



Dear Parents,

Happy Friday to you all!

We have had a wonderful week at school and the children have been busy preparing for next week's end-of-term assessments in amongst rehearsing for the Christmas performances.

Children in Need and our ramble raised a fantastic £516.60 - a great result for a small school! I am also certain that today's Christmas Fair will have raised a fabulous amount. Thank you so much to everyone who has donated, given their time and come along to support. "It takes a village to raise a child" is an African proverb that means that an entire community of people must provide for and interact positively with children for those children to experience and grow in a safe and healthy environment. Thank you all for giving our children this opportunity.

We are all very proud of Chloe Furlong, one of our Year 5 children, who played the lead role of Matilda in "Matilda," last week at the Daneside Theatre. Mrs Lwin, Mrs Darlington and I had a wonderful treat watching the young cast perform. Well done!

Have a lovely weekend

Iestyn Lewis

School Finish Time

There have been a few questions around school finish time recently. I can confirm that finish time is 3.15pm for all classes and the gates are opened just after 3.05pm. A number of clubs run after school to alleviate congestion on the car park.

Just before Easter, the Government published "The White Paper" which recommends the school week being 32.5 hours. Whilst this is not yet statutory, there is an expectation that schools are already adhering to this or heading towards it. As such, if we do have to consider a staggered finish it will be from 3.15pm onwards and not as it was previously during our Covid arrangements.



One-Way System and Parking

There have been a few comments recently about the "quality" of parking and how quickly some cars are travelling through the lanes around school.

Please be considerate when parking on the Village Hall car park and on the lane and please do not park on, or opposite, the yellow zig zags. We are very lucky to have the use of the Village Hall and we cannot, and will not, be policing it - we are relying on you, our parents, to use it in a sensible and courteous manner.

Can I please also remind you of the one-way system that we have in place for dropping off and picking up. Please approach the Village Hall car park by driving up towards school (from the direction of Martins Moss or around the triangle behind the Village Hall) and turning left into the car park. Please then leave by turning left out of the village hall.

It has also become apparent that some cars are parking on the corner of Church Lane/School Lane. This has caused some very near-misses as others having been pulling out of the junction.

We are very proud of our relationships with the community and its members and we all have a part to play in that.



Parents' Council Feedback and Update

Once every half term the Parents' Council meet and we did this on Wednesday of this week. It is useful for us as a leadership team to hear what is going well and anything that parents feel we can improve on. We are on a continuous journey to provide the very best for your children and, alongside a very detailed School Development Plan, ongoing feedback is crucial. There is a Parents Council section on our school website where we also publish the minutes once they have been approved. There was lots of positive feedback in terms of Ready Steady Phonics, Accelerated Reader and Class Dojo. However, in terms of some more immediate feedback, we discussed the following:

Communication: We have a comms strategy ready to publish but held onto this until we knew how Class Dojo was going to work out. We will move towards the majority of our communication coming through this media.

Uniform - we are looking at all our uniform being available directly from Badged but, for now, this will still be available through school.

Lost Property - We will return to having a central point for lost property in the corridor near the pupil entrance. However, there is a significant amount of uniform and clothing that it is not named - please make sure everything coming into school is labelled.

Curriculum, stretch and challenge - We have overhauled our curriculum from this academic year with far higher expectations, broader and more balanced with a focus on depth of learning. We have discussed a Parents Evening event (in the Spring term) to go through our curriculum in more detail but, in the meantime, you can find everything about our curriculum on the school website. The Autumn overview is on there (http://www.smallwood.cheshire.sch.uk/serve_file/7850155) along with our approach to each subject. The Spring term overview is nearly ready to be published. Any questions please do ask class teachers.



Attendance and Holiday Requests

Good attendance at school is essential for a pupil's education and establishes a positive working ethos early in life, it is crucial to making progress. There is a clear connection between regular attendance and achievement. If attendance deteriorates, so does performance, achievement, friendship circles and self-esteem.

We work together with parents to ensure that children attending Smallwood both regularly and punctually. We all know it has been incredibly difficult in recent times with many of us succumbing to coughs, colds sore throats and the dreaded Covid. Before we break-up for Christmas, we will be sending letters out to parents and carers where attendance has fallen below 95%.

I have also had several Holiday Requests recently. Unless there are exceptional circumstances, I cannot authorise these. There have been some requests for over 10 sessions (5 days) which could potentially lead to a fixed penalty notice being issued by the local authority.

Upcoming Events

Friday 25th November - Christmas Fair

W/C 6th December - Performances - please check the School calendar on the website

Friday 9th - Christmas Lunch and Jumper Day

Sunday 11th - Nine Lesson and Carols, in Church, at 6pm

Monday 12th - New Vic Alice in Wonderland - late return to school

Thursday 15th - Christmas Party

Friday 16th - Christingle Service 11.15, Finish at 1.30pm