

PILGRIMS POST

UP TO DATE NEWS FROM PILGRIMS PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

ISSUE DATE: 4 SEPTEMBER 2009

The children have come back to school in high spirits, full of energy and enthusiasm. The school field was a delight to watch on Thursday morning as the children explored forgotten corners, climbed trees and conquered the fort once more. The new children were indistinguishable from the rest as they quickly gained confidence and played with their new friends. Inside the school the children quickly settled to routines and there was an amazing sense of purpose and calm, long may it last!

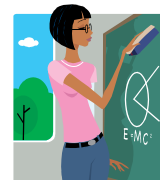
I have now received notification that the Inspection report will be ready for publication next week. I am delighted with the final draft and I am sure that you will be when you finally receive a copy. Although the report found no issues we are not complacent. We have worked very hard to create an exciting curriculum for the children at school and we are going to continue this work over the course of the coming year. Roger Cole, an educational consultant, will be continuing his work with us this term with a focus on the creative curriculum in Year One. In the summer term we will have staff training with Mike Askew, the mathematics professor at Kings College and one of the co-founders of the prestigious BEAM mathematics project. Mike specialises in making mathematics really exciting through creative approaches to teaching. Both consultants will be working with the children as well as the staff and we hope that they enjoy the experience.



We have covered the roof of the camouflaged cave on the field with sedum over the summer break and I have reminded the children not to climb on it. Please could you do the same as you bring your children to school in the morning or collect them at the end of the day? The Little Pilgrims playground has new Tarmac so hopefully the water will drain away more effectively. We now have the finished sensory panels

for the Little Pilgrims playground. Hopefully they will be fixed in place over the weekend ready for the children to enjoy next week.

I am delighted to welcome the following new staff to school this term: Mrs Laura Auld in Year 2, Mrs Jacqueline Morales in Year 1 and Miss Alyssa Holdgate in Reception as Class Teachers; Mrs Maxine Spriggs in Year 2 and Miss Ellie Chadwick in Year 3 as Teaching Assistants; Mrs Mary Collins as Room Leader within Nursery, and Miss Charlotte Barritt and Jessica Hemmings as Nursery Nurses within Little Pilgrims. Mrs Emma Mayles has moved from Little Pilgrims to become a Teaching Assistant within the main school and we are pleased to welcome back Mrs Susan Quince from maternity leave into her role as Gifted and Talented Co-ordinator. In addition we have four new voluntary classroom assistants who are undertaking their training with us – Mrs Ismail, Mrs Eeles, Mrs Walker and Miss Keyworth.



Sadly Mr Oliver will be leaving us in a few weeks time to embark on his postgraduate law degree. The children he worked with in Year 3 last year benefitted immensely from his input and I am sorry that he has decided not to stay with us. I am sure he will make a wonderful barrister.

We are all very excited that Miss Prockter has announced her engagement. Following a very romantic proposal in the Grand Canyon



Miss Prockter said “yes” and is now busily planning her wedding. Unfortunately for us, her fiancé, Phil, lives in Wolverhampton so Miss Prockter has handed her resignation in and will be leaving us at Christmas. I am very sorry to see Christine leave. She has achieved an incredible amount during her time at Pilgrims. She has prepared the choirs and orchestras who have represented the school on so many occasions, including many victorious trips to the Bedfordshire Festival of Music, Speech and Drama. She has also given hundreds of children an excellent start to their piano or recorder playing. I am sure that this Christmas we will see something very special before she leaves us for her exciting new life in the West Midlands.

The term is packed with opportunities for the children and we hope that you will be as involved as you can be with the events in school. Next week we will be holding parent teas for each year group in Reception and above. Details were provided in the Parent Handbook at the end of last term. Year 2 and 3 parents are invited in on Tuesday afternoon, Year One on Wednesday afternoon and Reception on Thursday afternoon.



Parents are invited to meet their child's class teacher from 2.30pm. Afternoon tea will be provided! It is great if you can attend. Although we provide you with as much information as we can, each teacher has slightly different routines and the afternoon offers you an opportunity to discuss the year ahead for your child. If other commitments prevent you from attending, the class teachers will ensure that a précis of the afternoon is sent home. Another date for your diary is the Pilgrims Parents Autumn Tea Party which takes place on Sunday, 20th September at 2pm until 4pm.

Year 3 are off to Chellington for their first residential visit of the year next week. Last year's group had a wonderful time so we wish for good weather for them.

The week beginning the 14th of September is our annual Healthy Happy Heart Week. Further details will follow but be prepared to don your trainers and join us for aerobics each morning at 9am!



At 7pm on the 14th September parents of children in Nursery and Reception are invited to join us for a presentation on the way in which we teach reading at Pilgrims. To help with the arrangements for the evening please email school or let your child's class teacher know if you are able to attend. We will provide light refreshments for you.

I will not be in school during the week beginning the 21st of September as I will be inspecting another school. This is an invaluable part of my work as it allows me the opportunity to observe good practice in other schools and to bring back the best aspects of what I

see to Pilgrims. Mrs Waddington will be available to help parents with urgent enquiries during this week.

You should receive a dates' card today which gives you further details of this term's events. Unfortunately there was an error regarding the times for 29th September Junior Heads' evening. Year 2 parents are invited to come along at 6pm until 7pm to discuss the residential trip which next year will be to Hindleap Warren. The Junior Heads' evening will then start at 7pm when parents of Years 1 and 3 may join to discuss your child's future education.

Can I please remind parents that children should be in full school uniform at all times. They all look very smart at the moment but it is worth noting that hair slides, scrunchies and bands should be yellow or green and that boys should have short hair cuts. If girls' hair is long enough to be put in a pony tail then please do so as this reduces the spread of head lice enormously, plaits are even better but more time consuming! Already some children do not have swimming caps so we will start to provide caps to children who don't have their cap for two consecutive lessons and add the cost to your termly bill.



After discussions with a podiatrist we have decided to review our verucca 'policy'! Current thinking is that veruccas are a common childhood problem and that they only need to be actively treated if they are painful. We have struggled to ensure that children wear verucca socks in the past with little success in stemming the spread of veruccas. If your child



does have a verucca the advice I have received is to use a disposable emery board once or twice a week to file over the verucca. Most veruccas will disappear of their own accord over a period of about 6 months and although children are not then immune from re-infection they are far less likely to catch another verucca. If your child does have a verucca there are waterproof liquids which can be painted on top of the verucca to prevent the spread when the child is in the changing rooms. Please use this rather than verucca socks.

Can I also remind parents that earrings are not permitted at any time in school. Please ensure that they are removed before children come to school each morning.

We offer parents an opportunity to order uniform from the main office which is normally ready for collection 24 hours later. Please do collect orders promptly as we don't have an enormous amount of space at the front desk. Orders not collected within a week will be returned to the shop.

Miss Hannah informs me that the ballet uniform for Monday's lessons has changed to a pale lilac colour. Please don't worry if you have bought the blue uniform, this is perfectly acceptable unless your child is taking an exam, when they will need the new uniform.



Pilgrims Parents would like to remind you that applications for the 100 Club need to be in by next Friday, 11th September. If you have any queries please contact Mrs Goldwin on 01234 824684.

I hope that your child has come home full of enthusiasm for their first few days in school. It has been a delight to have them back in school. Please do feel free to drop in and see me if you have any comments or you can contact me directly using my email: mshaw@harpur-trust.org.uk

I hope that you and your children have a wonderful autumn term.

Best wishes

Maxine Shaw
Headteacher