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Autumn Newsletter 3 - Friday 13th October 2017

Dear Parents / Carers,

Here we are with the last newsletter of this half term – just where the weeks have gone is quite a mystery!



Our Harvest Celebrations last week were fantastic; a big thank you for all the generous gifts of food, toiletries, pet items etc that you sent in. Everything was taken to St James Church and was then driven to Jimmy's Night Shelter in Cambridge to support the many homeless people.

The other great big "Thank you" is for all your support for our Macmillan Cake Sale last Friday; whether you donated cakes, came along and bought cakes or, indeed both, we are very grateful. We raised the amazing amount of £271.06 which has been sent to the charity.



We have already had another couple of complaints from our neighbours about people carelessly parking across their driveways; we ask that you do not do this please but always find safe and appropriate places to park. Thank you.

We are also aware of a "very near miss" this week when one of our pupils rode her bike out across a junction in front of an oncoming car. Please impress once again the need to be careful on the road!

The LPSA have got lots of events planned between now and the Christmas holidays. The first events are the Spooky Discos on Wednesday 1st November. Details are attached with this newsletter. Next we have the LPSA AGM on Tuesday 7th November at 7.30pm. Again, further details will be sent out. We are looking for members so if you are interested then pop along to this meeting to find out how you can get involved. The Auction of Promises is going really well; there have been quite a lot of things / time donated so far however we could do with some more! Here is a message from the LPSA about the auction:



Remember to contribute your promises for the LPSA online 'auction of promises', which will open for bidding on November 1st. We have had some fantastic auction lots donated already – including a weekend at a holiday apartment in Swanage, a professional oven clean and a reflexology session! Huge thanks to those who have contributed so far. It would be wonderful to see lots more promises appearing in the coming weeks – whether they're an evening of babysitting, a tennis lesson, a hand knitted baby jacket or a dozen eggs from your free range hens. The possibilities are limitless, so please do have a think about what you may be able to offer.

Visit the auction site: <https://www.auctionofpromises.com/auctionread.aspx?a%3d3058>

Bidding opens online at 00:00 on Wednesday 1st November and closes online at 09:00 on Monday 4th December.

And finally the LPSA Christmas Fayre will be held on Monday 18th December at 3.15pm. This always a lovely, festive occasion complete with a visit from Santa!



We will be supporting Children In Need this year on Friday 10th November as we have managed to secure a visit from Pudsey Bear on that day. The theme of the event this year is "Rock the 80s" – so dig out those leg warmers, Wham t-shirts, shoulder pads, bright colours! The latter (bright colours especially fluorescent) is the easiest of these so if you haven't got anything that is particularly in an 80s style then wear some bright colours. We will be charging children the usual £1 fine that will go to Children In Need.

Cambridgeshire County Council have issued a new policy with regards to issuing penalty fines to parents due to their children being absent from school. We will be implementing this new policy from Wednesday 3rd January 2018 so it is vital that you read the details so that you do not end up receiving a penalty fine from Cambridgeshire County Council. Here is the relevant paragraph from the new policy:

UNAUTHORISED TERM TIME LEAVE(includes Holiday): Any parent who takes a child out of school for term time leave for 6 consecutive sessions (3 days) or more over a 4 week period, not authorised by the school (under exceptional circumstances rule), may receive a Penalty Notice. **Therefore Penalty Notices will be issued for single event absences of at least 3 consecutive school days or more where these absences are unauthorised because they are neither exceptional nor unavoidable.**

In summary, if a child is absent for 6 consecutive sessions which is 3 whole days, and it is not authorised by the school then the Local Authority may issue a penalty notice. The details about this are given in this extract from the policy:

1. Under Section 23 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 local education authority officers, headteachers and the police have the discretionary power to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school.
2. The new power provides an alternative to prosecution of parents under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and enables parents to discharge potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty of £60 if paid within 21 days or £120 if paid within 28 days.
3. Should the Penalty Notice remain unpaid or have been paid only in part at the end of the 28 day period Cambridgeshire County Council must prosecute the parents for the offence to which the notice relates, or, in specified circumstances (see section 29 below), withdraw the notice.

In summary this means that unauthorised absence is an offence that can lead to court prosecution, however by agreeing to pay the penalty notice, parents will avoid this. Please note that the penalty fine applies to both parents / carers whether living together or separately as long as they have parental responsibility so, as we understand it, a family with 2 adults with parental responsibility would receive two x £60 penalty fine notices **per child**.

We will continue to authorise genuine special circumstances and for any holidays to be marked as unauthorised. Where schools are told that a child is unwell but there are concerns and proof that a holiday is being taken, the process can move straight to a penalty notice. Some schools have

decided to implement this new policy from the beginning of last September (2017) but we (the staff and Governors) felt that this did not give people enough notice and so took the decision to delay its implementation until January 2018.

We will be posting the whole policy on our school website as soon as possible – hopefully before half term but it may be just afterwards so that you can read the whole document if you wish. In the meantime if you have any questions then please email the school office.



Please remember that we have our parents evenings next week and that our new caterers, Edwards & Blake will be in the hall with food tasters and details about the new menus which will start after half term – we look forward to seeing you all there. We are pleased to inform you that the cost of a meal for Key Stage 2 pupils (as Foundation and KS1 are free) will go back down to £2.25.....and there will be a wider choice of options for all children.



Please don't forget that Friday 20th October is a training day. We look forward to seeing all the children back on Monday 30th October. We hope you have a lovely weekend and then enjoy the half term holiday

Kindest Regards

Diane Hawkes – Headteacher