



Ravensmead Primary School

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No.3 NEWSLETTER

3rd January 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

I very much hope that you and your family had a most enjoyable and healthy Christmas and New Year. I am happy to be able to report a smooth start to this Spring Term 2017. Children and staff alike were generally rather surprised about the early start to the day having had over 2 weeks to relax at home.

I thought it might be helpful to give you some information about a range of school issues.

Free School Meals

Family circumstances continue to change and if this is the case for you and you now feel that you may be entitled to Free School Meals, please consult the link on the website under the heading "Community" <http://www.staffordshire.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals> or talk, in confidence, to the School Office staff.

Uniform

Our children are generally very smart and well prepared for school but could I politely remind you that the school policy is that children should come to school in black shoes. Of course we would always understand when shoes split or become damaged there may be a few days when children have to come to school in alternative footwear but at the start of this New Year could I ask that you ensure that your child has school shoes. It is also a good time in the year to ensure that each **and every item of uniform, PE kit and school coats are fully labelled so that the school Team Captains can, as part of one of their responsibilities, quickly return the items to your child.** For older children, of course, we would be encouraging you to insist that your own child takes responsibility for their belongings.

Can I also ask for your support in ensuring that your child is taking responsibility themselves for bringing swimming kits, musical instruments and other items into school determined by their timetable. We encourage our older children to record an accurate timetable in their Reading/Homework Diaries.

The Curriculum

By the end of this week we hope to publish on the website the Curriculum Letters for your child's class for this term. I do hope that you will take a moment to find this information which will give you a good idea for their learning for this Spring Term and how you may be able to support this learning at home. In addition the Extra Curricular/Clubs letter should be going out this week in advance of most Clubs starting next week. The Clubs must operate on a first come first served basis and, as usual, additional copies of this letter will be available in the rack in the school entrance.

Parent Governor Elections

I will be writing to you shortly with reference to the upcoming Parent Governor Elections. Mr Steve Swatton, the Chair of Governors, and myself will be available at certain times to meet with prospective candidates to outline the election procedures and the responsibilities attached to the position. In the first instance parents may wish to contact the Office for further information.

Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs DVD

You may be aware that one of our ex parents recorded the Key Stage 2 Production of Snow White & the Seven Dwarfs, these DVDs are available for advance order at a cost of £6.00 (Cash or cheque made

payable to Ravensmead Primary School.) Please send the money in a clearly labelled envelope with your child's name and class and ask your child to give it **directly to Mrs Webb first thing in a morning** over the next couple of weeks, before registration.

Absence

Can I remind you that we ask you to phone school before 9.20 giving a reason for your child's absence on that day and upon their return write a short note to the Class Teacher explaining the absence. All schools have a responsibility to monitor absence closely but I can tell you how pleased I was recently to announce record numbers of our pupils who had 100% attendance throughout the Autumn Term. The school is once again currently running at about 96% attendance but we strive to get it higher than this. It is the policy of all schools to discourage "term time holidays" but if you are considering this you need to collect the request paperwork from the school office and please do not book anything before the school has had time to reply to your request.

School Council "Approach" Fund Raising

As you may be aware, the School Council chooses a charity to support during each academic year and their chosen charity for this year is "Approach" which is a local organisation supporting the needs of older people with dementia. You will recall that we recently held a fundraising day in school where children were requested to wear an item of Christmas clothing or accessory and donate £1 to this worthy cause. On behalf of the School Council I would like to thank you for your donations which amounted to £380.

In addition to our chosen charity for the year, I am also pleased to report that the recent Poppy Appeal also raised a fantastic £378 in school.

Parking and Dropping Off

Unfortunately it was necessary to inform you last term that we had another **near miss** at the school entrance as a car was reversing. I have had a number of parents who have thanked me for attempting to address this issue which should concern us all. Can I again encourage you to make use of the Football Club facility 8.30-9.00am and 3.00- 3.30pm and avoid at all times stopping, turning or reversing close to the school entrance. Once again could I ask you to park courteously at all times, avoiding blocking any driveways. Could I also at this time of the year encourage parents to tell their children to wear their high vis vests which everyone has.

Litter

At Ravensmead we are fortunate that we have very little litter. It does appear sometimes at the end of the day when parents are collecting children. Could I ask you to reconsider the sharing of sweets on your child's birthday, it may be that you can think of another creative way to celebrate this important day with your child's classmates. It is very rare that the school receives complaints but I did recently from a resident on New Road who was complaining about litter left outside her house at the end of the school day. Could I ask that you carefully monitor your child at this time and we continue to be grateful for the use of the Chapel car park to drop off and collect and, therefore the children should only be walking up the steps and the path to the car park, not jumping off the entrance or playing around the side of the Chapel. Without the support of the Chapel the parking issue would be even worse close to school, can I therefore ask for your support in this matter and only use the path up to the car park, keeping off the rest of the well kept grounds.

Key Stage 2 Snacks etc

You will be aware that we are encouraging the children to take a little bit of exercise on the playground before registration in the morning, Key Stage 2 children also have the opportunity to wear "fit bits", technologies which monitor their exercise at lunchtime. The Autumn Term PE and Games lessons were largely this year structured around exercise and you may be aware that in recent years we have doubled our swimming provision for Year 3 and 4. The NHS Height and Weight monitoring of last year's Reception and Year 6 pupils alarmed school in as much as the Year 6 records indicated that close to 1/3 of the cohort were judged to be "overweight" by their own formula. A wide range of sporting based extra curricular opportunities have been a strength of Ravensmead's provision for many years. The school continues to work with Compass Catering to ensure a range of balanced meals and also at snack time I am insisting that there are always fruit options in addition to the usual snacks. I would very much welcome any parental comments on these issues.

Breakfast Club

This school provision is only for pupils requiring breakfast and it only runs from 8.40 in the morning. Families who require before school care for their child should contact the Silver Fox Care Club who operate from 7.30 in the morning via the owner, Mrs Sylvia Binns on 07813 679706. Unfortunately it may be necessary to “modify” our own breakfast club if the numbers continue to grow to unmanageable levels.

I would like to finish by once again wishing you and your families a very happy New Year and I am sure that we can continue to work closely together to make Ravensmead into “the best that we can be”.

Yours sincerely

Mr D Bell
Headteacher