



Newsletter

Monday 9th February 2009

Snow, Snow, Snow!

What a week! I would like to start this newsletter with a BIG thank you to everyone for their understanding and help during the challenging weather conditions last week. Taking the decision to close the school is never easy and is only one which I make having fully assessed all of the foreseeable implications regarding the working of the school. At the heart of the decision is always the safety of both pupils and staff - it is fortunately not a regular occurrence and hopefully will not be one which faces the school again soon (at least until next winter!).

Information relating to school closures can be found on the Schools Directory section of the County Council website - <http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk/en/councilservices/educationandlearning/pages/default.aspx> - and on local radio. The forecast for the next 24 hours is not looking too promising and I would ask parents to use the radio as their first source of information as the County website has experienced difficulties in coping with demand over the past few days. With the cold snap still well and truly with us at the time of writing it seems that spring is a distant hope. However, here at school we are very much looking forward to the coming months and to enjoying the second half of our very first year.

If the school is closed on Tuesday 10th February due to bad weather we will endeavour to process the lunch orders on Wednesday 11th February. Please ensure orders arrive at the office by 9am on Wednesday.

Book Fair

The book fair, which was due to start last week, has had to be cancelled. We are currently looking to see if we can rearrange the Fair for next term - look out for more information coming home from school soon. On another book linked topic we are collecting 'Nestle Box Tops for Schools' which can now be sent into school.

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 tomorrow (Tuesday 10th February) in the school hall from 3.30pm to around 4pm. 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 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, playground games & fixed sports equipment/markings and Eco-schools.

Pupil and Parent Surveys.

Thank you to everyone who has now completed and returned their surveys - we really do value the time that parents take to reflect and to complete them. I have already started to read, analyse and digest all of the comments, ideas and general feedback which will be used to change and improve the school as we continue into our first year. The vast majority of the feedback is both helpfully constructive and positive of the work of the school in the short time that we have been open. In school we are already discussing how best to address the two main areas that are causing some parents concern: homework and getting help and advice from school on how best to support children's learning at home.

Recent Events

- **Art Club** - Mrs Brown's art club (initially for children in Year 2) started after school on Tuesday 22nd January - if any parents would like to lend a hand at the club please contact Mrs Brown at school.
- **Woodwind Recital** - The school was visited by the County Music Service Woodwind Recital Group on the morning of the 23rd January. They taught the children about their instruments and performed some great pieces which were thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.
- **Friends Quiz Night** - A great time was had by all and plans are afoot for the next social event.
- **Police Visit** - Our local Police Community Support Officer, Anita Hambly, visited our Monday assembly on the 26th January to announce the winners of the Year 5 road safety poster competition. Congratulations to Chloe Morgan and Paulina Zacher for their winning posters which are now framed and on display in the Corby town centre police station.
- **Lunchtime Story Club** - Our newest club started on Thursday 29th January with three groups enjoying

different stories with Mrs Mallision (Reception & Yr1), Mrs MacDonald (Yr 2 & 3) and me (Yr 4, 5 & 6). The club meets each Thursday lunchtime in the school library from now on - if any parents would like to come along to read with the children please contact Mrs MacDonald in school.

- **Tag-Rugby Coaching** - All of the children in Years 5 & 6 have engaged in coaching sessions with a professional rugby coach from The Northampton Saints RFC this term.
- **Year 2 Tennis Coaching** - Our Year 2 children continue to enjoy their visits and coaching sessions with our local tennis coach. The coach is now undertaking the selection and preparation of the team which will represent the school at the town wide tournament at Corby Tennis Centre next term.
- **Foundation Stage Visitors** - Our Reception children continue to enjoy their special visitors and vehicles, so far they have had visits from the police, the fire service, the postal service, a double-decker bus and Miss Bird's car! The children also enjoyed a some what shortened Pirate day on Friday.

Dates for your diary.

- **Environment Club** - Tuesday 10th February 3.30pm in the school hall - see above, all welcome.
- **Star Dome** - Friday 13th February here at school for all children in the infants.
- **End of Key Stage tests information meeting** - Wednesday 25th February 7pm for parents (current Year 6 and Year 5 children) followed at 7.40pm by residential visit information evening for children and parents (again current Year 6 and current Year 5).
- **Friends of Oakley Vale Primary School Book Fair** - Saturday 28th February.
- **Friends meeting** - Next meeting 7.30pm on Wednesday 4th March here at school - all welcome.
- **World Book Day** - We will be celebrating world book day across the school on 5th March - look out for more information coming home from school after the mid-term break - www.worldbookday.com
- **Forest Tales** - During the week commencing 30th March our infants will be enjoying special story sessions out in the woods with professional story teller Jo Blake. These sessions are part of the Corby Learning Partnership 'Year of Reading'.
- **Second Parent Consultation Evenings** - the second parents' consultation evenings this year will take place on Wednesday 1st and Thursday 2nd April 2009. At these meetings parents will be given 'mini' reports relating current pupil progress and attainment. More information about these 'mini' reports will be coming home from school next term.

And Finally...

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

Friends of Oakley Vale...

Hello all,

After the busy run up to Christmas which included the Fayre and the refreshments at the Nativity Play, this term has been much more relaxed for the Friends of Oakley Vale. We did however have an extremely successful quiz night in January and we managed to raise a fantastic £150, so thank you to everyone who came along to join in the fun.

A few more events have been planned which we wanted to bring to your attention. Firstly we have the **Book Fair** on **Saturday 28 February** from 10 - 4. We would be very grateful for any books you could donate on the Friday before (27th) and would love to see you there on the day.

We have also fixed our date for the **Summer Fayre - Saturday 4th July**. There will be more information to follow but please put the date in your diaries now and spread the word! If there is anyone who would like to get involved in the planning of the Fayre, please do not hesitate to contact us. If you do not have our contact details, please leave your details at the reception desk and we will get in touch with you.

The Friends will also be helping the school with a quirky treat for **Red Nose Day** in March. Please start collecting your coppers and 5p pieces and more information will follow. Obviously all the money raised will go towards Comic Relief. The next date for the **Friends of Oakley Vale meeting** is **Wednesday 4th March** and we would love even more people to come along. As we have a very busy second half of the school year to come we will need as many helpers as possible.

We hope you all have a relaxing half term break and look forward to seeing you at the Book Fair.

Mike Rymarz

Chair of Friends of Oakley Vale