

Thingwall Primary School

Newsletter

Dear Parents

Apologies for the slight delay in this newsletter. The following information may be of interest to you...

Internet Safety:

We were pleased to welcome Imelda Spencer into school a few weeks ago to run a Parents' Internet Safety Workshop. The parents who attended all agreed it was a very worthwhile evening and they were able to find out lots of information to help to safeguard their children while using the computer and internet at home. Following the workshop, Miss Arden has been able to upload Imelda's presentation onto the VLE and she has also uploaded a list of the various Apps your child/children may be using so that you are fully aware of the potential risks involved with each app. Please take the time to access this vital information on our school's VLE to keep your children as safe as possible.

For those of you who were not able to attend, below is a short summary of the main points Imelda raised...

- ✓ **Install parental controls** - Install any controls on your home broadband and any other internet enabled devices. Set up a user account for your child on the device that they mainly use and ensure other accounts and devices are password controlled so that they can't access them accidentally.
- ✓ **Agree boundaries** - Agree together what your child can and can't do on-line. For instance how much time can they spend on-line? Which rooms in the house are they allowed to be in to access on-line material? Which rooms in the house are they not allowed to be in to access the internet from? Which sites are they allowed to visit? Which devices are they allowed to use? Imelda says it is a good idea to have your children accessing on-line material from the relative safety of a communal family room such as the kitchen or the lounge, rather than their bedroom, so that you can keep an eye on what they are doing.
- ✓ **Reassure them** - Explain that, although the internet is a great invention, things can easily get out of hand on-line. Encourage your child to talk to you immediately about anything that makes them uncomfortable on-line. Ensure they know that they should not talk to anyone that they do not know when on-line.
- ✓ **Talk to older siblings** - It is a good idea to talk to older siblings about what they access on-line and what information they show to younger siblings. Older siblings can be really useful as younger children will often turn to them for advice but encourage them to act responsibly, keep their younger family member safe and let you know if a problem is encountered.
- ✓ **Check suitability** - Often the age ratings that come with apps are a good indicator of whether they are suitable for your child. Also refer to Imelda's App List on our VLE so you can consider the advantages and disadvantages of each app before

you allow your child to access it. Use safe, child-friendly search engines such as Ask Jeeves for Kids or Kids-search.

- ✓ **Monitor** - Always monitor your child's internet activity by accessing their search history. If you agree that this will be done at bedtime every night it is easier to keep on top of what has been searched and you will be able to spot any problems at the earliest opportunity. This will also help you to be satisfied that your child is also behaving appropriately towards their peers on-line.
- ✓ **CEOP** - 'Like' the CEOP page on Facebook. This will give you up to date and relevant information on topical issues to help keep your settings private and your internet safe.

Imelda also recommended an NSPCC video that helps parents to understand how to set restrictions on iPhones to restrict connectivity. It is a short video and the few parents that we have trialled it with have agreed that it was easy to follow and quick to set up. The link is...

<https://youtu.be/mO1TYt5FAo0>

Parking Reminder:

A few parents have come in to the School Office recently as they are concerned about the volume of traffic and the parking outside school at either end of the school day. Please remember to park safely and avoid driveways, zig zags and double yellow lines. We have also had a few near misses lately as a tiny minority of parents are parking their cars outside our school gates, meaning that no-one else can get in or out and causing a backlog of traffic onto Pensby Road! The Community Patrol have agreed to conduct spot checks to keep everybody as safe as we can.

Attendance Matters:

As you will no doubt be aware, good attendance directly links to good achievement in school. We are pleased that the vast majority of our pupils arrive on time and start their school day at 8.55am. However there are a few children who are persistently late and this is making a big difference to the time they spend learning in school.

Lateness = Lost Learning

Over the school year...

5 minutes late each day = 3 days lost

10 minutes late each day = 6.5 days lost

15 minutes late each day = 10 days lost

Obviously we can all occasionally arrive a few minutes late at school from time to time; however certain families are in danger of falling short of expectations regarding school attendance on a regular basis. We meet half termly with Anne Grealiss, our school's Education and Social Welfare Officer, and children who are persistently late or who have attendance that is falling short of the school's expectation of 96% may be contacted for an interview with her.

If your child is poorly and is unable to attend school then please contact the School Office on 648 4885. Please remember that if your child is physically sick or suffering with a stomach upset then they must stay off school for 48 hours from the last bout of illness. Please note that school can not authorise holidays during term time unless exceptional circumstances are given. Each application is considered on an individual basis as we

acknowledge that every family is different but parents who persistently take their children out of school for holidays risk a large fine and the absence being recorded as unauthorised.

Harvest Festival:

This academic year we will be celebrating our Harvest Festival on Thursday 19.10.17 at 2.15pm. You are all invited to attend. This year we will be collecting food items again for the Forum Housing Association who are a local charity based in Birkenhead. Forum offer a range of housing facilities for single Wirral people from the ages of 16-25 who have, for whatever reason, found themselves homeless. We are collecting toiletries such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, soap, shower gel and shampoo and also food items to enable these young people to be provided with a starter pack as they move into their temporary accommodation. Food items could include tinned meat, fish, fruit and vegetables, soups (packet or tinned), cereal, rice, pasta, biscuits, hot chocolate and other hot drinks. Please note that the charity are unable to accept any fresh food items.

Any donations should be delivered to the School Hall over the next few weeks or left with your child's class teacher. These items will be gratefully received by each class Ethos Monitor and then displayed on the stage by our Year Six Equality Monitor under the guidance of myself and Mrs Hine. Please help us to support this worthwhile, local cause and we look forward to seeing you at the festival to celebrate with us in a fortnight. We are hoping to provide coffee and tea on arrival in return for a small donation to school funds.

Welcome to Mr Davies:

We are delighted to welcome Mr Davies back to school this year to work as a Teaching Assistant and Midday Supervisor. Mr Davies is based in the FS2 classroom and is working alongside Mrs Leyland and Mrs Hutchinson.

Parents' Association AGM:

The Annual General Meeting of the Parents' Association will be held on 19.10.17 at 6pm. The meeting will take place at school in the canteen. This is a very important meeting and is open to all parents, carers and grandparents, not just the existing committee. This meeting will see the new Chair, Vice Chair, Treasurer and Secretary being nominated for the forthcoming year and there will be discussions about planned events and future expenditure. Refreshments will be provided by staff at the start of the meeting, prior to Mrs Tracey Harwood (our current Chair) leading the meeting. We hope to see you all there.

School Uniform:

We were very proud earlier on this week to see everyone arriving for their school photographs looking so smart. We can't wait to see the proofs which will arrive very soon and we are sure that they will make perfect Christmas gifts for family members! As we are now moving into the colder winter months we know that parents will want to ensure that their children are as warm and cosy as possible. Please remember to clearly name all winter coats, gloves, scarves and hats as we appreciate that these items can be rather expensive and, if lost, we will be able to return them to your child in a speedy manner.

In addition, please note that if it gets really cold, girls may be more comfortable wearing grey trousers to school rather than a skirt or pinafore dress - this is fine.

Family Fun Evening:

The staff are currently in the final stages of planning our first Family Fun Evening, which will take place on Friday 3.11.17 from 3.30-5.30. We are organising lots of exciting events for families to enjoy together! Further details will follow as well as a sponsor form for a 'Walk a Mile' event which we plan to hold from 1.30-3.30 for all pupils.

2017-2018 Charities:

As you may be aware, we take Thingwall's role in the local, national and global community very seriously indeed. Each year we choose two charities to support - one local and one international. This year we have decided to support ***North Birkenhead Development Trust*** where one of our parents (Mrs Anna Barnish) works.

This charity aims to improve the quality of life for all living in North Birkenhead and Bidston. We plan to raise money this term to buy a number of Christmas Bags for deprived children in the Wirral area. FS2, Year One and Year Two will start the fundraising later on this half term with a Julia Donaldson themed day of activities and we will also use our Christmas Performances Collections for this idea. Mrs Hine and myself plan to take the School Council shopping to use the collected money to purchase items for the bags.

The second charity we have decided to support is ***Oxfam's Toilet Twinning campaign***.

This initiative helps to bring safe sanitation to the world's poorest people by linking each of our toilets to a toilet in Africa or Asia. This charity work will build on our last four years of successful fundraising for Alan and Alison Golightly's Cambodia Orphanage Appeal and will, we hope, help the children to realise how lucky we are to have open access to flushable toilets at any time of the day. Each toilet costs £60 to purchase and a school toilet block costs £240! Wouldn't it be incredible if we could achieve this amount of money over the coming year?

We have started our fundraising off by issuing each class with £10 as part of our whole school Enterprise Challenge - please keep an eye out for how we are 'Turning our Tanners into Treasure'!

Celebration Corner

This section is for any out of school achievements your child may want to celebrate...

Amber Year 3 Amber received a gold medal following the North West Combined Competition winning five fights-well done Amber what an achievement.

Cora Year 3 Cora was such a helpful and kind sister to her brother who had a broken arm.

Grace Year 3 Grace swam two miles a total of 128 x 25 metre lengths of the swimming pool this was for Lucy's Pineapple Fund-what a marvellous accomplishment.

With Best Wishes

Miss D L Cronin