

6 February 2009

Dear Parents

What a week of weather, and I joked last week about building a snowman...

I can only apologise for the closures. On Wednesday afternoon the forecast was that the weather would be wet and sleety, but I received a local authority update late in the afternoon that seemed to change things:

"The Met Office forecaster is holding to the advice previously given, but you should be aware that separate information provided to the Highways Agency during the course of this afternoon suggests that a fall in temperature may cause the rain to fall as snow across the County. Clearly we have to report a lower level of confidence around the earlier forecast and suggest that you monitor the situation closely over the next few hours."

After phoning staff that live in Cambridge in the early hours of Thursday to ascertain what the weather was like in the city, we made the decision to try to open. All staff that live in Cambridge made their way to school in the morning, but on arrival many had slipped, skidded, or suffered bumps and the decision was reversed at 8.20 am. I then immediately informed the Local Authority and all the radio stations, but was frustrated that our listing didn't appear until after 9 o'clock.

I hope you were not too badly inconvenienced, but appreciate that I have a duty of care towards the adults and children in the school, and that these decisions are not taken lightly or made easily.

We will re-schedule parent consultations for next Tuesday, 10 February and appointments will be at the same time as this week. If you cannot make the revised date, please contact your child's class teacher for another appointment.

On Tuesday, we had some intruders in school at the end of the school day. They found their way into school at 4:30pm and were found in classrooms later on in the evening. In light of this, we are going to have to minimise the opportunities for entrance into the school at the end of the school day, as we have at the start of the school day. The junior covered area gates and the outside doors to Years 3/4 and 5/6 will be locked at 3:30pm. The entrance for parents collecting children at the end of clubs will be through the hall fire exit door only (accessed via the infant playground); parents should then exit via the hall fire exit door or the main school entrance. Parents wishing to stay in school during clubs are most welcome and should wait in the library. Could I make a special plea that:

- Children attending after school clubs do not return to their classroom/cloakroom after the club has finished to collect any belongings. They should take all belongings to go home that day along to the club;
- The fire exit doors to Years 3/4 and 5/6 are not used to leave the school?

I hope that our recent spate of trouble comes to an end, and being proactive may at least minimise their impact. Please don't feel that we're locking you out, just keeping us all safe and sound.

Over the last few weeks, some staff have had problems parking in the school car park. For this reason, and also because we are concerned about pupils' safety, particularly at the end of the school day, we will be monitoring the volume of traffic in the car park over the next couple of weeks. Information will be passed on to the Premises Committee, who will then make a decision on the use of the car park.

Best wishes

Anna

# GOVERNOR'S COMMUNITY COMMITTEE

We've had very positive meetings, which have resulted in confirmation of our aims to be inclusive and far reaching within the Community.

We lend our school buildings for Community use to a variety of classes: The Japanese Play group, Asian boys Youth Group, Brownies, Formal Dancing, Badminton, Yoga, Asian Women's Sewing Group, Karate, Adult Singing, Saudi Student Group, Birthday Parties, Big Toy Library, and the City Council. Though we have had some difficulty in being an 'open' site, we are thrilled, when viewing the cctv footage at how many families enjoy our beautiful grounds outside of school hours.

Our Extended Schools classes are equally diverse: Breakfast Club; Healthy Eating/Cookery; Football; Disco/Modern Dance; Keep Fit; Netball; Handwriting Improvement; Times-tables Club; Storytelling; Cricket; KS2 Study/Homework Club; Strong links with Chesterton Community College, both through the Schools Sport Partnership which arranges Cricket, Football and Netball Tournaments and where various other classes are held eg swimming and break-dancing etc and the facility for after school care offered in St Luke's Church.

Within the school day, we are very fortunate in having commitment from our Church and the community with the Old and Young Club, Singing, Visiting Speakers, Drama Groups, shared worship, shared reading, involvement with pre-school group and reception. Our links with St Luke's Church also provides us with Livewires (5-11yrs) Livewires + for past pupils, Leavers' Easter and Christmas Services, Holiday Programmes, financial assistance with building programmes and help with panto and swimming costs!

We are also delighted to be able to offer our pupils experiences some have never benefited from before. The whole school panto, Day Trips to the Seaside, Links with the University Science, Engineering and Maths departments, enabling and helping us to run Science Week, Art week, Book week and R E Day. Our children visit various University departments, we enjoy training Homerton Students as well as welcoming our French Trainee Teachers. Our pupils are able to enjoy their proximity to the town, its museums and parks – all within walking distance of our school. We are grateful to the staff and volunteers who make all this possible.

Other areas where we enrich our students are the School Trips to Houghton, Kingswood and Sheringham, some involving Camping, all encouraging teamwork and their sense of community.

Our links with a Primary School in the Congo brought some inspirational support from our caring (and entrepreneurial) pupils!

Coming soon is the return of our INTERNATIONAL EVENING which is being organised by DIEP – (Nhulan's mum – yr3) Please see her with your ideas or offers of help. We hope there will be dancing, music and food from many cultures. And of course a lot of fun.

If you have an interest in starting a club, or any ideas on how we could further our links within the Community, we would love to hear them. We will be leaving a Suggestion box in the Reception Area and look forward to any queries/suggestions!

Thank you for taking the time to read our News.

Committee members: Anna Reeder (Head) Sally Haiselden (DH and link with Chesterton), Rev Philipa King and Stevie Roach (Committee Chair)

Stevie Roach : Mother of 4 former pupils and 2 present pupils (Victoria and Alexandria), School Governor for 14 years, ex teacher (business studies) and Deputy Head of Community Education (outer London); Welsh and can't break the habit! Co-carer of 1 dog, 1 cat, 1 hamster and 2 goldfish (I do the cleaning up). Deputy Chair of Governors, Link Governor, Chair of Community Committee, Scribe for Finance and Premises Committees. Firm believer in helping every child pursue their potential and enjoy learning. Firm believer in The School Community being the best place to learn about society and the importance of being part of it, however possible. Many studies have shown the correlation between happiness at school and happiness in Life! I am very proud to be a member of this caring community.

**PTA.** Last Friday's Quiz Night raised £74.46 for school funds. A big thank you to Sharon Wattley for organising the event.

**After School Clubs**

- Homework Club **for years 3/4/5/6 only**, Fridays 3:15-4:00pm, starting 27 February. Would your child like to get homework out of the way before the weekend? If so, we can offer a quiet place to work in, access to computers and adults on hand to help. If your child would like to attend, please complete the slip below and return it to the school office by 23 February. Please note that places are limited and preference will be given to years 5 and 6. The club will take place in Room 11 and the ICT Suite;
- Craft Club (to include clay work) **for years 1 and 2 only**, Wednesdays 3:15-4:00pm, starting 25 February, last session 1 April. If your child would like to attend, please complete the slip below and return it to the school office by 23 February. Please note that places are limited. The club will take place in Room 7.

**Reminders**

- **Drugs and Alcohol Community Awareness Evening**, Milton Road Primary School, Tuesday 10 February, 7:30pm;
- **Year 3/4 Residential Trip, 4 – 6 March.** There will be an information meeting for parents about the trip to Overstrand on Wednesday 11 February at 2:45pm. (Information will be sent home to parents who are unable to attend the meeting.)
- **School closed** for staff training Friday 13 February;
- **School closed** for the half-term holiday Monday 16 to Friday 20 February.

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**Homework Club**

I give permission for my child..... to join Homework Club.

I agree to make arrangements to collect my child from school at 4:00pm.

I understand that Anna Perry/Allison Done are responsible for the children's welfare during these sessions.

Information concerning your child's health that you feel the club leader needs to know about (eg asthma):

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Parent/carer name(s) and contact telephone number(s) relevant for the timing of the club:

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Signed .....

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**Craft Club**

I give permission for my child..... to join Craft Club.

I agree to make arrangements to collect my child from school at 4:00pm.

I understand that Jacky Gooding/Pat Powell/Atreyi Hore are responsible for the children's welfare during these sessions.

Information concerning your child's health that you feel the club leader needs to know about (eg asthma):

.....

Parent/carer name(s) and contact telephone number(s) relevant for the timing of the club:

.....

Signed .....

**Keeping up with the children – Literacy.** This is a free six-week course, run by Cambridge Regional College, which introduces parents to the ways in which their children are taught in the daily literacy lessons in schools, so that they can be confident in supporting them. It does this by giving parents direct experience of how the lessons work and the concepts they cover. It is not intended to mirror what is taught in a specific school, but will explain the general teaching methods and methodology used in primary schools in order for parents to best be able to support the school by helping their children consolidate what has been learnt. The course runs for a period of six, one and a half hour sessions, starting Thursday 26 February, and will be held at St Luke's School. On completion of the course parents are able to gain a nationally recognised qualification. Aims of the course:

- To give parents information about the structure, teaching methods and ethos of literacy teaching in schools;
- To improve their literacy skills, knowledge and understanding and in particular to improve their use of metalanguage, ie the technical vocabulary used in literacy;
- To increase their confidence and empower them to support their children's literacy learning.

If you are interested in attending the course, please complete the slip below and return it to the office by 23 February. Please note that the course is subject to sufficient numbers enrolling.

## Keeping Up With The Children - Literacy

A six-week course for parents who want to know more about how literacy is taught in school and how to help their children.

On: **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February**  
Time: 9.15 - 10.45  
Venue: St Luke's Primary School, Room 11

The course will run for 6 weeks, following positive feedback from parents and will help with supporting your child's progress in school. An informal opportunity for you to meet together as a group and feel more involved!

Cost: **FREE!**

Please return the slip below to the school office by 23/02/09.



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**Keeping Up With The Children**

Name: ..... Tel:.....

(please tick):

I would like to attend the course