



Portesbery School Newsletter

March 2014

a happy school where every one matters

Message from Matthew

Another term has passed us by — where is the time going? It was great to see so many of you at our Parents' Evening and thank you once again for the positive feedback. It's great to know that you value what we are doing for your children. I also cannot believe that it's been a year since our visit from Ofsted. The school has continued to go from strength to strength since the inspection and we are very pleased with the progress we have made towards the recommended areas for improvement. Under this current regime, we are not due another full inspection until Spring 2016. However, with the recent changes highlighted in the National press, we are prepared for it to happen sooner.

You have all received updates on the progress of the new school. This is an exciting time for us and our sights are set firmly on opening the doors for our pupils in September 2015, whilst not losing the quality of what we are offering here. This is going to be a delicate balancing act, but one that we will be able to achieve.

Matthew

Dates for the term

Fri 4th April — **School finished (2.15pm)**

Tue 22nd April — **Summer Term begins**

Mon 5th May — **Bank Holiday**

Wed 7th May — **Transition talk for Secondary Parents (7pm)**

Mon 26th May — **Half term**

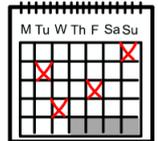
Mon 2nd June — **INSET Day**

Mon 7th June — **Primary Sports Day**

Mon 14th June — **Secondary Sports Day**

Wed 16th July — **Presentation Evening (5pm)**

Wed 23rd July — **Last day of term (2.15pm)**



School Development Plan

We have come to the end of another cycle of the school's development plan, and have been reflecting on our achievements over the past 12 months. As part of this process, the Senior Management Team and Susan have met to discuss priorities for development over the next 12 months. These were based on whole school evaluation and the parental comments gained at Parents' Evening. This year we will focus on pupil assessment, promoting more cultural events, parental workshops and enhancing outside learning.

The new School Development Plan will be published on our school's website early next term.

From your Chair of Governors

We have reached that time in the school year when the Head and Governors are grappling with budgets. This year we are confronted with a change to the way that all schools across the country are funded and this change has particularly affected Special Schools. Matthew, Debbie and several governors have spent hours working through the figures in order that the school is able to maintain its quality in terms of delivering the right curriculum for all the pupils.

Work at the new school site has begun and although rather muddy when I visited recently it is so refreshing to see progress. You will see regular updates on the school website.

The recent Surrey Ski Trip for our pupils was again a really good experience for some of our youngsters, a big thank you to all of the adults who gave their time so that this could again be a success.

Finally I wish to thank all the parents who contributed towards the school evaluation providing useful comments towards the new development plan. It is very important that we consider everyone in our small but vibrant community as we plan for the future.

Susan Carpenter

Portesbery Partnerships

Ros Blackburn's talk 'Logically Illogical' was heard by many of you and other families and staff from across Surrey Heath. We hope you found hearing Ros' insight into Autism interesting.

Our facebook page continues to be a success. Our favourite feature is sharing the achievements of the students. Recently a parent asked for recommendations for an optician, hairdresser or dentist. Lots of parents shared these. If you have any questions, please let us know and we will share them.

Unfortunately the Secondary Sibling events planned for this year have been cancelled due to a low level of interest. However we have some plans to revamp this service for the new academic year.

Sam Coomber



Staffing News

Since the last Newsletter we have said goodbye to Jack Beaumont, Sarah Barrett and George Gower, who were all SNSAs.

Our new Midday Meals Supervisors have been working hard to get to know all of the children and will be a great step towards improving the quality of our playtimes, ensuring the a range of play activities are available every day for both Primary and Secondary aged pupils.



School Council

The School Council has had another busy couple of months organising fundraising activities for Sport Relief. We held a Valentine's Disco and asked all of the classes to make some decorations for the hall. There were some very pretty hearts all over the place! We have also asked everyone to try and get sponsored to complete the Portesbery Mile; swim, cycle or run! We've got some balloons to decorate the hall and playground, and some certificates and stickers for everyone who completes their mile. We'll let you know soon how much we have raised.

Cathryn

After School Club

It's been an exciting term so far; highlights included an Under the Sea themed Creative Club, a dance session led by our own Ashleigh in Kids' Choice Club, and we continued to enjoy Swim Club and Friday Club.

I hope you've already seen the Summer Term Programme with new activities (including Drumming with Ray) and old favourites too, and our revamped Tuesdays - Swim & Spa Club, chilling out in our new therapeutic spa sessions, and of course enjoying our Hydro Pool with the light displays and music on!

Rob



Note from the Health Team

Exciting news from the health team this term - firstly a huge well done to Julie (Physio Tech) for being nominated and then winning a Virgin Care Staff Award for innovation. As you know Julie makes a great difference for all our children, especially for their equipment needs and the service so well done Julie!!

Sharina (OT) left us earlier this month to go on maternity leave and Aimee (Band 5 nurse) is going on maternity leave this Friday. Our FE class benefited from a health promotion session on pregnancy and babies and a lot of fun was had by all especially sharing baby photos. We will have a new Band 5 nurse joining the team called Emma Jackson who will be at Portesbery while Aimee is on maternity leave and Cherry (OT) will be covering in Sharina's absence.

Elaine

Funding and Class Contributions

As you are all probably well aware by now the school will be facing challenging times with regard to reduced levels of funding. It is our intention to minimise the impact that this will have on our students and the quality of the teaching and learning opportunities provided, however, this can only be achieved by working in partnership with families.

We are regretfully having to increase the amount that we request as a voluntary contribution each term to go towards such things as snacks and drinks, the cost of cookery ingredients, petrol for the school mini-bus (which enables regular outings for each pupil), and educational visits. We will be writing to you early next term to ask for this voluntary contribution.

Debbie