June, 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! I hope everyone had a good break over the holiday, and that you have been able to make the most of this long weekend. We have had a great start to the term – it has been lovely to have some sunshine too! We have lots planned for the next few weeks, and look forward to seeing you at some of these events.



Congratulations!

It is always lovely to be able to share the achievements of children outside school, as well as school activities. Flynn, from Year 4 has set himself some real challenges this year, taking part in sponsored hikes in all weathers! He has raised a massive £2,150 for the charity Young Minds. Over the holidays he walked the Llanberis path. Although the going was very tricky, he managed it in under 4 hours, keeping everyone going with made up stories and snippets from history. This weekend, he will be taking on a 10km hike in the Lake District. Well done Flynn!



IOW

We are so proud of our Isle of Wighters – children and staff, who had an amazing time on their residential school trip. The children's behaviour was outstanding (as was that of the staff!) and they embraced every new opportunity and experience. Amongst the activities they took part in included: visits to Portsmouth Historic Docks and HMS victory, Whippingham Church, Osborne House, Robin Hill Country Park, Carisbrooke Castle, Tapnell Farm and Water Park, the theatre and lots of trips to the beach. I was delighted to hear how polite and sensible the children were, and how much fun they made the week for everyone. I am extremely grateful to the staff for their generosity in giving up their own time to be responsible for the children 24/7, and for taking such good care of them.



PTFA

Thank you for supporting our Big Breakfast and Sponsored Walk today, and thank you too, to our fantastic PTFA helpers and staff. We really appreciate the kind donation of the delicious bacon from the Pack Family's Farm Butchery. Please can you return the sponsor forms and any money raised to the School Office? All children returning a sponsor form before the end of term will be given an ice pop, irrespective of whether they have been able to raise any sponsor money.

Our next big event is the Summer Do, and tickets are now on sale! This takes place on Saturday 24th June, and is always a great event for all the family – grandparents and friends are welcome along too! The event runs from 6.30 to 9.30; there will be live music, a licensed bar and a barbecue. Tickets can be purchased on the school gateway or via the office- food is included - £12 for adults and £6 for children. We hope you can join us!



Cricket Team

Congratulations to our cricket team who played extremely well at their tournament yesterday, finishing with some fantastic rainbow medals for 4th place. We are proud of them for their team work and positive attitude. Thank you to Miss Doran for taking the children, and for the Year 6 staff who have been providing a mini bus taxi service this week!



Codicote Plan

This week, our School Council spent an afternoon with a consultant to share their views for the Codicote Local Plan. They were asked some quite challenging questions, but gave excellent responses, showing how well they think outside the box, and how positive they are in approaching any issue; I was very proud of them.



Attendance

A high level of school attendance has a significant positive impact on the attainment and progress children make and in their social relationships. We appreciate the challenges people have had through the pandemic years - thankfully we have returned to the 'old normal' and children are able to be in school with coughs and colds; they only have to be off school with sickness or diarrhoea (48 hours), a high temperature or a communicable illness such as chicken pox, scarlet fever or Covid. There is a link here for other illnesses which may require treatment before children can be in school: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Whilst illness may be unavoidable, there has been a sharp increase in the number of term time holidays. Schools can only authorise absences for exceptional circumstances, which does not include holidays. Attendance is reported to the local authority who may issue a fine. This is currently £60, per child per parent if the fine is paid within 21 days of issue, or £120 if paid between 21 and 28 days. If this is not paid, parents can be prosecuted. There has been a 93% increase in fines being issued over the past year.

Opinions vary regarding taking holidays during term time. It is, however, worth noting that two missed weeks of school means 50 lessons missed, including 10 hours of learning in both Maths and English and 10 phonics lessons (Reception and KS1). Two weeks every year adds up to over a term of primary school. This is even more significant if school has been missed due to illness. The school curriculum is very fast paced, meaning lessons missed will lead to gaps in learning. It can be likened to trying to follow a film if you are going in and out of the

cinema for chunks of time; even if someone explains what has happened whilst you were out, it is harder to keep up with the plot, and not the same experience.

As required by the Department for Education, next week, I will be writing to all parents of children of statutory school age, where their child's attendance is below 95% so that they have this information available when making decisions about any planned absences. I will not be writing to parents where a significant medical condition is the cause for their absences, or to parents of children below statutory school age. Attendance certificates will be awarded this term, to mark improved attendance, or good attendance despite challenging circumstances. At the end of term, medals will be awarded for all children whose attendance rounds up to 100% for the year, and wristbands will be awarded for children who have been at school every day in the summer term.

If you need support with attendance, or have any queries regarding potential absences, please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Martin in the School Office or me, and we will be pleased to advise you. We would not wish any parent to be fined or prosecuted because they are not aware of the legalities, or to be disappointed with their child's progress because they were unaware of the impact absences can have.



School Expansion

We are continuing to make good progress with the building, and will be moving out of the mobile on Friday 16th June. Year 4 will be the first class to re-locate with the other KS2 classes following in due course. Some of the external work will be continuing, but there will be clear routes in and out of the building, including the fire escapes. The living roof is now well established and has started to flower – it looks amazing!

Mr Browne and I were on site a few days ago, and we are really pleased with the building – although we have had some delays, it is delivering exactly what we wanted it to – we can't wait to show it to you on the Open evening!

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

Yours sincerely,

Liz Pollard
HEADTEACHER