



Newsletter

Monday 19th January 2009

Happy New Year!

Welcome back to the start of a new term and a new year. I hope that you all had the Christmas that you wished for and have had a chance to re-charge your batteries ready for the challenges of the New Year. On behalf of the staff, I would like to thank families for the many Christmas cards and gifts that we received, 2009 will be another exciting year for our new school as we continue to grow, develop and improve. The school has started the New Year as busy as ever and all of the children have settled back into routine quickly and well.

Staff changes...

New Faces - We have two new members of the school learning support team starting over the next couple of weeks. A warm welcome to Mrs Rogers who will join the Learning Support team in the Foundation Stage classes, and congratulations to Mrs West (one of our existing lunchtime supervisors) who has now become our Forest School Learning Support Assistant. I am sure they will both quickly settle into their roles here at school.

Reading, Reading, Reading!

Following a great start to the school last year, with lots of pupil effort and family support for reading, the teachers (especially in the juniors) and I have noticed big gaps in many of the children's reading record diaries. This was especially evident in December and the resulting impact on the children's reading progress was very evident between those reading daily at home and those who were not. From this term the teachers are now keeping a daily record of the children's home reading and I have asked them to chase up reading record diaries every day. These diaries are for both children and parents to write in. The children, especially in the juniors, are expected to take increasing responsibility for their home reading and should be encouraged to record their reading for parents to check and sign each day. Parents can also make good use of their children's diary as a means of communication between home and school. Simple messages can be given and received between parents and teachers each day by using the diary.

To support wider reading we also have some great comics and magazines in school, but could still do with more! If you have any comics or suitable magazines in good condition that can be shared with others rather than thrown away please send them into school. The children can place them in the reading racks around school for others to read & return.

Environment Club

The start of the New Year is a great time to start working with the wider school community to develop and enhance our environment. With this in mind we will be holding a meeting on Tuesday 10th February in the school hall from 3.30pm to around 4pm (this meeting was previously arranged for Thursday 22nd January). The purpose of the meeting is to bring together interested parents, family members, children and staff to discuss how we can work together to really make our school grounds a wonderful place to learn and play. We would like to create several groups who would meet regularly to work together to create wonderful environmental projects in and around the school. So if you have an interest in or expertise in any of the following areas please come along and lend your support: wildlife habitats; growing fruit and vegetables; creating living sculptures, herb and sensory gardens; recycling/composting.

Wolly Hats & Lost Property.

We have a pile of children's clothes in the school office which has grown alarmingly over the past few weeks! These items are un-named and we would very much like to be able to return them to their rightful owners. We will be asking all of the children to check the lost property and if you have any missing items please pop into school and see Mrs Hare and Mrs King in the school office. Also now available from the school office are our lovely school wolly hats. These are great for keeping nice and warm in the cold weather and can be purchased for the bargain price £3.50 each.

Start of the year Bits & Bobs...

Getting to school - I would like to thank all of the families who are walking, cycling and even scooting to school each day. It not only gives the children an active start to the day but also helps to reduce congestion on the roads around the school. For those who have to come by car, thank you for your careful and considerate parking on the roads around the school and for not u-turning into and out of the drop off bay on Lyveden Road.

P.E. Kit - all children should have their P.E. kit in school throughout the week. Several children have unfortunately missed their P.E. lessons as their kit has not been in school. We engage fully with our local School Sports Partnership and have an increasing number of sport specific coaches coming into school to lead sessions with the children. As well as their normal school P.E. lessons we currently have tennis in Year 2 and Tag-Rugby across the juniors - opportunities not to be missed!

Pupil Appearance - I have noted a gradual increase in the number of children that are having to be reminded by staff of the expectations for appearance at school. Children should refrain from wearing nail varnish, jewellery and trainers to school and should be smartly dressed in their school uniform.

Morning access to school and time keeping - It is very important that all children are on time for school every day as lateness not only disrupts their start to the day but also that of the rest of the class and the learning activities planned by teachers. All children should be in their classrooms by 8.50am each morning ready to start the day. Before the school day starts is a very busy time for teachers and although the school grounds are open from 8.30am teachers are of course using this time to finish their preparations for the day ahead. If teachers are working in their classrooms the children are of course able to enter and quietly start to prepare for their day. This is also a good time for a brief word with your child's teacher. If you would like a longer discussion with a teacher please arrange a mutually convenient time to meet either later that day or on a subsequent day. Please keep in mind as well that when your child's teacher is on morning playground duty the children will not be permitted to enter their classroom as no supervision is in place. Thank you in advance for your understanding and co-operation in this matter.

Healthy schools - As part of the school's work towards achieving the National Healthy School Award we will continue to promote good health at school. The staff will monitor the children's snacks and lunchboxes to ensure that we are all eating healthily. The school will continue to provide fruit to all children for their morning snack and water throughout the day. Parents are reminded that children will not be allowed to eat sweets in school and that they are not to send their child to school with fizzy drinks or glass bottles.

The Coffee Stop - Mornings can be a bit of a rush so why not take 5 and pop into the 'Coffee Stop' for a coffee and a chat. Damien and Maggie Carr can be found in the community room (next to the main entrance) from 8.30am to 9.30am every weekday - come along, you deserve it!

Messy times - please can all children have an apron or old shirt suitable for messy activities in school as soon as possible.

Sniffles and runny noses - through the winter season our use of tissues rockets and any donations of boxes of tissues for classrooms would be greatly appreciated.

Reflectors - We have been fortunate to receive a 'road safety reflector' for each child in school from Northants 96 radio station. These can be attached to coats or book bags to make the children more visible during the dark winter mornings and evenings.

Dates for you diary.

- Friday 23rd January - County Woodwind Recital Group in school.
- Friday 23rd January - Friends Quiz Night, £5.00 per person 7.30pm start - come and join in the fun!
- Monday 9th February - Book Fair 3.30pm to 4.00pm Monday to Thursday in the school hall.
- Tuesday 10th February - Environment Club - 3.30pm in the school hall - all welcome.
- Thursday 12th February - Friends End of Term Valentine Discos - details to be confirmed.

And Finally...

Attached to this newsletter you will find the term dates for this year and the start date for the next academic year. I would ask all families to refer to these dates when booking holidays to ensure that children do not miss school during term time.

School closes for the mid-term break on **Friday 13th February at 3.30pm** and re-opens to children on **Monday 23rd February 2009 at the normal time of 8.50am.**

M.Deane-Hall - Headteacher