

NEWSLETTER

William Gilbert Endowed School

9th September 2005

No: 298

Dear Parents

At the beginning of this new academic year I would like to welcome all staff, parents and pupils who have returned to school after the summer vacation and wish an especially warm welcome to parents and pupils who are new to the school. It is always the school's desire to seek a happy and successful partnership with parents whilst their children attend William Gilbert and to that end we ask you not to hesitate to come in if you have any query or concern. Staff will always be willing to speak to you at the beginning or end of the day although the end of the day is preferable if you have more than a quick message, as there is more time available. Sorry, I have not been outside at the end of the day. I have been teaching this week.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

We are delighted to welcome Miss Saxby (previous information had mistakenly read 'Faxby') to cover Red class for this term, Miss Hibbert as a temporary Teaching Assistant based in Year 3 and Mrs Ollett as our new Special Needs Co-ordinator based in school on Tuesdays.

IN SERVICE TRAINING DAYS

The school will be closed to pupils on 4 occasions during this academic year in order for the staff to undertake training. The dates are:-

Monday 26 September 2005

Monday 31 October 2005

Wednesday 4 January 2006

Friday 26 May 2006

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Thank you for abiding by our school uniform and turning the children out so smartly. On the first day everyone shone from head to toe. It is always a delight to see the children in their new school shoes and uniform and with new haircuts and styles. Girls may wear their school dress and boys a white polo shirt until October half term. After half term all pupils must wear winter uniform with a white shirt and school tie.

ABESENCE

All schools are now challenged to meet an absence target which must show improvement year on year. In order to assist the school in meeting our target I need to ask parents to try as hard as possible to avoid taking holidays during school time. As absence due to ill health cannot be avoided the only way we can meet our target is for absence due to holidays to be reduced.

There are now some holiday companies offering better priced holidays during school vacations which is worth looking into.

Any absence from school does cause difficulties for staff and interrupts pupils learning and progress. Therefore it is in your child's interest to keep absence to a minimum. However, we do still understand the need for quality family time and that holidays can broaden children's educational horizons. All we ask, is that you consider your personal situation carefully and try to support us in reducing our absence level.

If your child is absent due to illness, please can you phone the school office on the 1st day of absence which should be followed by a letter upon return.

SCHOOL MENU

The menu for this term was issued yesterday. We are firmly committed in ensuring processed food is not on the menu. All our meat comes from Andrew Coates butchers on King Street and the kitchen staff are working very hard to produce burgers, pies, casseroles etc with the fresh produce. Staff will be encouraging children to try the variety of meals, vegetables and salads in order to ensure they eat sensibly. We would appreciate your support in talking about the menu with your child to also encourage them.

We will wait with interest, news of extra finance and training for Derbyshire Schools regarding school lunches.

JEWELLERY

Pupils are allowed to wear a watch from Year 2 upwards. Earrings can prove to be a health and safety risk especially in PE lessons and playtimes. Girls who have had their ears pierced during the holiday or in the future may wear a small stud earring but no hoops, until their ears are completely healed. Parents must sign a disclaimer form and provide their child with surgical tape to cover their earrings in PE lessons unless they can be removed. Pupils need to be able to apply the tape or remove their earrings themselves. After 12 weeks from the date of piercing I have been advised that holes will not close up and earrings may not then be worn during school hours. Without a completed disclaimer form girls will not be allowed to wear their earrings. The school will record dates and no exception will be made after 12 weeks unless there is a valid reason or a medical certificate is provided.

HAIR

Can all pupils with collar length hair please wear their hair tied back. If hair is so fine that it is not quite long enough to tie back please ensure a headband keeps it off their face. Last year, we had a huge problem with head lice so I urge parents to be rigorous in checking your child's hair regularly.

VOLUNTARY HELPERS IN SCHOOL

In the past the school has been extremely fortunate to have a large number of parents and friends of the school to come in and help. There is no doubt that the help and assistance given to the school is fundamental to its success and we are most anxious that it should continue. If you are willing to come in to help us then we would be delighted to hear from you.

SCHOOL TIMES

May I remind parents that the school day begins at 8.55am and pupils should be on the premises a few minutes before, ready for the bell to ring. Of course there are occasions when a problem arises and you cannot avoid being late such as road works/accidents causing hold ups, inclement weather etc. We do ask for your support in ensuring your child does arrive at school on time. Parents of pupils who are regularly late will be asked into school to discuss the problem as all late arrivals are marked on the computerised register, which is monitored by the LEA.

Equally important is the end of the day. Pupils are easily deflated, worried or upset if whoever they are expecting to meet them is not outside on time. Once again, unavoidable circumstances may cause you to be delayed and if that is the case please try and phone school with alternative arrangements or so we can inform your child and keep them safe. All pupils know if there is no one to collect them they should come back into school to their teacher and that they must not go home with anyone else's parent or minder without permission from their own parent.

The staff are trying hard to be prompt with home times, they are so often engrossed in teaching that time is forgotten. However, we do appreciate the wait outside can be tedious and tiresome especially if you have a toddler and pupils in both departments.

May I remind you that younger brothers and sisters are not allowed on the infant playground while waiting and that the grit box and school steps are dangerous and should not be played on. We would greatly appreciate your support on these matters.

INFANT GATE

The Infant gate has now been fitted with a padlock to ensure tighter security. The member of staff on duty will lock the gate at 8.55am. If you are late arriving it will be necessary to escort your child through the main entrance and down to their classroom.

CCTV SYSTEM

At the end of last term I informed you that we would be having a new telephone and CCTV system installed. Unfortunately there were problems with the chosen supplier and we have now had to negotiate a new contract. We are in the process of obtaining DfES approval and hope to have the system installed later this term.

CLUBS AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES (JUNIOR PUPILS)

I will be writing in due course with details of the clubs and after school activities that the school will be offering this year. We are also seeking parental help to run activities such as chess, drama, Kwik cricket, short tennis or any other worthwhile activity or sport a parent or parents would like to introduce.

We are aware that we have a number of talented parents so if you are willing to give your time and make the commitment to help on a regular basis we would be delighted to hear from you.

If you would like more information or would like to discuss a proposal for an activity please call in to see me.

ROAD SAFETY

With the support of Derbyshire Constabulary, the school seeks the co-operation of parents to provide the safest use of Vicarage Lane to its pupils and parents.

To do this the school urges parents who bring and fetch children by car to avoid using Vicarage Lane.

However, in the event of an emergency when it may be necessary to use Vicarage Lane it is safest and in everyone's interest to travel along Vicarage Lane in a westerly direction, from Castle Hill to Hazlewood Road.

Under no circumstances should anyone stop on the zig zag lines outside the school gate. In fact, failure to respect the zig zag lines can lead to police intervention, which may result in the prosecution of anyone committing an offence.

Since the school and Derbyshire Constabulary urged parents to avoid using their cars on Vicarage Lane there has been almost unanimous support from parents. It is to be hoped that this will continue and when everyone co-operates, your child will, of course, be that much safer.

Also, could we please ask parents to avoid parking in St Alkmund's Close as there are a number of elderly residents and the road needs to be kept clear for emergency vehicles.

The school is in the process of putting together a road safety plan in conjunction with Derbyshire County Council and when we have further information we shall be pleased to share it with parents.

HEALTH & SAFETY HOME SCHOOL CONTACT

Please enable the school to speedily make contact with you, especially in an emergency by ensuring we are updated with any changes in contact addresses and telephone numbers, including mobile numbers. It is also very important for the school to be aware and updated of any allergy or medical condition your child may have. Please find attached a form to complete if any of your details have changed.

PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEOING OF PUPILS

In order to record evidence as well as pleasure we like to take photographs of the pupils and record their work on video from time to time. Such material is kept in school and used purely for school records and evidence of progress/achievement.

We would appreciate your support in allowing us to take photographs and video concerts for example at Christmas etc. If however, you do not give your permission for your child to be photographed or videoed then you must return the reply slip attached. Non-return will be interpreted as parental approval.

INTRUMENTAL TUITION

Junior pupils who have requested music lessons will be informed this week if there are places available for them and will also receive details of instrument hire and payment from the respective teachers, all who do their own organization and timetables.

Pupils who are continuing lessons should bring their instruments as normal next week - Violins on Wednesday, Guitars & Woodwind on Thursday, Brass lessons on Friday.

HOME SCHOOL AGREEMENT

A copy of our Home-School Agreement, which we would like to invite you to sign and with older pupils discuss with them will be sent out shortly. The agreement provides mutual support and sets out clear objectives.

It is not a legally binding contract but if you wish to have a formal partnership with the school and approve of the terms of the agreement then the appropriate section should be signed and returned to your child's class teacher for safe keeping with your child's school records.

PACKED LUNCHES

Pupils who bring a packed lunch for their dinner may bring a boxed drink, plastic bottle or drink container of juice, squash or water. No fizzy drinks are allowed, neither are sweets.

SCHOOL SECURITY

We are experiencing problems with older children using the school playground for skateboarding outside of school hours and damage is being caused to school property. If you live near to the school and notice anybody on school premises at evenings or weekends could we ask that you phone the police on 01773 570100. We consider this is the only way to prevent further damage occurring.

PERSONAL NOTE

May I take the opportunity to reaffirm to all parents new and established, that all the staff and I care that your child feels happy and safe at school and are keen to ensure that each child achieves his/her full potential. "The door is always open" – please do not be afraid to approach me or any member of staff if you have any concerns or queries.

Yours sincerely

S J Whyld (Mrs)
Headteacher

✂.....

I am willing to help in Class/any class on Between I provide the following details for my criminal background check

My full name is
Address
Date of birth
Signed Date

✂.....

I am interest in helping with the Club. I am available to do this club on

Signed Print

✂.....

PHOTOGRAPHS/VIDEO RECORDING OF PUPILS

I **do not** give permission for my child to be photographed or included on a video as part of the schools evidence collection system.

Signed Print

✂.....

CHANGE OF CONTACT DETAILS

Please will you make the following changes to my child's contact details

.....
.....

Child's Name Class