

Dear Parents

The following information may be of interest to you.

Changes to Free School Meals:

Please see the following letter below from Sharon Jones as she has notified us about changes to the Free School Meals entitlement...

Dear Parents

Free School Meals wage threshold eligibility criteria will be introduced from 1 April 2018 for new claims from working parents who also claim Universal Credit (protection is applied to existing claims made up to 31 March 2018)

You may wish to raise awareness with parents and carers who are receiving Universal Credit, that they will presently qualify for Free School Meals for all of their school aged children (provided a claim for this is made)

They will qualify, even if they are working and get Universal Credit in addition to wages at any level.

A wage threshold is to be introduced from 1 April 2018 and anyone who works and successfully applies before 31 March 2018, will get transitional protection so their child(ren) will continue to receive Free School Meals either until 2022 or until their child(ren) finishes their current phase of education, regardless of any increase in their earnings level..

Wage thresholds for working parents who also get Universal Credit will mean some parents will not qualify if they make a new Free School Meals application after 1 April 2018.

*So the big message is **APPLY IMMEDIATELY FOR FREE SCHOOL MEALS AND CERTAINLY BEFORE 31 MARCH 2018.***

Applications can be made in the usual ways

- 1. Via the Wirral Council website www.wirral.gov.uk/free-school-meals (parents should ignore any negative messages they receive from the eligibility auto checker)*
- 2. Via a paper form submitted at a One Stop Shop or posted to Benefits Service PO Box 290 Wallasey CH27 9FQ*
- 3. Via e-mail to freeschoolmeals@wirral.gov.uk advising full name, address, date of birth, National Insurance number, names of children and schools attended.*

Proof of Universal Credit will be required, and the wage threshold figure is calculated using information from up to three Universal Credit past monthly assessment periods. This is to take into account that many parents earn fluctuating amounts each month due to zero hours contracts etc. The regulations pertaining to the administration of the scheme have been altered to implement a net earnings threshold of £7,400 pa from 1 April 2018.

If you have any questions or need additional help to notify your parents please get in touch

Kind regards

Sharon Jones

Nick Gibb Correspondence:

We were thrilled earlier on this week to receive a letter from Nick Gibb (Minister of State for School Standards) congratulating us on our Key Stage Two Progress scores for Reading, Writing and Maths (this is the measure of progress the children have made from the end of Year Two to the End of Year Six). Not only is our school 7th in Wirral this year (3rd year we have made the top ten and 4th year we have been in the top 20) but we are also in the top 2% of schools nationally. Deserved congratulations to the children - our pupils are such a credit to us and their hard-working attitude and enthusiasm for school means that they get the best out of every lesson. Thanks also must go to the Thingwall staff - their professionalism and commitment to each and every child is impressive. The letter is displayed in our Entrance Hall if you would like to read it. Well done Thingwall!

Guides, Brownies and Rainbows:

Earlier on this week we welcomed representatives into school to talk to our girls about joining Rainbows (ages 5-7), Brownies (ages 7-10) and Guides (ages 10-14). Greer (The District Commissioner) and the rest of the team really enthused the children about the exciting things they could experience if they joined our local Rainbows, Brownies or Guides. Your child should have brought home a postcard with the telephone numbers to ring if your child would like to join a local group. If you require further details please contact the School Office.

Easter Competitions:

As you will no doubt be aware the Parents' Association are planning an eggciting eggstravanza! They will be holding an **Easter Fair from 11am to 2pm on Saturday 24th March.** We are very excited as Mrs Anna Barnish has managed to invite the Mayor (Councillor Ann McLachlan) and the Mayor's Consort (Mr Bill McLachlan) to visit the event. Whilst they are here they will visit the stalls, sample our delicious cakes and judge our Easter Competitions...

Easter Bonnet Competition - Children will be invited to decorate an Easter bonnet and we will have an Easter Parade in the Hall. Children should come wearing their bonnets on the day - they can be as creative as you like **BUT** they must be Easter/Spring themed. There will be a prize for the winning infant and the winning junior.

Decorate an Easter Egg Competition - Children are invited to decorate an egg and present it in a creative way! Competition entries can arrive on the day or they can be delivered earlier on in the week and kept safely in the staffroom. Again, there will be a prize for the winning infant entry and the winning junior entry. Past winners have included a stunning Fabergé styled egg, 'Egg' Sheeran and a Thingwall Viking!

World Book Day:

It was wonderful to see the array of costumes this week for World Book Day. The children enjoyed a book themed day of lessons and, as ever, it was great to see everyone joining in with great gusto. Even those children who didn't want to

dress up got into the spirit by telling us about their favourite books! We had a marvellous selection of book characters from Cruella De Vil, to Minecraft figures, to Hermione Potter, to Mr Stinky and many more! Thank you everyone for getting involved and helping us to raise awareness of Thingwall's Year of Reading!

Heswall Tennis Club Charity Fundraising Day:

Sue Davies, from Heswall Tennis Club, would like to invite all Thingwall pupils to a Tennis Fun Day at Heswall Tennis Club on Sunday 18th March from 2pm to 5pm. Entry is free and there will be lots of exciting games to entice you into the world of tennis! Entry is completely free but they are collecting for Claire House so all donations will be gratefully received. It promises to be an amazing day so we hope to see lots of you there!

Mothering Sunday Shop:

Our Mother's Day Shop will be open this coming Friday from 1.30pm. Presents range from £1 to £2 to £3. Please bring money to school in a named envelope.

Celebration Corner:

Isaac (Year Five) - Many congratulations to Isaac who managed to defeat Miss Cronin in a closely contested chess match this week. Miss Cronin battled valiantly to the end but Isaac was far too good! Well done Isaac! ☺

Hana (Year Five) - Well done to Hana who went to Leeds last weekend for the U.D.O with her Dance troop, Animal. Hana came first in her solo Street Dance, first in her duo Street Dance and first in her team's Jip-Jop dance! Congratulations Hana, you must be very proud. ☺

Celebration Corner Request:

We have many talented children at Thingwall and we would like to celebrate those children who represent local teams both on a local and national level. Mr Bettridge is planning on creating a celebration display board so, if your child takes part in a big sports competition (a football cup, a judo competition for example) or takes part in a creative dance, music or drama event (a dance competition in Blackpool or a pantomime for example) please pass us a photograph of them in their costume/kit and we will display them on our POOC board (Pupils Of Outstanding Character).

With Best Wishes
Miss D L Cronin