

Grove Park Primary School



Newsletter No 16 15th January 2010

PARENTS' FORUM FEEDBACK

Thank you to those who attend the parents' forum. It is a really useful way for me to talk with parents about any issues within the school. Tamara Mehta organises an excellent agenda with questions she has gathered from all year groups and the topics are wide ranging. This week we discussed school dinner portions with Terri, our wonderful cook. Terri explained that DS Catering, our catering company, only allow her to cook an additional 10% over the actual requirement, which is to cope with the unexpected: a child who has dropped their lunch on the floor, for example. This does not allow for second helpings but Terri did take pains to describe our lunches; Wednesday was roast turkey and the children could have as many as 6 roast potatoes, vegetables and help themselves from the salad bar. Terri makes sure that the salad bar has a carbohydrate to fill up the children, with tasty pasta salads or couscous etc.

We also discussed clubs, termly projects, snow day procedures, touch-typing and handwriting. The minutes for each meeting will be emailed via ParentMail.

PARENTMAIL

ParentMail is becoming increasingly central to our communication. We will text you if your child is absent from school without explanation, so we can be sure they are safe. Texts are also used to warn you if a trip is late back or a club is cancelled, unexpectedly. The email system also keeps you up to date with news from your class teacher, from Imelda (our Parent Support Adviser) and from the school as a whole. If you still have not signed up, please come in to see Gillian in the office. The only information we share with ParentMail, via their secure website, is your name and your child's name and class (in order to be able to get the right information to the right people), your mobile and / or email address. You can sign up with just an email address or just a mobile number, it doesn't have to be both (although obviously we are limited in what information we can send by text, but it is still extremely useful in an emergency). During a school closure, when the school office is unmanned, you can receive an email and / or text in the comfort of your own home to let you know of the closure. We still put signs up on the school gates in the event of an unplanned closure, and will continue to do this, but if you are signed up to ParentMail, you don't have to come out in the cold and the snow to find out the school is shut! If you are at all unsure about how ParentMail works or about handing over your information, please feel free to look at their website, www.parentmail.co.uk, ask other parents who are signed up what they think of it, or please come and ask in the office.

PUNCTUALITY

Hopefully the dreadful weather is over and, therefore, so are the disruptions to travel. Please make sure your child is at school to **begin lessons at 8.55 am**. Every class has been dreadful recently—we had **twenty-one** children late yesterday - and teachers are becoming really frustrated that they have just explained the 'important starting points' of their lesson and then late children join them and they have to go over it all again. This loses pace for the majority of the children who have heard it all before, and if several children are late, it can happen several times!

We have also noticed that parents are taking longer to leave the playground. Having a chat is extremely important to our school community, but please do not do this near classrooms, either in or outside, as it disturbs the children. **We lock the school gates at 9.00am**, although we have been a little lenient during the difficult travelling conditions!

Friday Coffee Mornings

Thank you to Jules, who came to show us how to keep ours and our children's teeth healthy. It was an interesting and useful talk. We hope to provide lots of these informal talks on different subjects every week just after assembly, which is at 9.00am. I am sure you will be pleased to see that she has agreed to a return visit on 15th January, and I know she would value your support in attending this. Other coffee mornings will include:

Friday, 29th January: Imelda's drop in and chat

Friday, 5th February: Learning to Read

Come and hear *Kate Upsher* talk on *phonics* and how our youngest children learn to read. *A free book for all who attend* and lots of practical ideas which are part of our Power of Reading half term project next term.

Tuesday, 9th February: Learning Through Play

A return of our successful workshop with ideas for games and *free resources*

Friday, 12th February: Older Readers

As a finale to our reading project, *Victoria Retallack* and *Marion Lee* will share books and top tips to get the older children reading with enthusiasm. How do you develop comprehension and what *IS* reading with inference and deduction? *Free book to all who attend.*

PTA NEWS

Hello and Happy New Year to everyone from the PTA!

This year, the events in the PTA calendar so far include the Valentine's Disco in February, The Grove Park Football tournament in May, the regular bi-weekly cake sales and of course the Summer Fair towards the end of June.

We would ideally like to have one or more other fund raising events, so this is a request to get your thinking caps on!

How do people feel about another quiz night? Or bingo?

If you have any fund raising ideas that you'd like to discuss, then feel free to catch me in the playground (I have children in Nursery and Year 2) or email me (clare@whitelabeluk.com) or call me 07973 300307. Remember, no idea is a bad idea!

The Friends of the PTA are meeting on Monday 18th January at 8.30pm - if you would like to come along, give me a buzz (Clare - 07973 300307) and I will let you know where the meeting is.

NESTLE CEREAL BOXTOPS

Please collect the tokens from Nestle cereals and bring them to our foyer. There is a box waiting for them. They are a great way of getting more books for the school. Thank you.

Holiday Dates

Please remember that the rules about term time holidays are being tightened and that children will only be allowed a total of 10 such days in their entire school life! There has been an assumption that this was *every year*. Make a note of the dates in your diary now so that you can be sure not to take holidays during school time. Thank you.

TERM DATES 2009 - 2010	
SPRING TERM 2010	
TERM DATES	Monday, 4 th January 2010 - Thursday, 1 st April 2010
HALF TERM	Monday, 15 th February - Friday, 19 th February
* Inset Day	Friday, 22 nd January 2010
SUMMER TERM 2010	
TERM DATES	Monday, 19 th April 2010 - Thursday, 22 nd July 2010
HALF TERM	Monday, 31 st May 2010 - Friday, 4 th June 2010
* Inset Day	Monday, 7 th June 2010
* Bank Holiday	Monday, 3 rd May 2010

TERM DATES 2010 - 2011	
AUTUMN TERM 2010	
TERM DATES	Thursday, 2 nd September 2010 - Friday, 17 th December 2010
HALF TERM	Monday, 25 th October 2010 - 29 th October 2010
* Inset Day	Wednesday, 1 st September 2010
* Inset Day	Monday, 1 st November 2010
* Occasional Day	Friday, 3 rd December 2010
SPRING TERM 2011	
TERM DATES	Wednesday, 5 th January 2011 - Friday, 8 th April 2011
HALF TERM	Monday, 21 st February 2011 - Friday, 25 th February 2011
* Inset Day	Tuesday, 4 th January 2011
SUMMER TERM 2011	
TERM DATES	Tuesday, 26 th April 2011 - Friday, 22 nd July 2011
HALF TERM	Monday, 30 th May 2011 - Friday, 3 rd June 2011
* Inset Day	Monday, 6 th June 2011
* Bank Holiday	Monday, 30 th May 2011

