

MEADFURLONG SCHOOL NEWSLETTER NO 254

Milton Keynes Council

NEWSLETTER NO 254

17th February 2011

SPRING TERM 2011

Dear Parents,

As the school year approaches the half way stage let's hope the bad weather is behind us and we can look forward to some pleasant sunshine and warmer days.

Half Term is next week so the school will be closed from Monday 21st February until Friday 25th February, but the children are expected to be back as usual on Monday 28th February.

New Teachers

I am pleased to inform you that Miss Diebolt will be returning to the school after Easter on April 26th to replace Mrs Hearne. In the meantime Mrs Grose will continue to take the class until then.

Mrs Nagra is expecting a baby and is beginning her maternity leave after half term, I am sure you will join me in wishing her the best of luck and we look forward to seeing her new addition to the world.

Mrs Nagra's class will be taken by Miss Kirstie Sales until the end of the year.

Advance Notice of Events

World Maths Day is on March 1st to try to encourage your children to get involved with mathematical activities on that day.

Mr Ramlugan's class is involved in a school link project with Green Park school in Newport Pagnell; they are visiting us on Thursday March 3rd.

Comic Relief and Red Nose Day Is on Friday March 18th. We are planning to celebrate this by allowing all children and staff to wear **red** on that day. The charge will be £1 per child which will be donated to comic relief.

Education City

Please note the attached letter inviting you to take advantage of 'Education City' which is an on line resource that we use at the school.

PE Kit

Thank you to those parents who have provided the correct PE kit for their children, they look very smart.

PE kit is a sky blue T shirt or polo with black shorts, trainers and track suits are needed for outside PE.

Lost Property

We have the usual large amount of lost property. This is kept in the changing room area of the school so perhaps you might encourage your children to check if their lost items are there and reclaim them before they are sent to the charity shop.

Reading with Children

Your children will benefit a great deal if you are able to spend just 10 minutes each day to read with your children; at school we are having a real focus on reading so it will be supporting your child's development in an interest in reading which is, of course, an essential life skill.

School Uniform and Free School Meals

The Governors have agreed that any parents eligible for free school meals may apply for free school uniform from April 1st 2011. For this academic year this will only apply to new applicants who have not previously applied for free school meals.

All existing families on free school meals will become eligible for free uniform in September 2011.

In order to qualify the school must have formal notification that you are eligible for free school meals and will only be for one sweatshirt and polo shirt in any one year.

If you believe you qualify for this offer please contact the secretarial staff in the school office for further information.

Amalgamation

There is not a great deal to report at this stage as we are still awaiting the result of the final consultation to see if the proposed amalgamation of Penwith and Meadfur-long will take place.

It is planned for this to happen in September 2012 so the two governing bodies are having preliminary discussions this term to plan for this well in advance



Times tables

We would like to encourage all parents to check that their children know their times tables; once again this only need take a few moments and can be done during meal preparation time or whilst walking home.

A good way is to make it into a song or 'rap' that the children will enjoy, examples of this can be found on Education City or other learning sites on the internet.

Year 6 SAT's

I am sorry to have to remind year 6 children about these tests but they are a statutory requirement that the government insist on us completing. Last year these were boycotted through official union action but there are no plans for this to happen this year. May I remind parents that there are strict regulations that we have to follow regarding these tests so I would appreciate your co-operation with this.

The main point is that they must be conducted under strict examination conditions and must take place at a specific time and date that we cannot change as they are a national test that all Year 6 children are taking at the same time.

Because of this I would ask that parents make absolutely certain that they do not organise any holidays or other appointments during the week of the tests and also make every effort to make sure their children attend school to complete the tests.

The test week is **Monday 9th May – Friday 13th May 2011**. There is a test allocated to each day. If your child is ill during this week we would urge you to allow the child to come in to do the test then go home wherever possible.



Wrist Bands

Apparently there is a new craze which involves the wearing of shaped wrist bands. Please discourage your children from wearing them to school as they cause many problems that are best avoided.

On Line Computer Games

A number of parents have been sharing with us the problems that are occurring with children who are playing computer games on line with each other. Some of these games such as 'Call of Duty' are 18 rated but are being played by children as young as seven. Additionally, the amount of time children are spending playing these games is frighteningly high; as much as 12 hours at a time in some cases; also being played late at night when perhaps you are not aware of it.

Would all parents please carefully monitor the suitability of the programmes your children are playing and the time they are spending as this is having a big negative impact on their life at school.

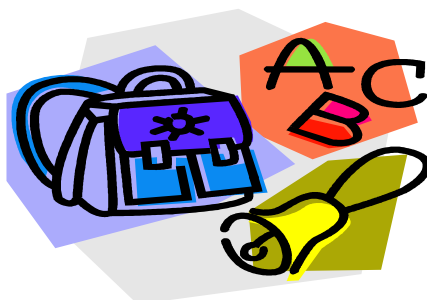
The children are often tired, they have arguments over the way the games are being played and they are being exposed to inappropriate images and language



Lateness and Attendance

I am really pleased to report that just recently the number of children arriving late to school has dramatically reduced. Many thanks to all parents who have made such an effort to get their children to school on time. Please remember that our breakfast club is available from 8.00am if this helps to get your children into school.

Could all parents please note that when you are contacted by the school about lateness or absence you will receive either a text message through parentmail or a letter home. It is really important that we receive a reply to either of these so that we know why your child is absent from school or the reason for the lateness, otherwise we are obliged to record it as unauthorised which may result in the authorities making contact with the possibility of court proceedings following. We would wish to avoid this as far as possible.



Breakfast

We have discovered that a large number of children are coming to school without having breakfast. This is having a big impact on the children's ability to concentrate on their work in the mornings because they are hungry. Eating something for breakfast is vitally important and is regarded by many experts to be the most important meal of the day. I would urge all parents to ensure that their children have a good breakfast before coming to school or take advantage of our breakfast club.

In future we would like to contact you at home to discuss any issues that may be arising in trying to provide you children with their breakfast. This will be intended to help you to overcome any problems you may be having.

Holiday Dates

School closes at the end of day on Friday 18th February 2011
School reopens on the morning of Monday 28th February 2011

School closes at the end of the day on Friday 8 April 2011
School reopens on the morning of Tuesday 26th April 2011

School closes at the end of the day on Thursday 28th April 2011
School reopens on the morning of Tuesday 2nd May 2011
(This is a long weekend for the Royal Wedding and May Day)

School closes at the end of the day on Friday 27th May 2011
School reopens on the morning of Tuesday 7th June 2011

School closes at the end of the day on Friday 22nd July 2011