



# Newsletter

Friday 16th October 2009

## **Africa Week**

This week we have all been enjoying our special Africa theme week. The children have really enjoyed their studies, particularly their African drumming and dancing sessions. The school is alive with the art, music and culture of Africa and we would love to be able to share with you all that the children have experienced, learnt and created over the course of the week. To this end we will be holding a celebration open event next week here at school and we hope that you will come into school to view all of the art work resulting from our special week. The school will be open to parents on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October from 3.00pm to 4.00pm - I hope to see you there.

## **Parent Consultation Evenings**

We will be holding our first parents consultation evenings for children in Years 1 to 6 during the first week of term 2 (week commencing Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> November). These meetings are essential for us to share with you how your children have settled into their new classes and what their main learning focus is for the coming months. Please complete the attached appointment request form and return it to school on Monday (19<sup>th</sup> November) to enable staff to compile their meeting schedules. You will receive notification of your appointment from class teachers next week. It is essential at this important first meeting of the new school year that we see all parents and I have instructed teachers to contact and chase up any parents who do not return the form requesting an appointment time.

## **School to home communications**

From next week we will be trialling a new communication system between school and home. The system allows us to utilise e-mail and text messaging to help us to communicate effectively with parents. We are aiming to send out a text reminder today to all parents notifying them of this newsletter. We will be using the phone numbers given to us on parental contact and emergency contact information sheets - fingers crossed!

## **Choir**

Do you enjoy singing? Miss Cockshoot needs your help! The school choir is looking for new members this term so if you are in Year 3, 4, 5 or 6 and would like to join the school choir please speak to Miss Cockshoot in school. The choir meets every week after school from 3.30pm to 4.30pm on Thursdays in the school hall.

## **Tom Bonner Soccer Schools**

With the success of Tom's Soccer School sessions this term he will be back next term - look out for letters coming home next week. There will be no Tom Bonner football next week but will begin again in November.

## **Data Collection Sheets**

At present we are updating our central records and need your help - if you have recently received a letter and data sheet please return the completed sheet to the school office on Monday. Many thanks for your help and support with this exercise, accurate data enables us to access the appropriate funding for all of our children.

## **Lunchtime Supervisors Needed!**

This term we are looking to increase our numbers of lunchtime supervisors. This is a challenging role requiring a special person who enjoys working with children but is also able to demonstrate high expectations of behaviour, conduct and manners. Hours of work will be 11.45am to 1.25pm week days during school term time. If you are interested in the position please contact Mrs Hare in the school office (461199) for further details. Adverts have been placed in the school notice boards and on the notice boards in local shops.

## **Unwelcome visitors!!**

We have some unwelcome visitors in school at the moment.....headlice.....please take time to read the accompanying leaflet and to check your child this weekend. Only with continual vigilance and by working together can we reduce cases and keep the school nit free!

## **Safeguarding**

We are currently reviewing our safeguarding procedures here at school and need your help to ensure that we are doing all we can to create a safe environment for all children, staff and visitors. Safeguarding relates to many aspects of the work of the school from recruitment and vetting of staff and volunteers to security fencing and child protection. We have identified two particular areas where we need your help and support, these are concerning parental access to the school buildings and pupil attendance and timekeeping.

As a school we have endeavoured to create a welcoming environment within the school particularly at the start of the school day. At this time parents are able to speak with class teachers from 8.40am (Reception & Year 1 classes are encouraged to come into classrooms for a short period to help with the transition into school). It is at this time when there are many parents in the school that we would like to make clear our expectations in terms of safeguarding. We have started to use the internal bell at school as a signal that the day is starting. The bell sounds at 8.50am and we would appreciate it if all parents could exit from classrooms back onto the playgrounds at this time. Any parents in the school corridors after this time can expect to be challenged by school staff as from this time in the school day all visitors would be expected to sign into the school office and be wearing a school visitor badge. We also need to make sure that it is members of staff who control entry to the school via the automatic doors in the main entrance. Parents and children should not open these doors using the push button unless authorised to do so by school staff.

The second priority is that of attendance and timekeeping - all pupil absences must be reported to school via the school office prior to 8.50am and when the child returns to school written confirmation of the reasons for absence must be presented to the school office. It is also important that children are arriving at school on time. Children are expected to be at their classroom doors by 8.50am each school day. Children who arrive after this time must report to the school office as they will have missed morning registration and will therefore be unaccounted for in school. This presents significant difficulties as the office staff will then use the electronic registers to start to make contact with families where child absence is unexplained. If children are not registered as present in school it also means that in the event of a school evacuation they could be in danger as our official records would indicate that they were not in school and therefore we would not actively look for them as part of the evacuation procedures.

I am sure that you will agree that the safeguarding of your children is of the highest priority and by assisting us on these simple matters we will all be able to do our very best to ensure that all children are safe and happy in school.

## **After school clubs**

Could all parents collecting children from after-school clubs please wait in the outside under cover area at the main entrance, not inside the main reception. Children will then be sent out to parents at the end of each session, as parents waiting inside would compromise our safeguarding procedures.

## **Attendance Letters**

I have recently been reviewing our attendance procedures and looking back at our attendance rates across the school for our first year. I am happy to report that whole school attendance for 2008-2009 was very good and together we achieved an attendance rate of over 95% for the school year - Well done to everyone, I believe we achieved the highest attendance rate for a primary school in the whole of Corby. However we will not be resting on this success and I have agreed with our Education Welfare Officer, Sue Duffy, an improved communication protocol to target and support individual children and families who are struggling with attendance.

- Letter 1: notification of poor attendance, expectation of immediate improvement.
- Letter 2: (2 weeks monitoring & no improvement) invitation to a meeting at school to discuss attendance issues.
- Letter 3: (2 weeks monitoring & no improvement) invitation to a meeting with our Education Welfare Officer.
- Letter 4: (no improvement & lack of response to letter 3) school refers case to EWO for action.

For the purposes of this protocol poor attendance will be classified as being below 95%. As of today this affects over 80 children and those families can expect to receive Letter 1 next week.

**For all those who are maintaining good attendance (over 95%) well done and keep up the good work.  
Poor attendance adversely affects children's learning, progress and their life chances.**

## Friends Dates for your Diary

### **October**

Friday 16th Family Disco (tickets available on the door - £2.50 per person 6.30-9.00pm)

### **November**

Saturday 7th Dads n lads (or ladettes) afternoon

Saturday 14th Book Fair

Friday 20th Quiz

### **December**

Saturday 5th CHRISTMAS FAIR!!!!!!!!!!!!

Saturday 12th Family Quiz

## School Photographs

Photographers will be in school on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November and letters are being sent home today to enable the school office team to make the necessary arrangements to ensure that the day goes smoothly. The organisation for 270 children plus family and sibling groups is quite a task so please complete and return the photograph slips to school by Friday next week - 23<sup>rd</sup> October.

## Can you help?

**Shoe Aid for Africa:** This year our school is taking part in Shoe Aid for Africa. Shoe Aid for Africa is a programme initiated and run by the shoe-care company Kiwi. We are asking children and their families to collect as many pairs of good-quality, second hand shoes as they can and then bring them into school and drop them in the collection box. Kiwi will then collect the shoes, sort them and distribute them to children in Africa who really need them.

We are looking for the following types of shoes:

- Sports shoes and football boots
- Children's school shoes
- Practical, everyday shoes (all adult shoes are welcome).

The shoes you donate will need to stand up to all kinds of rough and tumble, so wellies, boots or high heels aren't practical.

**Collection week will be Monday 12<sup>th</sup> to Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> October.**

## Road Safety

We are lucky to have the local police on hand this week and this year they should be making several visits each week at the start and end of the school day. They have asked that I pass on a couple of reminders to everyone regarding traffic:

- Parking in the drop off bays off Lyveden Way. These bays are solely for quick drop off of children not for parking. Cars that are parked in the bays and left while parents walk into the school playgrounds cause difficulties for other road users and compromise the safety of children crossing Lyveden Way.
- Accessing the drop off bays. The police have asked that parents only access the bays from the Lyveden Way side (not from the roundabout with Cheltenham Road). Again there were a couple of dangerous manoeuvres this week that compromised the safety of the children. If coming from the Cheltenham Road end please pass the bays and pedestrian crossing turn, at the next roundabout and return to access the bays without having to turn across the traffic. The police have now moved from warnings to enforcement and have been issuing tickets to drivers who are breaking the law.

Thank you for your help with these issues, I am sure that with your help we can make best use of the drop off bays and ensure that all of the children are as safe as possible on their journeys to and from school. It is great to see so many families walking to school and to see so many bikes in the cycle racks.

## Dates for your diary

- Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> October - African Art Celebration - open afternoon and Year 2 assembly.
- Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> & Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November - Parent consultation evenings for Year 1 to Year 6.
- Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November - school photograph day.
- Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> November - Reading information evening for parents (provisional).
- Friday 27<sup>th</sup> November - Year 6 class assembly.
- Week commencing Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December - School wide Christmas around the world week.
- Week commencing Monday 14<sup>th</sup> December - School Nativity led by Year 1 & 2.

M.Deane-Hall - Headteacher