



William Gilbert Endowed

(Church of England) *Voluntary Aided*

Primary School

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

NEWSLETTER

7 September 2007

No. 335

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 of the day if you have a **quick** message, however, if you need more time then the end of the day is preferable.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

We are delighted to welcome Miss Akers as a part time Teaching Assistant.

IN SERVICE TRAINING DAYS

The school will be closed to pupils on four occasions during this academic year in order for the staff to undertake training.

Friday 19th October 2007

Friday 15th February 2008

Tuesday 25th March 2008

Friday 23rd May 2008

SCHOOL DIARY

Please find enclosed a list of dates for events happening throughout the school year. There will be further additions and if any changes are necessary we will try to give you as much notice as possible. Further information about each event will be sent nearer the time.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Thank you for abiding by our school uniform and turning the children out so smartly. It is always a delight to see the children in their new school shoes and uniform and with new haircuts and styles.

School jumpers ordered before the holiday are ready for collection from the school office. Ties, book bags, order forms and full details of the school uniform are also available from the office.

ABSENCE

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.

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.

Skiing holidays during the Spring Term are very popular and cause considerable absence as well as severely disrupting pupils' learning. If you are considering applying for permission to take a skiing holiday during term time, it would be far less disruptive to your child's education and learning if this could be the week before February half term if you are absolutely unable to do February half term or the Easter vacation. This would avoid constant disruption throughout the Spring term.

Next week, I will send a separate letter detailing the rules about holidays during term time so you are informed.

Please remember holiday request forms are located outside the office and you must explain why you need to take a holiday during school time. Cheaper costs will not be accepted as a valid reason.

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

SCHOOL MENU

A copy of the menu for this term will be circulated shortly. We are firmly committed to healthy eating and meeting Governmental Standards for Nutrition and ensuring processed food is not on the menu. 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.

If your child brings a packed lunch we would appreciate your support towards our healthy eating policy and ask you not to send unhealthy foods such as chocolate, sweets, fizzy drinks, crisps etc.

COMMUNITY AT HOME TEXTEASE

Many of you purchased, through school, a textease studio disk in September 2006. Each year, in accordance with the licence, the password alters. As of the 30th September 2007 you will be prompted to enter a new password. The new password for 2007-08 is **'hurdles'**.

JEWELLERY

Pupils 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 their ears pierced may wear a small stud earring but no hoops or dangling earrings. Parents must sign a disclaimer form and provide their child with surgical tape to cover their earrings in PE. In swimming lessons they must be removed altogether. Disclaimer forms are available from the office.

HAIR & HEAD LICE

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 pupils with head lice so I urge you to be rigorous in checking your child's hair regularly. If we notice a child has head lice in their hair we will contact you and ask you to collect and keep your child away from school until they have been treated and their hair is clear.

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 pupils should not arrive at school before 8.40am and that the school day begins at 8.55am so 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 Local Authority. Persistent problems will lead to the LA issuing a fine.

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.

May I remind you that younger brothers and sisters are not allowed on the infant or junior 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 is 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 and Big Brother will be monitoring you!

CLUBS AND AFTER SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

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, netball, 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 & JUNIOR GATE

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 and park away from the school site.**

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.

The new junior gate is now in regular use. **Please exercise self discipline and park your car away from the school site so as not to endanger pupils, parents and staff who are walking to and from the gate.**

Under no circumstances should cars be using the school drive as a turning point.

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 complete the reply slip if any of your details have changed or if your details change in the future please **inform us in writing**

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 next 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 Monday 10th, Guitars & Woodwind on Thursday 13th, Brass lessons commenced this Friday 7th and the pupils have been informed.

If your child is in Key Stage 2 and wishes to learn an instrument you should contact me in writing.

SCHOOL SECURITY

In the past we have experienced problems with older children using the school playground for skateboarding outside of school hours and damage 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
Headteacher