



ARCHBISHOP RUNCIE CHURCH OF ENGLAND (VA) FIRST SCHOOL

March 2018 Newsletter

Dear Parents/carers.

It's hard to believe it is the end of the Spring term. Thank you for your support throughout the term, particularly with the weather.

School Update

Our new caretaker Mr Russell Hunter will begin on Monday 16th April. We do hope he will be very happy in our school and wish him every success. We are pleased to welcome Miss Anna Gray into Year 2, who will be working closely with Mrs Mann and Mrs Massey. My previous school was a part of a SCITT (School based initial teacher training) and I am delighted that we have a student as I know the positive impact it can have when trainee teachers work with teachers in the classroom.

We are delighted to welcome 6 new nursery starters after Easter. As the numbers are increasing in Nursery we are now offering the flexible option of attending 2 ½ days Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday morning. Please spread the word. If any current Nursery parents are interested in full days, please come to see me.

Office Efficiencies

As you are aware, we have aimed to ensure the office can operate efficiently with one member of staff and thank you for your support with this, particularly with the decrease in the number of children who are late and ensuring your children are responsible for bringing in letters etc through the classroom. This all has made a significant difference. We have regular volunteers which we appreciate greatly.

Mrs McCloud meets regularly with the Admin Officers within the Gosforth Schools Trust and the group have shared various strategies to ensure efficiency. We have successfully introduced electronic registration to save time and next term, we will be introducing the use of electronic forms for trips, clubs, events etc via ParentMail

We would also now like to bring our dinner procedures and processes in line with other schools. Mrs McCloud currently spends a significant amount of time finalising dinner numbers as they change on a daily basis. After half term children will need to agree to take lunch for the full half term and we will require a fortnight notice if the children no longer wish to have a school lunch. Lunches will not be available on an ad hoc basis. School lunches need to be paid either for the half term in full or weekly in advance on a Monday, ideally by electronic payment through ParentMail (see further below) or by cheque in a named envelope in your child's book bag.

The cost for the full half term for school meals will be £56 taking into account the bank holiday and teacher training day. All amounts currently outstanding for school meals payments have been requested and some children have credits. Mrs McCloud is still updating the ParentMail system and will send a ParentMail to you when the balances reported to you can be accurately relied upon.

We will also be removing the charge for using electronic payments to school through ParentMail to encourage more parents to use this facility. School incurs differing charges depending on the method of payment. To keep the charges low, please can you make payment by UK Visa /MasterCard or UK Maestro **Debit Card NOT CREDIT CARD OR PAYPAL.**

At present, we have 96% of school receiving ParentMail communications which is fantastic and I will be encouraging the remaining parents to register for ParentMail next term. There are at present only 33% of families using the free ParentMail App. ParentMail list the benefits of the App below:

- Receive school messages instantly – **perfect for busy parents.**
- See all school communications on one easy feed – **so you don't get buried in a busy email inbox.**
- Complete forms, permissions and surveys wherever they are in the world – **improving school responses.**
- Make online payments or top up dinner money – **or receive reminders and alerts.**
- Book parents' evening as soon as they receive it – **making the process quick and easy.**
- Receive in app notifications – **never miss a school message again!**
- Record Absences – **saving you time in the morning!**

You can download the App from Google Play or the AppStore for free. I encourage you to do so over the holidays!



Home school partnership

We are keen to look at homework and home/school partnership and a couple of parents have offered to be a part of a working group. We thought for the first meeting it may be useful to invite all parents. The first meeting will be held on Monday 30th April at 2.00p.m in the school hall. This will provide us with an opportunity to reflect upon what we currently do as a school in terms of home school partnership and homework, share some of the work we have been doing in school to address the areas for improvement identified by Ofsted and look to how we can develop this further in partnership with home.

Thank you to all who were able to join the Mothers Day service – it was so well attended and so wonderful to see the children sharing their thoughts of thankfulness on this special day. Thank you for the support for World Book Day, the Scholastic Book Fair and Sports Relief, where £134.50 was raised for this worthwhile cause. Thank you to all who were able to join the Early Years Stay and Play which all who joined reported back how superb it was.

Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 17th April – Key Stage 1 – Local Trip

Monday 30th April – 2.00p.m – parent meeting – come and join us for a coffee in school.

Thursday 24th May – Break up for Half Term

Friday 25th May – Teaching Training Day

Monday 4th June – Return to School

Kind regards

Mrs Denise Henry