



## September Newsletter 2013 (1)

Welcome back to a new school year. The children all look very smart in their uniforms and have returned to school with plenty of enthusiasm. I would like to extend a special welcome to all our new families that have joined us this September. I hope that you soon feel 'at home' in our learning community.

You are invited to meet your child's main teacher for a 'settling in' consultation on either the 24<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup> of September. Please see the return slip at the end of this letter which you must return, showing your preferred times for an appointment. Once the appointments have been made they will be confirmed in your child's home-school link book.

Obviously, you may need to speak with your child's teacher at other times and these are our lines of communication:

- Non-urgent questions/information can be written in the Home School Link Book which teachers read most days and certainly by the end of each week.
- You can email any of the school staff at [admin@rettendon.essex.sch.uk](mailto:admin@rettendon.essex.sch.uk) and they will reply or call you back as soon as possible
- For more urgent concerns you can make an appointment to see your child's teacher after school. If you do this via the school office they will be able to check the teacher's diary and clear a slot for you as soon as possible.
- Mrs Barber has an 'Open Door' policy and will try her best to speak to any parents/carers at any time provided she is not already in a meeting.

In addition, all our general information and key policies are on the website. The only rule we have about meeting with teachers is that you **do not** come in the school in the mornings asking for '5 minutes of the teachers time'. This is because it rarely is only 5 minutes you need and teachers are too busy at this time of day preparing their classrooms and lesson materials. It is much better to make a dedicated appointment time and give your concern the time it deserves.

## School Security

Due to tighter Ofsted regulations we have to be even more vigilant regarding adults on site. **ONLY** parents who are going to Class 1 to settle their children in should come in the back gate in the mornings. Older children must be left at the gate and if you have any school business to attend to you must come to front reception via the external alleyway adjacent to the school playground. At 'home time' all parents (except those who are meeting children in Class 1) must wait on the playground. The courtyard area is strictly for 'Before and After School Club' children and parents of those in Class 1.

### **Medicines/Fist Aid Policy**

Please be reminded that medicines must transfer **adult to adult** and you or your representative must hand medicines to the duty personnel at the back gate at 8.45am and collect medicines from the front reception at the end of the day. If the medicines are newly prescribed you will need to fill in a form at reception to authorise our staff to administer the medicine.

### **Sending in Money and Notes**

For those families new to the school all notes, slips and money sent into school must be brought in **by your child** in a sealed and well labelled envelope. This envelope reaches the front reception via our internal school pouch system. This is the only secure way of handing in money and letters. Please do not come to the front desk in person with money. The front reception is a very busy area where staff can be easily distracted and money mislaid. It is not always the safest place for money to be left either, as this is the public access to the building.

### **Autumn Term Clubs and Music Lessons**

Please find attached a timetable of clubs that are available this term. Please return the Registration Form, as soon as possible, **(through the class pouch system)** indicating which club/s your child/children would like to attend. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

### **Holidays and the New Law**

You will now be aware that the law has changed and applications for time away from school for holidays can no longer be accepted. Your child can only take leave from school in exceptional circumstances, for which proof will be required. The new application form and guidance for leave can be found on our website.

To try and help families to secure cheaper holidays the school closes for **two weeks** at Whitsun (please refer to the dates list attached). As all other schools close for one week you can often secure a cheaper holiday during the second week. We also close early at the end of term. We can do this because our school day is slightly longer than the statutory school day timings, hence allowing for an early closure and an early 'get away' for you.

### **Events and Dates List**

The new school events and dates list, printed on blue paper, is included in this bundle. All dates will also be published on the school website.

### **Duty Personnel for the Back Gate**

I would like to appeal to any parents who can help the school by unlocking the back gate in the mornings. The process involves coming in to the front entrance at about 8.35am and collecting the key to open the padlock on the school gate. It also includes receiving any medicines and bringing them to the front reception. It is a relatively quick duty but really helps the school as teachers and

staff can continue with their preparation for the day instead of coming down to unlock the gate. If you can help on even one or two mornings there is a rota to 'sign up' to in the front reception.

### **Ordering School Uniform**

The school places uniform orders once a month (on the last working day of the month). Order forms can be obtained from the office or printed out from the school website. Please allow time for this system when planning your purchases.

### **Earrings and PE**

Essex County Council has a policy that clearly states that earrings must not be worn for PE. However, we are aware that those families new to the school may not be aware of this information. So, we have decided that younger children (Years FS to Year 2) who may need time to practice taking their earrings out can have until half term to achieve this (or parents must remove them before the children come to school on PE day). For these children, surgical tape must be provided from home to cover the piercing and parents must be aware that their child wears the earrings during PE at the parent's own risk. We shall not take any responsibility for injury caused by earrings or their loss or damage. After the October half term all earrings must be removed for PE without exception. Children in Year 3 and above will be expected to remove their earrings themselves at all times regardless.

### **MacMillan Coffee Morning**

Mrs Marsh will be hosting a coffee morning on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September in the school hall from 8.45-10.45am for parents of children in Class 1, parents new to the school and those interested in supporting the FRS. Cakes should be brought in by the children on Friday morning and delivered to the hall. Any left-over cakes will be sold after school

### **Volunteering in School**

Volunteering with us can be very rewarding and if you can spare the time we always need help in the following ways:

- Becoming part of the parents association; **'The Friends of Rettendon School'**, helping to organise functions and activities that benefit the pupils.
- Working with children during Golden Time on Friday afternoons (this can be anything from outdoor games to arts and crafts).
- Becoming a Governor (new vacancies will be announced shortly).

Please put a note in your child's Home School Link Book if you are interested in any of the above.

**Parents' Consultations Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> and Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> September**

**Response deadline Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September**

We would like to offer you a 10 minute appointment to meet with your child's class teacher to discuss how well your child has settled into the new academic year and agree future targets. On the reply slip below select the day and time slots most suitable for you and return the slip to the school as soon as possible (via the class pouch system). We will endeavour to allocate you a day and time close to your request. Your appointment will be confirmed in the child's **Home-School Link Book by Friday 20<sup>st</sup> September**. For this term's appointment you will only meet your child's registration class teacher (regardless of setting).

We are sorry, but your children should not be brought to the consultation appointment and due to insurance purposes **must not be brought** into the building out of hours.

Additionally, to ensure there are no last minute alterations to the teachers' appointment schedules we are implementing a deadline for your requests for appointments. Hence, the deadline for your request to reach the office is **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September**, by the end of the school day. **Under no circumstances will appointments be offered after this date.**

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**RETURN SLIP**

Childs Name.....

Registration Class.....

Please show your preferred time slots by ticking at last two choices.

	4.00pm-5.00pm	5.00-6.00pm	6.00pm-7.00pm	7.00-8.00pm	Anytime
<b>Tues 24<sup>th</sup></b>					
<b>Thurs 26<sup>th</sup></b>					

**Response deadline Friday 13<sup>th</sup> September**

We are very sorry but all 'return slips' handed in after 13th cannot be accepted.

