

# Ridgmont Lower School

## General Information

### Newsletters

Regular newsletters are sent to parents to keep them informed of school news and events. They are also published on the school website.

### School Dinners

School dinners are brought in to the school from a local school kitchen. If you wish your child to have a school dinner please check at the school office for current charges.

Dinner money can be paid weekly or half termly. Payment can be made by cheque or cash, though cheques are preferred and these should be made payable to Eden Foodservice.

### Packed Lunches

Children can bring a packed lunch to school but glass containers and cans of drink are not allowed in school. Please do not put sweets/bars of chocolate in packed lunches. Please encourage your child to bring healthy food into school.

### Healthy Snacks and Tuck Shop

Ridgmont Lower School works hard to promote the Bedfordshire Healthy Schools Scheme.

The school regularly runs a healthy tuck shop for the children. They can bring 50p to purchase a drink and snacks from a buffet bar.

The school also participates in the School Fruit and Vegetable Scheme, where fresh fruit and vegetables are delivered to the school for the children to enjoy during the day.

Children may bring their own fruit/cereal bar for playtime if they wish. Milk is served to the children in Class 1.

### Water Bottles

Parents are given a free water bottle from the school when their child joins us. The bottle should be brought to school each day and taken home daily to ensure that it is fresh. Bottles can be purchased from the School Office. The current cost is £1.30.

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## **Car Parking**

The school car park is not available for parental use at any time during the school day. We ask parents to respect the needs of the local residents when parking and also to park away from the school gates to avoid obstructing the bus.

## **Security**

In an effort to maintain a high level of security parents and visitors must enter the school via the School Office, located in the old school house.

All visitors to school should sign in the visitors' book and should wear a visitor's badge

## **Consultation Evenings**

Meetings are arranged for you to discuss your child's progress with staff in the autumn and spring terms. In the summer term there is an open afternoon when you can visit the school and see the working environment.

At the end of the school year a written report is sent to all parents informing them of the progress their child has made over the year.

However, should the need arise for a quick conversation, teaching staff are always available first thing in the morning and after school in the afternoon. Should you need a longer discussion, please contact Mrs Dimery to arrange an appointment.

## **Arrival at School**

Staff cannot be responsible for any child arriving on the playground before 8.50 a.m.

A member of staff will be on the playground from 8.50 a.m. and the children will enter school at 9.00 a.m. Children should not enter school before this time unless it is raining, very cold or they are part of our Early Birds club.

In an effort to develop independence in our pupils we ask that parents do not accompany the children into school. Please try to encourage your child to carry and sort their belongings both at the beginning and the end of the day.

## **Hometime**

Please wait at the exits for the children to be dismissed so that teachers can ensure that every child has been handed over safely.

If there are any changes to your regular routine, or you are going to be delayed or someone else will be picking up your child, please advise the school as soon as possible.

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## **Attendance and Messages**

Regular, punctual, attendance is important to ensure that children make best progress.

If you know dates of dentist, medical appointments, etc, please let the school know as soon as possible. Please try to arrange these outside school hours if at all possible. If your child is poorly please telephone the school before 9.15 a.m. on the morning of their absence to let us know why they are not in school. You are welcome to leave a message on the school answerphone before the school opens and if you do this there is no need to confirm it in writing. A member of staff will record the message and pass it to your child's class teacher. If you have to bring a sibling into school then please pop into Mrs Dimery's office to let her know your other child is poorly.

The register is taken promptly at 9 a.m. and 1.15 p.m. and pupils who arrive late should go to the office.

Absences are recorded at the end of each term and reported to Bedfordshire County Council. They are also reported at the end of the academic year on the school report to parents.

## **Medicines/First Aid**

Sometimes a child is fit to return to school but still requires medication. On these occasions the medicine should be taken to the school office and an indemnity form completed. Medicines cannot be administered without a signed indemnity form. With the exception of children going straight from school to either Swallowbrook or Fordfield, medicine should be given to children before school, immediately they get home and at bedtime - thus avoiding them having to be administered at school. This follows Bedfordshire County Council guidelines.

If your child has suffered vomiting or diarrhoea they must not return to school for at least 48 hours after the last attack.

Pupils with asthma may need to have access to their inhaler at all times. If so, please let your child's teacher know so that an arrangement can be made for this.

We currently have five qualified First Aiders in school and all staff are Epipen trained.

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## Absences

Absences from school, other than those caused by illness, can only be granted under exceptional circumstances. All absences must be accounted for. Frequent and unexplained absences or lateness are reported to the Education Welfare Officer to follow up. We ask that you ring the school before 9:15 a.m. if your child is going to be absent that day. The school has an answer phone service for your convenience.

## Holidays

The school discourages children taking holidays in term time. The importance of avoiding absences during term time cannot be over emphasised. Children miss the introduction to topics at the beginning of new term, they miss assessment activities towards the end of term and all the learning opportunities and the time to develop the skills which happen throughout the term. There is also the possibility that friendship groupings may suffer and additional curriculum activities may be missed.

**Guidance from the Department for Children, Schools and Families and Central Bedfordshire Council** advises that unless exceptional circumstances are identified then term time holidays should not be authorised.

Exceptional circumstances are defined as:

'For service personnel and other employees prevented from taking holidays outside term time if the holiday will have a minimal disruption to the pupil's education'; and when a family needs to spend more time together to support each other after a crisis'.

The Education Regulations 2006 expect schools not to authorise holiday because of:

- Availability of cheap holidays
- Availability of desired accommodation
- Poor weather experienced in school holidays
- Overlap with the beginning or the end of term

The law says that parents/ carers do not have a legal right to take their child out of school for holidays during term time. You must provide additional information outlining why the holiday must be in term time before the application can be considered (six weeks before holiday)

All holidays taken without prior consultation or school authorisation will be recorded as unauthorised.

All leave can only be authorised by the Headteacher. Request forms can be obtained from the school office. The school may ask for evidence to support any application.

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## Personal Records and Information

When your child starts school you will complete an admission form. We will formally ask you to update this information annually, but please keep us informed of any change during the year e.g. daytime telephone numbers. It is very important that the school office is kept up to date with personal information.

## Equipment

Details of school uniform are attached. In addition parents are asked to provide the following items for use in school:-

### Physical Education (in a named P.E.bag)

- plimsolls and/or trainers
- royal blue shorts
- white t-shirt
- blue track suit bottoms (optional)
- Change of white socks

Pupils should bring their P.E. kit to school on the first day of each half term and will be returned for washing on the last day of the half term.

At Ridgmont we adhere to the county policy which states that pupils should not wear any jewellery during P.E. lessons. Staff cannot be responsible for loss of jewellery or injury caused from wearing jewellery to school at any time and we would therefore advise that no jewellery should be worn to school.

Pupils who have pierced ears must remove them before P.E.

### **Swimming (Class 3)**

- Swimming costume (one-piece / fitted swimming trunks)
- Towel
- Named swimming bag