

Dear Parents,

We have had a lovely start to the term with the children settling down well in their new classes and some exciting events already happening in school. This week, every junior class has been working with a theatre group, learning about their history topic. At one point, Year 4 were re-enacting Boudicca's last battle against the Romans: fortunately no blood was spilt!

GOODBYES AND HELLOS

This term we have said goodbye to three classroom assistants: Mrs Hamilton, Mrs King and Mrs Oliver. They have all decided to move on to pursue other career/family options; we shall miss them all and I am sure that you will wish to join with us all at school in thanking them for their hard work and commitment. We have appointed three new teaching assistants: Mrs Holme will be working with Year 3, Mrs McCallum with Year 5 and Mrs Eveleigh will be returning to Year 6, where she covered a maternity leave last year.

NEW PARENT GOVERNORS

The governors are pleased to welcome our three new parent governors: Mrs Alison Hewitt, Mrs Ruth Norman and Mrs Anne Robinson. They are on the governing body to represent the interests of all parents at the school.

MORNING ROUTINES

This is just a reminder to some parents that we like all children to make their own way on to the playground in the mornings, rather than be brought on by their parents, so please say your goodbyes on the red tarmac area and do not come and stand on the main playground. Please also do not stand on the path by the flagpole – sometimes the path is blocked by parents and pushchairs and the children find it very hard to get past.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

All parents are invited to join us for our harvest festival service at 11.00 am on Thursday, 19th October at St. John's Church. Younger brothers and sisters are welcome at the church, but we do ask that parents take them outside if they begin to get restless or noisy during the service.

COATS

Now that the weather is getting colder and wetter, please ensure that your child brings a coat to school every day. The children still go outside to play when it is chilly and even when it is raining slightly!

SAINSBURY'S SPORTS EQUIPMENT

We have just taken delivery of a huge amount of play and sports equipment from Sainsbury's, including new kit for our football team and a giant 'treasure chest' to store all our playground equipment. Thank you to all parents who collected Sainsbury's vouchers for us – and if you are a Tesco's shopper, remember that we are currently collecting their sports equipment vouchers.

AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE SURVEY

Towards the end of last term, we conducted a survey to gauge the interest in offering after school care at Dormansland. The results were as follows:

Agree Disagree

I should make regular (at least 3 days a week) use of an after school child care facility based at the school. 11 30

I feel it would be a good thing to have after school child care based at the school, even if this means fewer after school activities are available. 17 15

I am happy for my child to travel in supervised transport to a local after school child care facility. 21 20

As you can see, there was limited support for an after school child care service based at the school, with almost double the number of people being prepared for their children to travel to an alternative venue. At this stage, because of the limited potential take up, we have no plans to introduce after school child care.

However, our breakfast club continues to run each day from 8.00 am and children receive a good breakfast and child care until the start of school for £2.50 per day. No need to book – just turn up on the day.

ELIGIBILITY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS

Children whose parents receive the following support payments are entitled to free school lunches:

• Income support

• Income based job seeker's allowance

• Child tax credit, provided that their annual income is less than £14,155

If you meet these criteria, and would like your child to have school lunches, please contact the school office in confidence.

If you meet the criteria, but do not wish your child to have school lunches, please also let the office know in confidence. Collecting this information helps the school to receive extra funding from the council, which will directly benefit the children.

The information will not be passed on to anyone in such a way that any individual parent or family could be identified.

SCHOOL PHOTOS

The photographer will be coming into school to take photographs of individual children on Tuesday, 17th October. The photographer will also be taking photos of brothers and sisters together. If you have a younger child who does not attend school and would like to have them included in the photograph, please bring them together with their older brothers and sisters to the car park entrance at 8.40 am on that morning. Photographs of brothers and sisters who both attend school will be taken later in the morning.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Jane Cowley
Headteacher

REMINDERS

• The one-off payment of £6.00 for Art Week, Science Week and Friendship Day, is due to be paid before half term. Please send it in with the slip attached to the bottom of this letter. Of course, as always, if you are experiencing financial difficulties, please come and see me or Mrs Douch in confidence to discuss what help we can give you.

• If you have not already done so, please return your amended contact details to the school office.

• Please ensure that your child has a named overall in school for art and other messy sessions. Too many school uniforms are being painted at the moment!

• Our lost property mountain is growing already; please check the bin in the entrance hall for any mislaid items.