

# Ridgmont Lower School

## PARENT NEWS LETTER NUMBER 4 Summer term 20th April 2010

Welcome back to school for the summer term. I hope you all had a lovely Easter holiday.

### **Ridgmont Bank:**

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

### **Visitors School Lunch:**

Ten parents and family members joined the children for lunch on the last Wednesday of term. The next visitor's lunch will be on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> July. Remember to book as soon as possible if you would like to join the children and staff for lunch.

### **Faith Tour:**

For those of you who have not yet returned the permission slips and voluntary contributions please can we have them back by Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> April. Thank you.

### **Morning Procedure.**

I feel that I need to clarify a concern a parent from class 1 raised with me at the end of term. When we have our open morning for new parents I always stress how important it is for new children and their parents to feel welcome, safe and secure. Parting from mum, dad or carers can be a very difficult time for all concerned. Each and every family have concerns and worries about how their children settle into school. Through experience we have found that the process of parting can be a more positive experience for all children when we follow the procedure of lining up with them and in the case of class 1 children hold their hand and walk with them to the classroom door, then hand them over to the teaching and support staff who are waiting to greet them. It is lovely to see that very soon your children become confident in finding their own peg, hanging up their own coat and putting their belongings in the right place. These are all such important aspects of learning independence and self management skills. They are also key skills which are assessed as part of their early learning goals.

In the past we have telephoned parents after they have left their children to assure them that they have settled as soon as they have left them. In one case we organised a different start and finish time for a child who found the whole parting issue really difficult.

I ensure that all staff are on the playground first thing in the morning so that any messages or concerns can be shared with staff before the children come into school. This allows the teaching and support staff to concentrate on the children as they come into the classroom rather than being engaged with grown ups.

Lots of children find it very daunting to have so many grown ups in the cloak room and even though they have settled into routines very well, begin to want their parents to come in and sort out their belongings too. As the children are very young when they start with us we are well aware that this is sometimes the first time they have been left. We are also aware that they are all special little people with different experiences and needs. How you are feeling is important to us too, but making a plan with staff to encourage all children to establish routines early helps all of the children in the class and, as I have said, ensures that the staff can concentrate all their energy and attention on the children. I do hope that this explanation helps to clarify why we do things in a particular way for the wellbeing of all our children. Parent helpers are always most welcome at Ridgmont Lower School and the children and staff really enjoy having your support and help in the classroom.

### **Clubs:**

Gardening club re-starts this Thursday; football letters went out at the end of term if any other children want to join the club this runs on Monday lunchtimes.

### **Parent Governor Election:**

Nomination forms for a parent governor are attached. I would urge you to consider taking on this important role. It is vitally important that Ridgmont Lower has a strong and dedicated governing body to support the school in all areas of education and development planning. If you would like to know more about what the role involves, before committing yourself please come and have a chat to me or talk to Bernie Ryan the chair of governors.

### **Free School Meals:**

In these difficult financial times I thought it would be helpful to remind you that Parents do not have to pay for school lunches 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.

**See next page for diary dates.**

### New Diary Dates for your information:

Mondays	School Saving Scheme 8:30 to 9:00. back group room
Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> April	K'NEX challenge work shop Class 2
Tuesday 27 <sup>th</sup> April	RE Faith Tour Trip Bedford Class 2
Thursday 29 <sup>th</sup> April	Mr Cardwell from Fulbrook assembly
Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	Bank holiday school closed
Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> May	Dr Barnardos whole School assembly
Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> May	<b>Confirmed.</b> school closure due to Polling Station
Monday 24 <sup>th</sup> May	Mrs Clancy and Fulbrook Yr 5 to lead assembly and spend time with Yr 4 as part of the transition project
Friday 28 <sup>th</sup> May	Bedfordshire Music strings section to perform to whole school
	School closes for Half term
Tuesday 15 <sup>th</sup> June	Year 4 to visit Fulbrook all day
Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> June	Multi sports festival (more details later)
Saturday 19 <sup>th</sup> June	PTA summer fair
Tuesday 29 <sup>th</sup> June	Yr4 Maths afternoon Fulbrook
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> June	Kwik cricket (more details later)
Wednesday 7 <sup>th</sup> July	Transfer day YR4 Fulbrook. New classes in the morning Class 1 Special activity am
Thursday 8 <sup>th</sup> July	New parents open morning YR4 BBQ with other feeder schools
Tuesday 13 <sup>th</sup> July	School Trip (full time children)
Wednesday 14 <sup>th</sup> July	Visitor's open lunch
Thursday 15 <sup>th</sup> July	Magic show
Friday 16 <sup>th</sup> July	Whole school open morning, café, singing and dancing display
Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> July	Sports day am aqua splash pm (reserve date 20 <sup>th</sup> if wet)
Wednesday 21 <sup>st</sup> July	Finish school Leavers assembly PM

All letters and return forms can be downloaded from the school's website at  
[www.ridgmont-lower.org.uk](http://www.ridgmont-lower.org.uk)