

HEATHSIDE NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2009

A Day In The Life

One of the issues that came out of the Parents Survey last year was a desire to know more about what the children do in school.

One way of achieving this is to have a photographic record of "A Day in the Life" of your child which shows some of the things they get up to while in school.

I am meeting with a photographer soon to discuss the possibility of making a photographic record for each class which captures some of the events, routines and activities that the children experience so we can share this with parents and carers. Once plans become more developed (no pun intended!!) I will let you know.

Welcome Back

We were pleased to welcome back all the children after the Summer holidays. It was great to see their happy smiles and the look of delight on their faces as they trooped into school. I'm sure you were feeling equally delighted as you waved good bye to the school transport!

Some of the children will be with new teachers and support staff this year and inevitably it will take time for them to settle into new routines. Please use the home-school diary to keep in touch with your child's teacher who will endeavour to write to you as necessary.



FUTURE OF HEATHSIDE

The period of Statutory Consultation about the proposal to extend the age range of Heathside and to close Belstead School has now ended. The next step is for the County Council Cabinet to ratify their previous decision and to proceed with the process of bringing the two schools together. The Cabinet meets on 15th September so we will know very soon if the merger is to go ahead.

Just to remind you, if the schools do merge they will remain open on their existing sites before moving to a new school which will be co-located on the newly built/refurbished Westbourne and Whitehouse Schools site in 2014.

Part of the process of planning for the future involves the governors considering the legal status of the school and the possibility of becoming a Foundation school rather than a Community School. There will be a consultation event about this issue on the evening of Wednesday 4th November. More information will come home about what this means nearer the time but you might like to put the date in your diary now.

Dinner Money

The cost of school dinners remains at £1.90 per day at the moment and if any changes are planned we will let you know. When sending the money in you can either pay for the week, half-term or even the whole term in advance. It is entirely up to you how you pay but please mark the envelope with your child's name and write "Dinner Money" clearly too. This will help Teresa to ensure that the money is credited against the right child. Any absences your child may have will then be credited against your next payment.



Social Skills Money

Social skills activities in class, and outside of school, are a vital part of the education we offer our pupils.

Unfortunately these activities need to be paid for. If you can make a voluntary contribution of £1 each week (or 20p per day) this would be a great help. If you can, please send this in an envelope marked with your child's name, stating how much is enclosed.

If you wish you can send in an amount to cover a number of weeks or even the term if you prefer.



Topic for the Term

The topic the children will be following this term is "Materials and their properties".

They will be investigating and experimenting with different materials, looking at differences in clothes and checking out how well they keep us warm or dry.



Parents Evening

Our parents'/carers' evening will take place on Wednesday 30th September between 6.00 and 8.00 p.m.

I am pleased to inform you that some representatives from **Suffolk Family Carers** will be attending the Parents Evening to share information about the work that they do.

Karen Markham and Bill Priestly who run the Learning Disability Project, would like to let parents and carers know how they can help to shape the future of the services offered to people with additional needs.

A letter with full details about the Open Evening will come home nearer the time.

Diary Dates

25th September Harvest Festival

28th September School photographs

30th September Parents' Evening

23rd October Break-up for half-term

2nd November Staff Training Day

3rd November Children return to School



18th December Break-up for Christmas

Suffolk Family Carers

Suffolk Family Carers organise a range of different activities for parents and carers of children with disabilities including: healthy living & wellbeing, creative writing, singing, guided walks, pampering and relaxation sessions.

If you want to know more please contact them on: 01473 835400, or

reception@suffolkfamilycarers.org or www.suffolkfamilycarers.org

Second-hand School Uniform

We have a supply of second-hand school uniform which has been donated by pupils who have left us recently. It is in very good condition and we would like to sell it to raise funds for our link school in the Gambia, Hart House.

It will be available to purchase at our Parents Evening so call into the Resource Room and have a look if you are interested.

New uniform orders can be made to Teresa ASAP.

Photographs

The photographers will be coming into school on Monday 28th September to take photographs of the children. A separate letter will come out nearer the time as a reminder but you might want to put the date in your diary and think about it if you want to send particular clothes in as the photographs will be taken throughout the day.



Occupational Therapy

We have now had confirmation about which Occupational Therapists will be working in school during the coming year. Kate Williams will be remaining with us and will be joined by Sarah Norris. Marisa Clarke, an OT technician will also spend a day in school. I'm sure Kate and Sarah will be in contact with you when necessary as the term progresses.

Harvest Festival

Our Harvest Festival celebration will take place on **Friday 25th September at 2.00 p.m.** You are welcome to attend and we would be pleased to receive any donations of food in the days leading up to the Harvest Festival.

Fresh food should be sent in on the Friday. All contributions will be distributed to local needy groups and organisations.

They have asked that dried and tinned food have long use by dates if possible because this enables them to make up hampers at Christmas time as well as supporting families now.



Parent Governor

We currently have a vacancy for a parent governor because Vivienne Tincombe's term of office has come to an end.

Vivienne is still considering whether to stand again but I have to inform all parents and carers that a vacancy has arisen and ask whether anyone would be interested.

If you would like more information about what being a governor involves please give Odran a call.



It is an exciting and interesting time at the moment with the merger with Belstead School being on the cards and also plans beginning to emerge about the future of the school on a co-located site. Being a governor gives an insight into these processes and also enables you to understand how the school operates on a day to day basis.

DATA SHEETS

Each new school year we are required to update our records of addresses, phone numbers, consent forms etc.

Teresa will be sending out the various forms in the next week or so. Can you please complete the forms and return them to her as soon as possible. It is a very time consuming process collating and checking the forms and it really helps if they are returned promptly. **"Thanks"** in advance from Teresa.