

## Ashgrove Primary School

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# Newsletter

September 2008

## Welcome Back!



As summer rain has turned to autumn rain we at Ashgrove have kept the gloom at bay by welcoming the children back after the long break. It's lovely to see the new Primary Ones bringing their own special magic to the school as they settle in. We look forward to doing our best for every child again this year, and to working with the many parents and friends that make up the Ashgrove community.

## Black Shoes

Many thanks for your help with uniforms; especially for the support you have shown for the black shoes, which make all the difference. Uniform ensures that all children are seen as equal, it contributes to a working atmosphere and of course it is a reminder to the wider community of Ashgrove's good reputation, but it is only with your help that the children come to school looking so well. It's appreciated. Please check that each item is labelled!

## Photographs

The photographer will be in school on Monday 27 October. More information will be sent closer to the time.

## Nut Allergy

With a number of our children suffering from severe nut allergies we must ask that no items containing nuts or nut traces be sent to school. Thanks.



## Results of Questionnaire

Last term you were invited to give us feedback on the service that we provide. Replies were received from about one third of our families with the vast majority being very positive. (A summary is enclosed.) During 2008/2009 we will address a number of suggestions, such as the provision of information about your child's curriculum and information about the role of governors. We will continue to promote healthy eating in the school as well as lobbying for a drop-off lay-by and the replacement of our mobiles with bricks and mortar.

## **School Dinners**

I would remind you that money for dinners should only be sent to school on a Monday. This should be accompanied with a slip to indicate the days on which the meals are required.

Slips have been attached to this newsletter.

Our new cook, Mrs Cairns, has informed me that the deep-fat fryer has reached the end of its days. There will be no chips until it has been replaced.

## **Medical Appointments**

Where possible, all dental and medical appointments should be made outside school hours.

## **Parent Interviews**

Parent/teacher interviews will be held:

Thur 23 & Mon 27 October: P7

Thur 13 & Mon 17 November: P1-6

## **Security**

In order to maintain the security and safety of our children I would remind you to report to reception upon entering school premises. A member of staff will deliver any item or message as necessary, or find the person you need to meet. This routine should also be followed for the mobile classrooms and playgrounds. Thanks.

## **Notes to Parents**

Keep checking your child's bags for notes. Whenever possible these will be sent on Mondays and Thursdays

I would also request that parents look over homework and sign the appropriate books/reading cards.



## **Holidays Plus**

Please find enclosed a list of the school closures for the year. Our policy is to close at 12:30pm at the end of each full term and before parent interviews, but to close at the normal times before half-term holidays.

## **Update of Pupil Information**

This will be carried out formally within the next few weeks but please remember to keep us up-to-date with any changes in contact/medical details during the year.

## **Volunteers Please**

We are required to update the vetting of our volunteers every year. September is also an appropriate time to encourage more parents and friends to sign up. If you are interested in helping individuals, groups or classes in any way, or to be available when we might need that extra pair of eyes or hands, please contact the secretary.

## **Board of Governors – Parents**

A meeting will be held in the school canteen at 7pm on Monday 29 September to elect two parent representatives to the Board of Governors - more information to follow.

## **Parent Teacher Association**

The Annual General Meeting of the PTA will follow the Board of Governors election on Monday 29 September.

## **Medicine**



If your child needs to take any form of medication during school hours, please speak to the class teacher who will give you a form to complete with a signature and details of the dosage.

## **Transfer Tests**

Please note that this year's tests will be held on 7 and 21 November. Unless sitting the tests, no child should enter the school grounds before 11:10am on these dates.

## **Absence**

If your child is unable to attend school, please alert the school on the first morning of absence.

## **After School Activities**

You should now have information about the times and choices of our clubs, which will commence during the week beginning 29 September. With a large staff we are able to offer a reasonable range, but the school policy will remain to prioritise senior classes. Your child's turn will come!

## **Change to Internet Policy**

Please note the following change to our internet policy. In order to have photographs on the website fairly soon after an event such as our nativity service or sports day, permission will be presumed and individual parents informed immediately with a copy of the photograph being posted to their home address. Children will, of course, appear anonymously and parents will continue to reserve the right to have any photograph of their child removed. If you are unhappy with this arrangement, please contact the principal

## **A Tactful Request!**

In Ashgrove we understand how important relationships are in a child's education and we are keen to keep in touch about any problem or news that is important to your child, however it is not practical for a teacher to have a lengthy conversation at the classroom door when preparation, supervision and learning are the priorities. The secretary or I will be happy to set up an appointment for anything other than a quick exchange of information. Many thanks.

## Flora Love Your Heart Tokens

Those of you who use Flora margarine and who enjoy the internet may be interested in helping us collect vouchers for free school cookery equipment. What you have to do is find the code on the greaseproof paper layer of the promotion tubs of Flora and log onto [www.florahearts.co.uk](http://www.florahearts.co.uk) then follow the links to where you will be asked to name the town (Newtownabbey, County Antrim), select the school and key in the token's code. Thank you to the parent who registered Ashgrove.

<http://www.florahearts.co.uk/Consumer/ArticleIFrameContainer.aspx?Path=Consumer/HealthyHeartLiving/CookingWithSchoolsIFrame/AboutTheCampaign>.

## Gifted & Talented

As a complement to the teachers' carefully differentiated group-work and our support for children with special educational needs the school has now introduced a policy for gifted and talented children. If you think your child has an exceptional ability in some area, please talk to the class teacher or myself.

## Bike the Baltic

While the rest of us were enjoying local rain or Spanish sunshine Mr Agnew was cycling from Warsaw in Poland to Vilnius in Lithuania to raise money for Marie Curie Cancer Care. This epic ride of 621km brought in sponsorship from all arts and parts, including a non-uniform day in Ashgrove. With your help Mr Agnew's total is likely to finish in excess of £10,000.



Cool shades Mr Agnew!

## Road Safety

**I would be grateful if you would please remind all childminders, grandparents and friends that no vehicles should be brought into the school grounds other than by staff, delivery personnel and disabled drivers with stickers.**



## Pastoral Care, Good Behaviour & Discipline

A number of policies relating to pastoral care are currently under review. Updated copies will be sent home before the end of September. Please read them and talk to your children about safety, stranger danger, bullying, etc. In particular remind them – as we do – about asking for help **whenever** they might need it.