

Wiveliscombe News



20 January 2017

Welcome back everyone. Hope you all had a great Christmas and wish you a Happy New Year!

Achievement Certificates – Roll Call of Honour

Arthur Irvine, Ben Pursey, Logan Schofield, James Lonsdale-Eccles, Ben North, Freya Whiting, Oscar Horn, Charlotte Mills, Corey Garrity, George Cowley, Mark Sattler, Faye Salmine, Nathan Cook, Kean Hannaford, George Perry, Otto Lawrey, Aerin Duffy, Harry Coward, Neve Leigh-Firbank, Diego Reis Da Silva, Elizabeth Beale, Ella Holmes, Mollie Fox, Cassia Knight, Oliver Tilley, Beech Class

Future Dates for your Diary:

- **1 February** – KS2 – Chitty Chitty Bang Bang, Bristol Hippodrome
- **6 February (3.30pm – 4.30pm)** – Year 6 SATS Information Meeting for Parents, Willow Classroom
- **7 February** – Year 4 PE Festival, Blackbrook Pavillion, Taunton
- **10 February** – last day of term
- **13 – 17 Feb – Half Term**

- **20 February** - Return to School
- **14 & 15 March** – Parents' Evenings
- **31 March** – last day of term
- **3 – 17 April** – Easter Holidays

Parents' Evenings this term

This term we are planning Parents' Evenings for Tuesday 14 and Wednesday 15 March - please put those dates in your diary. You will be able to book a slot nearer to the time. As ever, if you have anything you would like to discuss now with your child's teacher don't feel you have to wait for two months until mid-March! Either catch the teacher at the end of the day for a quick chat, or make an appointment for a longer meeting. As Mrs Ker leaves us to go on maternity leave at half term we are currently considering having her Parents' Evenings before she goes – we will let you know the date of that when it's been decided.

Holiday Leave

It's been made very clear to us by our Education Welfare Officer that schools should NOT be authorising holidays during term time. Please, therefore, do not be offended if you put in a Term Time Absence Request Form for holiday leave and it is returned as being unauthorised. What might happen next? From the school's point of view - as focused as we are on education - we would ideally want all holidays to be booked outside of term time. If the holiday is taken during term time then as long as your child's attendance generally is above 90% there shouldn't be any further action. If your child's attendance is already less than 90% (which means that on average they've missed more than a day of school a fortnight) then it's likely that a warning letter would need to be issued. We hope that you understand why we want children to be in school as much as is possible during term time.

Late Arrivals (after 8.45am) - Reminder



If your child arrives late to school (after morning registration at 8.45am) please ensure you/your child records their name and time of arrival in the red book at Reception. This is extremely important so we know exactly who is in school for Health and Safety reasons.

If we needed to evacuate the School in the event of an emergency we may not have any record of your child being on the premises if they were not in class for registration and not signed in the red book and recorded their time of arrival!

We understand that school mornings can be hectic but would like to ask parents to make every effort to get their child/children to school in time for registration. School opens at 8.35am and registers are taken at 8.45am. Children arriving late can be disruptive to the class and teacher, and is not a good start to the individual's day.

Please be aware - If your child arrives 30 minutes (9.15am onwards) after the register has been taken), they will be recorded as an "unauthorised" late mark. This will affect your child's overall attendance record.

Absence

Please remember to phone the school after 8.30am (but before 9.25am) if your child will not be here for registration and you have not already notified the teacher or the school office. This is particularly important if your child has a medical or dental appointment and may be arriving at school late.



If your child is poorly and will be absent from school, it is a **legal requirement** that you inform the school of your child's absence as soon as possible. If you do not notify the school of your child's absence, it will be recorded as "unauthorised" which will affect their attendance data.

Please let the Office know your child is going to be absent from school by 9.25am together with the reason for absence. This avoids us having to telephone you.

Millennium Catering

Most of you may not have heard that just before Christmas Millennium Catering announced that it would be winding up its business at the end of March as the owners go into retirement. This gives the schools who currently rely on Millennium to provide their lunches very little



time, and because of that it limits the options available to those schools in the short to medium term. However, the good news is that we are hoping to collaborate with some of our other Tone Valley Partnership Charter schools to maintain the hot meal provision. Ultimately over time it is hoped that the standard and quality of the meals served will be improved by re-investing any profit made, and by responding to the views of children and parents. More news on this as it comes.

Zebra Crossing

We received a letter at the start of the term from Somerset Highways saying that they are consulting



over plans to put a zebra crossing outside the school. I am sure most of us would be in support of this as it would make crossing much safer throughout the day, not just when there's our crossing patrol, and would also make the crossing safer even when there is a patrol (there have been several near misses over the last few years). It would also involve some double yellow lines that would improve visibility for pedestrians and for motorists as they approach the crossing. I know that there will be those that therefore argue that improving pedestrian safety will make parking more difficult for motorists: that appears to be the opinion of some on the local council. Perhaps a degree of inconvenience is the price to be paid for reducing the risk of a life-changing or fatal injury – I think that most of us would want the zebra crossing. Use the following link to see a copy of the plan:

<http://www.somerset.gov.uk/policies-and-plans/schemes-and-initiatives/small-improvement-schemes/?entryid114=119891>

If you would like to vocalise your support for the scheme please contact the Town Council using this email address parishclerk@wiveliscombe.com (with a copy to Steve Ross Clr.S.Ross@tauntondeane.gov.uk) and Somerset's Principal Programme Implementation Officer, Steve Lawrence, slawrence@somerset.gov.uk before February 3rd.

E.Safety



It has been brought to our attention that some of our pupils in Years 4,5 and 6 are using an app at home called 'Musically' where children and adults post 15 second music videos of themselves, lip syncing to a favourite song and people can comment on it. This app is a social media platform, and on investigation we noticed in the terms and conditions that the age limit for this app is strictly 13 and above because of the sexually explicit lyrics, and in some cases videos that can be accessed by everyone. If you would like to view other parents' opinions on this app please click the link below.

<https://www.common sense media.org/app-reviews/musically-your-music-video-community#>

Our advice to all parents would be to monitor very carefully what children are doing on the internet, and to investigate and understand what apps they are using, particularly those involve any element of social media. Children might well say that most of their school friends use something, but that doesn't make it safe.

Bad Weather Procedure



In the event of bad weather the school will make decision on whether the school will be closed by 8am on each morning and a message posted on our website www.wiveliscombprimary.org.uk. The school phones will be answered from 8.30am.

Please refer to the attached 'Bad Weather Procedure' for more information and keep somewhere safe for future reference.

Toys in School

Please can we remind parents and children that toys aren't allowed in school. Recently, lots of toys have been brought into school and are becoming a distraction as well as becoming lost or damaged. Any toys that are seen in school, will be put in a safe place and returned to parents at the end of the day.



American Football club



American Football club with Mr Phillips is no longer running after-school on a Thursday. This does not affect any other clubs run by the school or Primary Sports.

After February half-term, Multi-sports Club will be back on a Thursday for children in Reception, Year 1, Year 2 and Year 3. The club will begin straight after school and finish at 4.15pm. The cost is £2.50 per child per session. To reserve a place in this club, please email Mr Phillips on russell@primary-sports.co.uk

Young Leader's Club – Clarification of Club



This is a sports and active club for KS1 ran by the Year 6 children. The Year 6 leaders will run a variety of sports and active session on the school field. If any children are interested there will be letters for all the KS1 classes with the class teachers. Any Year 6 leaders interested please collect a letter from Mr Deeks or Mrs Fry.

Summer Swimming

It may seem like a long way off but we are already beginning to think about our school swimming this summer. Following staff swim training last year, we have rethought our adult to child ratios and want to have many more adults both poolside and in the water this year to enhance our teaching. As always, we will need parents to support us with this and so, if you think you will be keen and able to help us out this year, please ensure you have DBS clearance or your previous DBS is up to date, as only adults with this clearance are able to help. If you are unsure if your DBS is still current/when it expires, speak to a member of the office. Thank you for your continued support.



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Governors' Corner

During the Spring Term the School sets the budget for the next year. As Governors, we have to ensure the school spends its money wisely and it is becoming increasingly more difficult for all schools to balance their books. Whilst school budgets have not been cut, they have been frozen in real terms, and while costs will go up this will put pressure on all schools. A campaign has been launched to raise awareness of the effect that increasing costs will have on school budgets. Please have a look at <http://www.schoolcuts.org.uk> where you can put in our postcode – TA4 2LA - and see the impact that the new funding arrangements will have on our school. You will also be able to see the impact on Kingsmead. These effective cuts are very worrying for our community so please voice your support to overturn this funding policy by signing the online petition, and writing to or emailing our local MP, Rebecca Pow (House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA, email: rebecca.pow.mp@parliament.uk).

We will of course keep you informed of the challenges we face and we will work hard to minimise the impact but the reality is that all schools will need to be more and more imaginative in managing their resources and schools will be faced with difficult decisions to make.

We strongly believe that schools will survive and become better equipped to manage their resource by creating stronger school communities. We already have a great PTFA whose role in fund raising will become even more important for our children. We are also exploring how we can involve parents to help us find the solutions to drive the school forward. We are considering setting up a solutions-focused Parent Group to help channel and improve communication within the parent network and generate productive ideas to help our school and our children. If anyone has any thoughts on how this could be set up or would be interested in getting involved, please contact the School Office.

Adrian Myram, Chair of Governors

"Thoughts from the Head's Study"

In the column next to this, our Chair of Governors has mentioned the potential real-terms cuts to school budget over the next two or three years. The National Audit Office very recently calculated that by 2019/20 schools in this country will face a real terms drop of £3 billion per year as rising costs are not matched by frozen budgets. It has been calculated that school spending per pupil nationally is likely to fall by around 8% in real terms by 2019/20, the first drop since the mid 1990's. This is only two years away and will have a devastating effect on schools and education if it comes about.



Visit the schoolcuts.org.uk website to see the potential effect on Wiveliscombe Primary's and Kingsmead's budgets by 2019, and you will see that it is very worrying. We can't wait for it to happen and then complain about much larger classes, fewer clubs, tatty reading books and so on. Schools are expected to do more now than they have ever done in the past, and expected to achieve the highest standards ever set. To do this they must at the very least be given a fighting chance by being properly funded.

It is possible to prevent this from happening. Local MPs care very much about what their electorate is thinking; especially when they consider that the cuts will be biting very much by the time of the next General Election in May 2020. Please contact Rebecca Pow MP to let her know your views on this.

Whatever we think of austerity and the reasons behind it, I'm sure we'd all agree that it should not be our children that are paying the price of mistakes made by older generations. A civilised society invests in its children and its future.

Mr S Duncan, Headteacher