



William Gilbert Endowed

(Church of England) *Voluntary Aided*

Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs S J Whyld



Healthy School

NEWSLETTER

12th September 2008

No. 350

Dear Parents

Despite a very wet start to the new academic year all our new pupils made a settled start to life at school and so it is timely 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 let us know if you have any query or concern.

STAFF INTRODUCTIONS

We are delighted to welcome Mrs Wilde teaching in Green Class on a temporary contract, Mrs Hare teaching in Blue Class and Mr Coates our new Caretaker.

BUILDING PROJECT

Despite the problem in the KS2 department being worse than expected the builders worked really hard throughout the holiday and just managed to finish the project in time. With new carpet, flooring and decoration and most things unpacked, the department is looking very smart.

SCHOOL UNIFORM

Thank you for abiding by our school uniform and turning the children out so smartly. 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

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.

All schools are challenged to meet an absence target, which must show improvement year on year. This is the only area in which we failed to achieve "outstanding" in our recent Ofsted inspection. In order to assist the school in meeting our target and improving in this area, 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. We will not provide work to take on holiday and parents must remember that the teachers exposition is of utmost importance.

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.

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.

SCHOOL MENU

A copy of the menu for this term is enclosed. 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. Each year, in accordance with the licence, the password alters. Very soon you will be prompted to enter a new password. The new password for 2008-09 is '**hopscotch**'.

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 their ears pierced may wear a **small, plain** 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.

READING HELPERS

Mrs Willis would welcome her regular, and any new parents who would like to offer their time, to come in and read with the infant children. Please complete the attached form indicating you can help. Reading will take place on a Tuesday and Thursday afternoon, where you would spend half an hour with each year group reading with individuals. Reception class join the reading afternoons later in the year once reading has established.

These reading sessions are in addition to a wide variety of reading opportunities that go on already in every class on a daily basis. If you wish to pair up with another mum and offer your time on alternate weeks that too would be welcomed; indicate this on the reply slip.

If you can only spare half an hour a week and would still like to support us in some way we also welcome offers to change reading books, maths games or library books under the direction of the class teacher. Any questions please direct to Mrs Willis.

SCHOOL TIMES

May I remind parents that pupils **should not** arrive at school before 8.40am and that the school day **begins at 8.55 a.m** 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 in order that they are not recorded as late which once again led to the downgrading by Ofsted in our recent inspection. 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. At the junior end of the school it is important not to stand in the gate way but to wait on the pavement opposite. Our critical incident plan requires access to be clear at all times. 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

Please see a separate sheet for details of the 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.

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 junior and infant gates.

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

INTRUMENTAL TUITION

Junior pupils who have requested music lessons will be informed 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 or have already been informed, should bring their instruments as normal this week. Violin lessons commence this Wednesday 17th, Guitar and Woodwind are on Thursdays and Brass on Fridays.

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

SCHOOL SECURITY

During the holiday we have experienced problems with older children using the school playground for football, skateboarding, eating and drinking, playing loud music and damage being caused to school property. The police have advised that should you notice anybody on the school premises at evenings or weekends that you phone them on **0845 1233333** in order that they can attend school.

FAIR PROCESSING NOTICE

We have a statutory duty to provide you with the enclosed notice, which informs you of the Data Protection Act and the information we hold on your child.

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. "My door is always open" – please do not be afraid to approach me if you have any concerns or queries.

The staff are always willing to make arrangements to meet you to discuss any issues and are most readily available at the end of the day. Pupils in KS2 all have a home/school book which can be used to correspond any messages or concerns.

Yours sincerely

S J Whyld
Headteacher

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INFANT READING

I am willing to help with Reading in the Infant Department.

* I can help on a Tuesday afternoon and/or Thursday afternoon with infant reading.

* I can help on alternative weeks with

* I am willing to help change reading books, maths games etc

* Please delete as appropriate

My full name is

Address

.....

Date of birth

Signed Date

I am willing to help in Foundation Stage / Key Stage 1 / Key Stage 2 on
between I provide the following details for my
criminal background check.

My full name is

Address

.....

Date of Birth

Signed Date

✂

I am interested in helping with the club.

I am available to do this club on

Signed Print