

HEATHSIDE NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2008

POSITIVE PARENTS POSSE

If you have ever been involved in the Positive Parents Posse you might like to know that they have moved premises to The Meredith Children's Centre (also known as Whitton Clinic) in Meredith Road, near Norwich Road. They meet on the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month during term time. They have a toy library, offer mutual support, advice about DLA and other benefits. If you would like any further information contact Joanna Lewis on 01473 404106. They also run a sports activity morning at Whitton Sports Centre from 9.30 to 11.30 a.m. on 12th October and 16th November. Joanna can give you more information if you are interested.

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

You may have read in the local papers, or heard on the radio, about the option being put forward by the Local Authority to merge Heathside and Belstead Schools and then around 2013 to relocate the new school onto the Westbourne High School site. This is most likely what will happen but there is a consultation process which will start towards the end of September and run until December. As part of that process, there will be a consultation meeting for parents and carers at Heathside School on **Wednesday 15th October at 7.30 p.m.** This will be your opportunity to discuss the future of Heathside with Local Authority representatives and I would encourage you to make it to the meeting if you can. All parents and carers will receive a copy of the consultation document so if you are unable to make it to the meeting you can still have your say about the future. Can I reassure you that we will be remaining at the Heathside site until at least 2012/2013 and if Heathside and Belstead merge before then the two schools will remain on their current sites until a move to a new school has been agreed. You may hear more about the future developments in the papers or on the radio but if you want to clarify any issues or concerns please don't hesitate to contact me.

SPORTS DAY

Unfortunately we had to postpone our Sports Day in the Summer term but I am pleased to let you know that we are intending to hold our Fun Sports Day on Wednesday 24th September at 10.00 a.m., weather permitting. The morning will be the usual assortment of races and a host of sensory and fun events that everyone can take part in. We will of course also ensure there are some activities for parents, brothers/sisters etc. to take part in too!!



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 "Ourselves" The children will be finding out about different parts of their bodies, exploring likes and dislikes and probably spending lots of time admiring themselves in a mirror!



Parents Evening

Our parents'/carers' evening will take place on Wednesday 1st October between 6.00 and 8.00 p.m. I am pleased to inform you that some representatives from **Out & About** will be present at the Open Evening. They will showcase some of the work that they do to enable children with disabilities to access facilities and activities in the local community. Out & About are keen to work with children from Heathside and you will be able to ask about the possibilities of them getting involved with your child. A letter with full details about the Open Evening will come home nearer the time.

Diary Dates

24th September Sports Day
 29th September School photographs
 1st October Parents' Evening
 3rd October Harvest Festival
 15th October Consultation evening
 24th October Break-up for half-term
 3rd November Staff Training Day
 4th November Children return to School
 19th 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

Parent Governor

We currently have a vacancy for a parent governor following the resignation of Teresa Steward at the end of the Summer term. Teresa was a magnificent asset to the school in her governor role which she continued to fulfil even after her daughter left Heathside. If you would like information about being a governor, please contact Odran.



Photographs

The photographers will be coming into school on Monday 29th 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 during the morning.



Occupational Therapy

We were very sad that Carol Raffe, our Occupational Therapist, left us at the end of the Summer term. Fortunately we have replacements with Rebecca Clark (Tues & Wednesday) and Ruth Cadwallader (Tues & Thursday) providing cover. Rebecca will be with us for the Autumn term only but Ruth will be with us for the school year.

Harvest Festival

Our Harvest Festival celebration will take place on **Friday 3rd October at 10.00 a.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.



HOLIDAY CLUB

I am pleased to let you know that we managed to secure substantial funding from the Local Authority to establish a Holiday Club at the school. Unfortunately, our plans to be up and running for October half-term have been thwarted by the fact that we were unable to recruit staff during the Summer holiday period. We will be interviewing potential staff in the next week or so and hope to have a team of qualified and experienced staff in place ready for the Christmas holiday period. The delay in opening is caused by the need to ensure all staff appointed have been CRB checked (which can take up to 6 weeks) and are fully trained in moving and handling, child protection, and the administering of medication etc.

I am really disappointed at the delay but the Management Committee felt it was better to open with a service properly in place rather than try and rush things and probably not get it right.

One good piece of news I can share with you is that Rachel Cooper, the After-School Club playleader will be the Manager of the Holiday Club. Rachel does a fantastic job in the ASC and her knowledge of the children, and the school, will be invaluable when the Holiday Club opens.

Thank you to everyone who replied before the summer about possible requests for dates during the coming year. I will be contacting you again later in the term to confirm requests and sort out arrangements for officially registering your child.