5th January 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Newsletter**

**First Week Back!**

Welcome back to everyone, I hope you all enjoyed the festive season and time together.

I have been so impressed to see how children have returned to school this week, full of positivity and enthusiasm for their learning.  They have all looked very smart too!  We realise the return to school in January can be tricky for some children and our miserable wet weather does not help, so thank you for all your support in ensuring children are arriving at school on time and well-prepared.

I have also been pleased to see how kind and polite Sidlesham children are to each other and adults in school.  This was particularly evident during our ice skating trip this week when children helped each other both on and off the ice and really enjoyed their time together as one big family!  The children were excellent role models for our School Values **'Kindness', 'Respect', 'Self-Belief' and 'Enthusiasm.'**

A huge thank you to Mr Allen and all the staff team who worked incredibly hard to ensure our ice skating experience was successful.  There is a huge amount of planning involved in any visit to ensure our children are safe and well cared for.  A sincere thank you also to our invaluable parent helpers for their time and support on the visit, without which, such events could not take place.

It has been a busy week for me joining Sidlesham and making plans for the term ahead. We have had a very helpful and informative INSET day with the County's Learning and Behaviour Team supporting staff with further strategies and approaches to managing behaviour and Mr Allen leading our safeguarding training.

I have appreciated the warm welcome from staff, children, parents and governors during what has been a very busy but enjoyable first week back. .  I look forward to working with the school community in the term ahead.

**Parent Volunteers**

If you would like to be considered to support us on a future trip or to help with reading in school please do contact us.  In order that we are compliant with safeguarding regulations we will require the following:

·          DBS check and safeguarding training (which we will support you with).

·          Two references

**Celebration Assembly - Parental invitation**

From Friday 12th January, we will be welcoming parents/carers of children who have received 'a star of the week' award into our Celebration Assembly.  On Thursdays, the office will contact the relevant parents/carers of the selected children who will be receiving the award for that week.

**Home toys**

Could we please remind you to not let your child bring in any home toys, including fidget toys as we would not like these to get lost or broken.

**Dojo's points**

The house with the most dojo points in Autumn term 2023 was Maple House.  All children from Maple House are welcome to come to school wearing their home clothes on Thursday 11th January.

**PE days**

Please see below which day your child's class will be doing PE on.

            Monday           Kangaroos

                                    Tigers

            Tuesday          Penguins

                                    Huskies

            Wednesday     Meerkats

                                    Kangaroos

            Friday              Huskies

                                    Meerkats

                                    Penguins

**Hummingbirds**

If you are requiring your child to attend any sessions at Hummingbirds please note that we now require you to book this online via parentpay.  I am sure you understand that we have to abide by the child - adult ratio and this can become difficult when children are not booked online.

**Clubs**

Please see the attached schedule of clubs.

**Forest Friday**

There will be no Forest Friday this half term.  This allows for the ground to recover and dry out.

**School Meals - Action Needed (if your child may be eligible)**

A reminder that your child may qualify for Free School Meals (FSM) at school.  If so, this also provides additional funding to the school to support with a wide range of teaching and learning support and strategies.

Your child may be eligible for Free School Meals if you receive any of the following:

·          income Support

·          income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

·          income-related Employment and Support Allowance

·          support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999

·          the guaranteed element of Pension Credit

·          Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)

·          Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

·          Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

Eligibility for Free School Meals also brings the added benefit of access to the government's Holiday Activities and Food Programme (HAF) if you are interested.  Activities are available for all students in receipt of FSM. More information on these activities can be found at <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/support-for-families/holiday-activities-and-food-programme/>

Pupil eligibility also allows the Council to allocate funding for any FSM holiday time supermarket voucher schemes we are able to fund from Government grant funding. The voucher scheme funding is ad-hoc and the Council are reliant on Government funding to provide these, there is no guarantee of future schemes.

To find out if your child is eligible for FSM (and the additional benefits this brings) you can apply online please see the attachment.

**Childcare costs**

Since 2nd January 2024, eligible working parents can apply for 15 hours of childcare for their two-year-old. Parents/carers have until 31st March to apply for a code, with mid-January to the end of February being the optimum time to apply in case you need to provide further information to support their application.

To apply for a childcare code each parent/carer needs to be working and earning the equivalent of 16 hours a week at national minimum/living wage and under £100,000 adjusted net income per year. This means that each parent/carer needs to earn from just over £8,600 per year to be eligible for 15 hours a week of childcare during term time.

There is more information on the childcare support available to parents on the [Childcare Choices](https://lnks.gd/l/eyJhbGciOiJIUzI1NiJ9.eyJidWxsZXRpbl9saW5rX2lkIjoxMDYsInVyaSI6ImJwMjpjbGljayIsInVybCI6Imh0dHBzOi8vd3d3LmNoaWxkY2FyZWNob2ljZXMuZ292LnVrLz91dG1fbWVkaXVtPWVtYWlsJnV0bV9zb3VyY2U9Z292ZGVsaXZlcnkiLCJidWxsZXRpbl9pZCI6IjIwMjMxMjA0Ljg2NTU3NTExIn0.eGdwJOnEA5tk3lVHNBa7CnYhJbM0BgXNUr3S18DhYsM/s/2162396864/br/232155894398-l) website, where they can explore the early education entitlements and other government help with childcare costs.

**Dates for your diary**

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| House event: Times Tables | Friday 12th January |
| Young Voices Parent Meeting | Monday 15th January @ 4:10pm |
| Young Voices Concert | Wednesday 17th January |
| Safer Internet Day | Tuesday 6th February |
| Science Day | Thursday 29th February |
| Half Term | Monday 12th - Friday 16th February |
| INSET Day | Monday 19th February |
| World Book Day | Thursday 7th March |
| House event: Spelling Bee | Wednesday 13th March |
| Annual reports | Friday 22nd March |
| Parent/Carer/teacher Consultation Evenings | Tuesday 26th March & Wednesday 27th March 3:30pm - 6:00pm |
| Last day of term | Thursday 28th March |

Have a good weekend

Mrs Norton