



FROM THE HEADTEACHER...

The clocks have gone back and suddenly the nights are dark – great for bonfires and fireworks but disastrous for allotment holders like me. It also means that children wearing school jumpers in the evening are not terribly visible so please let's keep everyone safe. We have a couple of Christmas dates confirmed including the Carol Concert and the Christmas Fair and we will let you know as soon as possible when all the other activities are planned. However we still have November to get through first and then we can argue about when to put the tree up!

Iain C. Gilmore

STAFF NEWS

We are delighted to say that Deb Welling has returned to school following her illness. Ms Welling will be working part-time to begin with building up to full time hopefully before the end of this term. I am sure you will want to join with me in welcoming her back!

My other staff news concerns where staff are working. Mrs Cope and Mrs Paine have moved into new offices which were the old Golden and Yellow rooms at the top of the stairs on the southern side of the school. The old leadership room which is the room at the back of the ICT suite is now called our "learning support room" which is where Ms Welling now has her workbase. Our new family support worker, Owen Greenaway, is based there when he is in school.



If you need to speak to any member of staff, please ask at the office and we will arrange an appointment for you if they are not immediately available. Please remember that teachers are very busy first thing in the morning getting ready for the day which is why we ask parents not to go up and see them without having an appointment: the best time to grab them for a quick chat is at the end of the day on the playground!

SOCIAL MEDIA

I am told that Facebook, Twitter and other social media sites are still proving very popular except with me: I still use an old manual typewriter to contact my family.

The school and Trust do have a social media policy which is available at www.tsatrust.org.uk (About Our Trust → Academy Policies → social media policy) which essentially says that we should not be contacting family members via social media such as Facebook. I will of course be reminding staff about this but wanted to make it clear to you that if staff decline "friend" requests or "block" you, it is not personal!



SCHOOL DINNER ORDERING AND PAYING – GOING ONLINE!

A reminder that from January 2016, we are moving to an online cashless 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 WEBSITE

Our new website has gone online thanks to the Trust’s IT wizards and I hope you find the information contained on there helpful and easy to find: certainly the new menus are much better than the old ones. The old Wordpress address is no longer in use so please update your favourites to www.isambard.portsmouth.sch.uk or scan the QR code on this page.



POPPY APPEAL

As usual we are supporting the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal. We are selling poppies and other merchandise after school in the lower hall and would ask for donations between 50p and £1. We will be observing the two minutes silence on Remembrance Day next week.



HANDWRITING

This half term we are going to have a big focus on children’s handwriting. To support this, we have bought a new computer font that matches the handwriting we’d like children to use and will be having regular handwriting sessions to make sure children’s presentation is excellent. We have spoken to Meredith so will match the handwriting that they teach so it shouldn’t be anything new. If you have any questions, please come in and ask.



COOL MILK

We are able to offer milk to children who wish to have it via the Cool Milk scheme. Children who already get a free school meal are entitled to free milk and for others there is a small charge. However children must be registered before we can give out the milk so if you are interested, please come and speak to Mrs Smith in the office.



CAROL CONCERT

A reminder that our Carol Concert is on Wednesday 16 December at 2pm at St Mary’s Church where we will be singing a range of traditional carols. 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.



MATHEMAGICIAN

You should have received a letter this week about the Mathemagician, Andrew Jeffery, visiting school next week to do some workshops with the children. Remember that children can buy a copy of his "Magic for Kids" book for £6 of which £1 will be donated to school. I showed the book to children this week during assembly but if you'd like to see it first, please come and ask. Please return the order form by the end of the week.



PTA EVENTS

Following the success of the Halloween discos, the PTA is organising two events for this term. A **Christmas Fair** is being held in the Lower Hall on **Friday 4 December 2015**. They are asking for donations of prizes for the tombola, cakes for the cake stall and other items. Please could these be brought in on Friday 21 November and we look forward to seeing you all at the fair.



There will be two more **Film Nights** for **Years 3 & 4** on **Thursday 10th December** (The Grinch) and for **Years 5 & 6** on **Thursday 26th November** (Elf) – please look out for letters with more details.

CHILDREN IN NEED

Children in Need day is Friday 13 November and theme is "Be a Hero!" Therefore for a donation of at least £1, we would like children to dress up as their hero be it real or fiction. As ever with our non-uniform days, please do not send children in wearing football kits or onesies but apart from that, be as creative as you can! Just one word of warning: for those many children who will want to dress up as me, I now sport rather a handsome beard...



DIARY DATES

Tuesday 10 th November	Maths Magician in school
Wednesday 11 th November	Finance, personnel, buildings governors' meeting
Friday 13 th November	Open Day for new Year 3 parents and children
Tuesday 17 th November	Children in Need "Dress as a Hero" non-uniform day
Wednesday 18 th November	Year 5 "Up for It" with Portsmouth University
Friday 20 th November	Full governing body meeting
Wednesday 25 th November	Book fair arrives for a week
Thursday 26 th November	Donation day for Christmas Fair
Friday 4 th December	"Up for It" maths workshops
Thursday 10 th December	Year 5 & 6 Film Night
Friday 11 th December	Christmas Fair 3:30pm
Wednesday 16 th December	Year 3 & 4 Film Night
Friday 18 th December	Year 6 trip to Globe Theatre
Tuesday 5th December	School reopens for Spring Term



TERM DATES

Spring term	Tues 5 January to Thurs 24 March	Half term: Mon 15 th to Fri 19 th February
Summer term	Mon 11 April to Wed 20 July	Half term: Mon 30 th May to Fri 3 Jun
		May Day: Mon 2 May

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