

FROM THE HEADTEACHER...

Welcome to our October newsletter. This has been a very long half term and I think everyone is ready for a break next week. I'm really pleased about how well the year has started and I hope we can carry on seeing both children and staff doing their best to deliver excellence. Have a great half term break and I look forward to seeing you all back on Tuesday 3 November!

Iain C. Gilmour

SCHOOL DINNER ORDERING AND PAYING – GOING ONLINE!

From January 2016, we will be moving to an online system to order and pay for school dinners. This will reduce the queues in the morning and hopefully make life easier for everyone. We will of course give you more details nearer the time but for now the headlines are:

- Meals can be ordered the night before or in the morning at home.
- Alternatively children can order their own meal in the classroom.
- You will need a debit or credit card to set up an online account – this is a cashless system
- Payments for meals will automatically come from that account.
- You will get a text when your balance falls below £5



We think this is a sensible step forward and brings us bang up to date with the world of online shopping and “click and collect”. We will send a special newsletter nearer the time with full details but wanted to give you as much notice of the changes.

SCHOOL UNIFORM JUMPERS

I'm pleased that the new uniform is so popular. Children being children, we are getting a few jumpers going missing so it is really important that jumpers are very clearly named. However some children are taking home jumpers that are named but with someone else's name. I hope this is by accident but please do check your child has the right jumper and if for some reason it is not, please bring it to the office so we can return it. As a father with three school-age children myself, I know buying uniform costs more and more each year so please support us with this.



LATES

Unfortunately the number of children coming in late every day is on the rise again going from 9 in the first week back to an unacceptable 60 last week. This causes massive disruption to the school and there are very few excuses we hear that are acceptable. To remind you, a child will be late if they arrive after 8:50am even by one minute. Children who are delayed in the dinner queue are not marked as late and from next year, this will no longer be an issue. We are now back to texting families of children who are regularly late and will be referring persistent offenders to the Education Welfare Officer. Thank you to the vast majority of you who make sure children are on time and I hope everyone else can show the same commitment to school as you do.



SCHOOL WEBSITE

I have been given a preview of the new school website which fits in with the corporate style of the academy trust but also keeps our identity as an individual school. The current website, although different from last year, was a temporary site and the new one has many improvements such as separate menus rather than one big one. I'm promised the site will be ready for November and when it goes live, I'll send a text out. One thing to watch: we are returning to our old address of www.isambard.portsmouth.sch.uk so please update your favourites!



CAROL CONCERT

Despite Mothercare already having a "seasonable" display up already, it is still October and I refuse to talk about anything to do with trees, crackers and turkey.

However I am reluctantly compelled to forewarn you that our Carol Concert is on Wednesday 16 December at 2pm at St Mary's Church. This being an odd year (in purely mathematical terms) we will be singing a range of traditional carols – and by "we" I mean children and parents! I hope that everyone is able to join us for this community event which is the only time in the year we are able to bring all of the school and all our parents/carers together. However if you would prefer your child did not take part for religious reasons, please write to me at school and you will need to collect them at 12pm on the day of the Concert as school will be closed that afternoon.



HALLOWEEN DISCO AND "TRICK OR TREAT"

My thanks to the PTA for organising the Halloween discos. It was lovely to see the hall full of excited, costumed children enjoying themselves so much despite the DJ! My thanks too to the members of staff who were able to help as well.

Being somewhat old and grumpy, I'm not a fan of "trick or treating" so every year I share the Hampshire Constabulary link for a "sorry not here" poster. We will do an assembly on respecting the choices of those who want to take part and those who would rather not as well as staying safe by not knocking on strangers' doors and having an adult with you.

The link is: <http://www.hampshire.police.uk/internet/news-and-appeals/campaigns/halloween-no-trick-or-treat>



TERM DATES

INSET days next year are 2 November, 4 January, 22 February and 6 June

Autumn Term 2015
Tue 1 September - Fri 18 December

Spring Term 2016
Mon 4 January - Thurs 24 March

Summer Term 2016
Mon 11 April - Wed 20 July

Half Term
Mon 26 October - Fri 30 October

Half Term
Mon 15 - Fri 19 February

Half Term
Mon 30 May - Fri 3 June

Christmas
Mon 21 December - Sun 3 January 2016

Easter Holidays
Fri 25 March - Fri 8 April

May Day – Mon 2 May