**Headteacher Update**

**Friday 13th October 2023**

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has been lovely to see you all this week for Parents’ Evenings. We know those of you with children on our SEN register found your meetings with Mrs O’Neill useful, so this is something we will continue moving forward.

**Netball Stars!**

Last week I forgot to mention how proud we were of our Netball team, who took part in an inter-school tournament at the County High School and won. We celebrated the team during our assembly on Friday – well done everyone!

**New Starters for September 2024**

We enjoyed meeting some of our prospective new starters for September on Saturday morning. The sun was shining and the children who came along thoroughly enjoyed playing in the Reception classroom and outdoor area. They especially liked Miss Danielle’s potions activity… there’s nothing like a bit of messy play!

**School Photographs**

You will have received an email to remind you that it is individual school photographs on Monday 16th October. *Please send the children into school wearing their school uniform, not PE kits*. We have cancelled PE lessons which would normally take place on Mondays (years 1, 3 and 4) so there is no need to send their kits into school separately.

If you would like to have family photographs taken with either younger or older siblings, please come along from 8am to the main entrance – photos will be taken in the school hall. Please ensure all sibling photos have been taken before the start of the school day at 8.45am.

**Christmas Dates**

We have confirmed dates for the Infant Christmas Play. We have a dress rehearsal during the afternoon of Monday 11th December for grandparents, siblings and anyone who can’t make the main event. The performance will take place on the evening of Tuesday 12th December at 6pm. These dates have been added to the list below.

We will be confirming dates for our key stage 2 carol concerts in due course, so please look out for these dates too.

**Reading Book Amnesty!**

This is a plea for everyone to look for reading books that have been sent home, but not returned to school. There will be no judgement we promise, we would just like them back! We are looking to replenish our stocks of reading books linked to our phonics scheme, but at the moment the cost to do this is approximately £2000. We simply cannot afford this, particularly when a large proportion of the books we need to order are replacements for those that have been taken home by children to read, but have not been returned.

Please can everyone have a good look at home this weekend and send back any books you find, as this would be a huge help with our budget. Thank you in advance for your support.

**OPAL – Can you help?**

We are looking for any pushchairs/ buggies that toddlers or pre-school children have out-grown, for our children to use as part of their OPAL play. Any donations will be gratefully received! We are also in need to of help from anyone who might be able to help maintain our go-carts (currently two are broken). So please get in touch if you think you can help and you can spare a little time.

**PE Kits**

Thank you to all of you who continue to support our PE uniform policy, most children have looked really smart this year and the majority are wearing plain navy/ black joggers as requested. We are more than happy for girls to wear cycling shorts, but please can we ask that these fit appropriately for school wear – we have noticed some very short shorts recently!

**Online Safety**

It is becoming increasingly difficult for parents to keep children safe online. Miss McCracken, our new subject lead for computing, will be sending out a monthly Online Safety newsletter to guide parents on the latest apps and games that children might be able to access, along with links to help parents keep a good level of control to make sure children are safe at all times.

We urge parents to monitor the messages sent and received by children*. The minimum age for use of Whatsapp is 16 years old*, and yet we have a large number of pupils who are using this as a form of communication. Please be aware that over the last two years, we have dealt with a number of bullying incidents related to messages and videos sent via Whatsapp. Whilst these incidents might take place out of school, the problems often continue during the school day.

The newsletter will be attached to this up-date once a month and the first of these has been sent to you all today. We hope you find it useful.

**Attendance**

As we near the end of this half term those children whose attendance falls below 90%, due to illness, will receive the standard letter to request medical proof of illness for future absences. We thank those parents who continue to keep us informed where there are concerns regarding regular time off school.

Those children whose attendance is below 90% due to having been on holiday will also receive letters. Please can we remind parents not to book holidays during term time as this really does have a detrimental affect on the progress children make in school.

As I said on a previous letter, we are coming into the season for coughs and colds. These are usually normal viruses that shouldn’t prevent children attending school, unless their temperatures are raised and they appear poorly.

Results for our attendance competition were close again this week. We celebrated year 4 in assembly, who all achieved 97% – well done! A representative of each class spun the wheel of fortune and won a chocolate treat which they will all enjoy this afternoon.

*Attendance for the week:*

Reception: 94%

Year 1: 97%

Year 2: 92%

Year 3: 87%

Year 4: 99%

Year 5: 95%

Year 6: 98%

*Whole school attendance for the year so far is 95%*

**Dates for your Diaries**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Event** | **Date** | **Time** | **Classes involved** |
| Photographs - individual | Monday 16th October 2023 | 8am – all morning | All year groups and pre-school siblings |
| Family lunches | 17th, 18th, 19th Occtober 2023 | 11.45am | Reception parents |
| Year 2 Class Assembly | Wednesday 25th October 2023 | 9.15am | Year 2 parents |
| Break up for half term | Friday 27th October 2023 | 3.15pm | All year groups |
| Community Fireworks Night | Monday 6th November 2023 | 5pm | School families/ local community |
| Open Afternoon for parents | Tuesday 7th November 2023 | 3.15pm | All year groups |
| Year 5 Class Assembly | Friday 17th November 2023 | 9.15am | Year 5 parents |
| Christmas Jumper Swap and coffee afternoon | Thursday 23rd November 2023 | 2.25pm | All year groups |
| Infant Play Dress Rehearsal | Monday 11th December 2023 | 1.30pm  | Reception, year 1, year 2 parents/ grandparents |
| Infant Christmas Play | Tuesday 12th December 2023 | 6pm | 2 tickets per child will be issued – Reception, year 1, year 2 parents/ guardians |

Have a lovely weekend everyone, hopefully we will see some dry weather!

Kind regards,

Mrs C Harrison and Mrs L Guy