

Ridgmont Lower School

PARENT NEWSLETTER NUMBER 5

Summer term 7th June 2010

Welcome back to school for the final half term of this academic year. I hope you all had a lovely half term holiday.

Mrs White:

Congratulations to Mrs White who has secured a promotion to a new post as a senior teacher in a Bedfordshire Lower School. Mrs White has done so much for Ridgmont School in the 4 years since she took up her post here and we will all miss her dedication and enthusiasm for teaching and learning. She led the foundation stage class for three years during which time she had a very positive OFSTED inspection. She has been instrumental in ensuring that the school has had a high profile in the Vandyke School Sports Partnership which contributed to us receiving annual awards for high achievement in the delivery of PE and extra curricular activities. I wish her luck as she pursues her aim of becoming a headteacher.

One-to-one tuition funding:

Three year 3 children have just begun the first round of one-to-one tuition sessions which are government funded. There are 10 one hour sessions which take place after the school day and the tutor is Mrs Hopper, a former deputy headteacher and maths specialist teacher. I hope that this funding carries forward to next year and I will be in touch with parents regarding the pupils chosen for the next round as soon as possible.

Additional hours for 3 year olds:

The introduction of funded part time nursery places at Ridgmont Lower School has been very successful and popular with parents. As some of you will be aware, last year I increased the hours from 9 - 11:30 to 9 - 12:00. However, an increasing number of parents chose to defer their child's start date until they are full time at 4 years old, because of work commitments or the fact that their child already has a full time nursery place elsewhere.

At this weeks governors meeting we will be discussing the option of offering additional hours for our 3 year olds to meet the needs of families. (At a child care rate of £3. 60 per hour.)

The proposal is to run a separate nursery session in the afternoon, thus ensuring:

- That the curriculum for our older children in reception class is not compromised.
- That the offer should be flexible in order to meet the individual families needs.

- That bookings within the flexible offer should be regular (i.e. a pre specified number per week.)

The last point is very important in terms of ensuring that quality staffing can be maintained and that planning and resourcing activities for the children is of the high standard you would expect from us.

It would be very useful to have parental comment on this proposal so that the governors and I can gauge the interest and possible uptake of this offer. (Please complete slip below)

Young Writers Competition:

Well done to all the year 4 children who entered the Young Writers competition earlier in the term. Their winning entries will be published shortly. We are still waiting for the results of the poetry competition. Thank you, Mrs White for organising both of these events for the children.

School summer trip:

A very big thank you to the PTA who have again agreed to subsidise the summer trip this year, thus enabling the school to keep the cost to parents at an affordable £10.00. As you will appreciate the cost of coach travel is very expensive. This year the PTA contribution is £6.75 per pupil. Thank you again PTA the summer trip is always such a brilliant experience for the children and it would be sad not to continue because of increasing costs. (see separate letter for more details.)

K'NEX challenge:

Well done to Kade, Nathan, Ben and Mason for qualifying for the regional final of the K'NEX challenge which was held at the Bunyan Centre on 27th May. They worked really hard and the competition was tough as 120 lower and middle school pupils designed and built their structures. St Georges at Toddington were the winning team, well done!

Church fete:

If you have not already done so please send in your reply for dancing at the church fete, it would be such a shame if we were unable to take part this year because not enough children were available to dance.

School Lunch:

The next visitor's lunch will be on Wednesday 14th July. Remember to book as soon as possible if you would like to join the children and staff for lunch. (see attached order form.)

You will have received a flyer from Eden food services offering a packed lunch service. Please note that children who are entitled to free school meals can also have a free packed lunch should they require one. You will need to inform us which sandwich filling and which dessert choice your child would like to order each day.

Football tournament:

The children who have joined football club will be attending the Swallowfield football tournament on Friday 11th June. Good luck!

Thanks to parents:

Thank you to all the parents who have helped the teachers and children this year. It is lovely to have so many willing helpers to support: swimming, gardening, cooking, reading and all the other things you do. If you would like to support in school please come and see me.

Ridgmont Bank:

I am still looking for a parent volunteer to help Mrs Dimery to run the school bank. Please let me know if you can spare half an hour a week to help.

Additional funding:

Families who are on low incomes / or are in receipt of benefits (see list below) can apply to Central Bedfordshire Council to pay for computer access at home. I can give you the forms if you think you qualify for this entitlement.

The school has also received funding to support parents in ensuring that their children can access extra curricular activities which they may not otherwise be able to afford. This includes our lunchtime football club and holiday sports and club activities which are organised outside the school day.

Please come and see me if you want to know more details or if you think you would like to take advantage of this offer.

The funding will be withdrawn if we don't use it!

Free School Meals / home access / additional funding:

In these difficult financial times I thought it would be helpful to remind you that

Parents do not have to pay for school lunches, can access activity funding / can apply for a computer at home if they receive any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the Guarantee element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit, provided they are not entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual income (as assessed by HM Revenue & Customs) that does not exceed £16,040
- Working Tax Credit during the four-week period immediately after their employment finishes or after they start to work less than 16 hours per week.

This entitlement is treated in confidence. The application forms are available from the school office or on line. The school governors have a policy that parents whose children qualify for this entitlement are not required to make any contributions to trips or activities as these costs are met by the additional funding the school receives in regard to FSM (free school meals.) If you think you may be eligible please do apply as the savings to you and your family can be considerable.

Diary Dates for your information:

Mondays	School Saving Scheme 8:30 to 9:00. back group room
Friday 11 th June	Swallowfield football tournament
Tuesday 15 th June	Year 4 to visit Fulbrook all day
Thursday 17 th June	Multi sports festival - class 2 & 3
Saturday 19 th June	PTA summer fair
Saturday 26 th June	Dancing at Church fete / children's art work competition
Tuesday 29 th June	Yr4 Maths afternoon Fulbrook
Wednesday 30 th June	Kwik cricket (more details later)
Thursday 1 st July	Woburn estates countryside day Class 3
Wednesday 7 th July	Transfer day YR4 Fulbrook. New classes in the morning Class 1 Special activity am
Thursday 8 th July	New parents open morning YR4 BBQ with other feeder schools
Tuesday 13 th July	School Trip (full time children) Wicksteed Park
Wednesday 14 th July	Visitor's open lunch
Thursday 15 th July	Magic show
Friday 16 th July	Whole school open morning, café, singing and dancing display, Come for breakfast!
Monday 19 th July	Sports day am aqua splash pm (reserve date 20 th if wet)
Wednesday 21 st July	Finish school Leavers assembly PM

NB Fulbrook Middle School and its feeder schools have agreed the additional inset day allocated for this year as Tuesday 2nd November 2010

Additional hours for 3 year olds.

I agree in principle to the additional offer of extended sessions for 3 year olds.
YES NO (please circle response)

(Parents of 3 year olds / younger children on the admissions register)
I would use some or all the additional sessions on offer. SOME ALL

Signed.....

Date.....

.....

Family and friends lunch
Wednesday 14th July at 12.00

I would like to join the children at Ridgmont Lower School for lunch on
Wednesday 14th July.

1st Name.....

2nd Name

I enclose £3.00 per person (adult) Total..... cash / cheque *
(payable to Ridgmont Lower School)

*delete as required

Signed.....

Date.....