



Newsletter February 2015

Dear Parents

Half term is upon us! Hopefully we have seen the worst of the cold, damp weather, the colds and sickness that pupils and staff have been suffering from and the dark morning and after school journeys home. My fingers are crossed that everyone has a chance to rest and recuperate next week and that the second half of term will be warmer and healthier. For the first time ever I have not been able to hand out full attendance for week prizes to any tutor group during a half term; a sure sign that illness levels have been high.

The past weeks have been busy even though there haven't been any major stand out events. That will all change next half term; year 7's visit to France, Stars in Their Eyes, Science and Engineering Week, World Book Day, year 8's week of Shakespeare and many other activities all happen in the next few weeks. (Please keep an eye on the website for more information as well as reading the parentmails)

With next half term being so busy please take the opportunity over half term to help your child be prepared. Please go through their bag and planner with them so everything that they need to have ready is done and any unnecessary pieces of paper etc are removed. Please encourage them to check their equipment, pencil cases, PE kit, homework etc before the morning they return to school!

Thank you to all parents who completed a questionnaire at the end of last term. They have all been collated and your responses are being scrutinised by staff and governors. The analysis will be placed on the website after March's Parents' Forum on 2nd March. Your comments and responses are very important to the school and, whilst we cannot act on every comment, we do take a large number of them into consideration when making decisions that affect you and your children so we are very appreciative of those parents who, not only complete the tick section but, add comments.

Parents dropping off / picking up children

After half term we are going to become stricter about vehicles entering the school car park before, during and after school. The gates will be closed during the day to deter the casual 'drive through' to check! and gates will be closed to parents dropping off from 8.30am. Too many parents are driving in and out of the car park in a manner that causes the safety of pedestrians to be put at risk. With safety in mind we have asked the local traffic enforcement officers to challenge parents who park on pavements, perform U-turns in the entrance of school or at the junction of Station Road and other nearby roads. We will pass on the details of vehicles we see being driven / parked in a manner that is likely to cause a danger or an obstruction to pedestrians or other road users. At the end of school many pupils are not through the gates until nearer to 3.40pm so this is a more sensible time for many pick-ups to be arranged.

Have a good week and we hope to see all pupils (and staff) back fit and healthier on Monday 23rd February.

Liz Hinton

Term Dates

Spring Term 2015

1 st Half Term	Mon 5 th Jan – Fri 13 th Feb
Half Term Break	Mon 16 th Feb – Fri 20 th Feb
2 nd Half Term	Mon 23 rd Feb – Thurs 2 nd April
Easter Break	Fri 3 rd April – Fri 17 th April
Inset Day	Mon 20 th April
Term ends	Thursday 2 nd April at 2.30pm

Summer Term 2015

1 st Half Term	Tues 21 st April – Fri 22 nd May
May Day Holiday	Monday 4 th May
Half Term Break	Mon 25 th May – Fri 29 th May
2 nd Half Term	Mon 1 st June – Fri 17 th July
Term ends	Friday 17 th July at 2.30pm

Autumn Term 2015

Inset Day	Weds 2 nd Sept 2015
1 st Half Term, Yr5 only	Thurs 3 rd Sept – Fri 23 rd Oct
1 st Half Term, All School	Fri 4 th Sept – Fri 23 rd Oct
Half Term Break	Mon 26 th Oct – Fri 30 th Oct
Inset Day	Mon 2 nd Nov 2015
2 nd Half Term	Tues 3 rd Nov – Fri 18 th Dec
Occasional Day	Fri 4 th Dec 2015
Term ends	Fri 18 th Dec at 2.30pm

Further term dates can be found at:

<http://ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk/calendar/>

Dinner Money

Spring Term 2015

Per Day - £2.25

Per Week - £11.25

2nd Half Term - £65.25

Whole Term - £132.75

If your child is going on one of the various school trips please deduct the appropriate amount

Cheques payable to

Ralph Sadleir School

Please put the child's name and 'dinner money' on the back of cheques.

Please refer to our website to read our policy on School Dinners Bad Debt

<http://ralphsadleir.herts.sch.uk/school-dinners/>

Changes to meal patterns

A meal pattern has been set for your child.

Any changes to the pre defined patterns must be notified to the school office **before registration** otherwise you will be charged for the school meal.

Please contact the office if you have any queries.

Attendance

If your child is absent from school it is essential that you telephone the school before 8.45am.

If we do not hear from you, your child's absence may be marked as unauthorised.

FREE SCHOOL MEALS APPLICATIONS

Herts County Council is working to promote free school meals and educational benefits to make sure that as many eligible children and families as possible get the support they are entitled to.

Families are able to apply in any of the following ways:

Online: at www.hertsdirect.org/freeschoolmeals.

Smartphone: using the LookingLocal app available from app stores.

Digital TV: The Community Channel – press the red button

Wii/Xbox/PS3: at www.lookinglocal.gov.uk/hertsdirect

Phone: 0300 123 4084

We can help you if you do not have access to the internet.



Ofsted Parent View

Parent View gives you the chance to tell Ofsted what you think about our school at any time of year. It is also a great tool to help us know which areas are working well and which can be developed further. This is a short questionnaire and will only take a few minutes of your time but provides Ofsted with valuable information about our school.

Parent View asks for your opinion on 12 aspects of your child's school, from the quality of teaching, to dealing with bullying and poor behaviour. Ofsted use the information you provide when making decisions about which schools to inspect, and when. By sharing your views, you'll be helping our school improve. You will also be able to see what other parents have said about the school. Or, if you want to, view the results for any school in England. Access via the school website or

<http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/login?destination=give-your-views>

Jane House – School Family Worker

I would like to introduce myself as School Family Worker for the 11 schools within the Rib Valley Schools' Partnership for Buntingford, Puckeridge and surrounding villages. I am based at Edwinstree Middle School in Buntingford.

My role is to provide greater access to a wide range of support for children, young people, parents and families.

In the New Year I will be arranging a series of Parenting courses and Family Learning Workshops. Course details will be sent via Parent Mail.

Family Lives Services over Christmas

I would like to let you know of an excellent helpline called Families Lives. They provide support 24 hours 7 days a week and continue this service throughout the Christmas holiday period;

- Family Lives free helpline – 0808 800 2222, available 24/7 and via Skype.
- Online 1 to 1 chat with a Family Lives worker – www.familylives.org.uk/how-we-can-help/online-chat
- Email - parentsupport@familylives.org.uk
- Online community support – www.familylives.org.uk
- Online parenting groups – email your phone no to ParentsSupportHerts@familylives.org.uk

Technology Tournament by Harvey.

On 4th February I was part of a group of twelve Year 8's who travelled to Shepreth to take part in a technology tournament organised by Royston Rotary Club. In teams of four, our task was to design and build a 'cable car' that carried a model 'Shelterbox', that was able to travel along a string using pulleys. We had materials to use such as various pieces of wood, dowel, string, straws, pulley wheels, elastic bands, a motor, pins, screws and nails.

Our design, although simplistic, was effective and fulfilled the brief. As well as making the 'car' we also had to write about our design and explain our design decisions to the judges. The other schools taking part were Freman College, Edwinstree, Greneway, Meridian and Roysia. Ralph Sadleir was the only school where all the teams were able to make a working design.

Mrs Bush joined a team of teachers who won their particular category. We were shown a video on Shelterbox which is a charity set up that deliver boxes around the world that contain essential items that people need after a disaster. The teachers decided to donate their prize to Shelterbox.

I had a really enjoyable day and learnt such a lot. The practical side of building the car involved many new skills to us and the thinking and design behind it was a real team effort. I would like to pass on my thanks to the Rotary Club for organising such an enjoyable and educational event.

My Teen Brain – understanding teen behaviours

From Hertfordshire County Council Childhood Support Services

Being the parent or carer of a teenager is not always easy. We can struggle to communicate, worry what our young person is doing and can be baffled by their behaviour. However, recent interesting research on the adolescent brain has given us an insight into adolescent development and enabled us to better understand this period in a young person's life.

In response to this research Hertfordshire County Council's Childhood Support Services have launched My Teen Brain. The initiative aims to highlight what happens in the teenage brain, in conjunction with experience and environment, can affect many aspects of teenage behaviours including emotions, relationships, behaviours, sleep, attitudes to risk.

Information for parents and carers is available on our dedicated website. The website is to provide practical information on all aspects of teenage development, to enable us to better understand teenage development and the role that parents play in the lives of our young people. There will also be parent workshops running, more details of which are available on the website.

<http://www.hertsdirect.org/services/edlearn/css/teenbrainlanding/>

Book Amnesty

Too many library books are not being returned - please, please check your children's rooms to see if they have any outstanding books, as we want all our books to be available to all our pupils.

Many thanks
Mrs C Woollard
Librarian

Fundraising!

The Christmas Carol Concerts at St Mary's Church raised £187.71 for the charity 'Emmaus St Albans' and the last Fund4Schools clothes collection raised £135.

Thank you so much for donating and supporting these charities.

Parking

The school works closely with our community to ensure that issues that may affect our local residents are discussed and resolved to a mutually beneficial level.

It is imperative that when parents visit our school either to drop off or pick up their children that they do so with due care and attention and do not put others at risk. They should also give consideration to our local community and park safely and in appropriate areas. It may result in parents parking a small distance away from school and walking into the school grounds to drop off or collect their children. It is important to our school that positive relations with our local community remain in place and do not diminish due to inconsiderate, dangerous parking by our parents or visitors.

On 2nd February 2015 East Herts Council launched a mobile parking enforcement service dedicated to the enforcement of yellow line 'zig-zag' restrictions outside schools. The launch of this initiative is in part a response to reports and complaints from members of the public concerning dangerous and inconsiderate parking outside schools and is in line with the Council's overall parking enforcement strategy.

The emphasis will be on deterrence, although a Penalty Charge Notice will be issued where a parking contravention occurs.

In addition to the above, the Police and the Civil Enforcement Officers will be making regular trips to the area at the beginning and end of the school day to monitor the situation. In addition to these visits a member of the Senior Leadership Team will be monitoring the situation and we will not hesitate to pass details of car number plates to the police and mobile parking enforcement service if we see dangerous driving or parking in the vicinity of our school.

Whilst writing, we would like to remind parents of the following:

- The speed limit in the school front car park is 5 MPH. This speed is set in the interest of the safety of pedestrians using this car park. On more than one occasion, we have seen near misses due to parents driving too quickly.
- Parents dropping off or collecting their children are **NOT** permitted to drive into or park in the school grounds unless they have prior agreement of the school.
- Even when this agreement has been made, if there are no available car parking spaces, please park outside the school grounds and walk into school to collect your child(ren).
- Calling into the school office with a query at the start or end of the school day is not an excuse for you to park in the school grounds. This is being monitored.
- Do not block cars already parked or double park your car as this is a hazard to other vehicles entering and exiting our car park and therefore could endanger our pupils when they are exiting our school.

We have a number of mini buses and taxis that use our parking facilities and therefore in the interest of safety other vehicles should not use the car park until after 4.00 pm.

We would also like to ask parents collecting their children to support the school in three other ways and so reinforce what we tell the pupils:

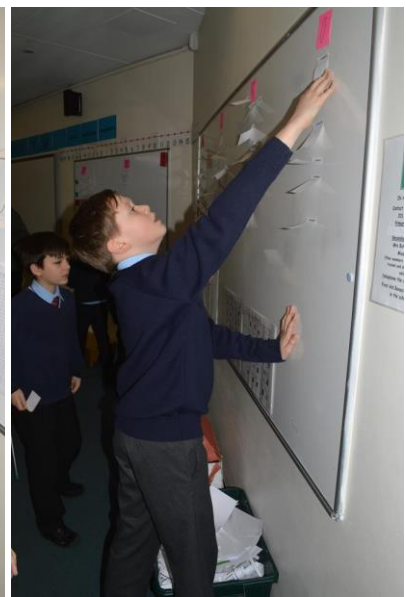
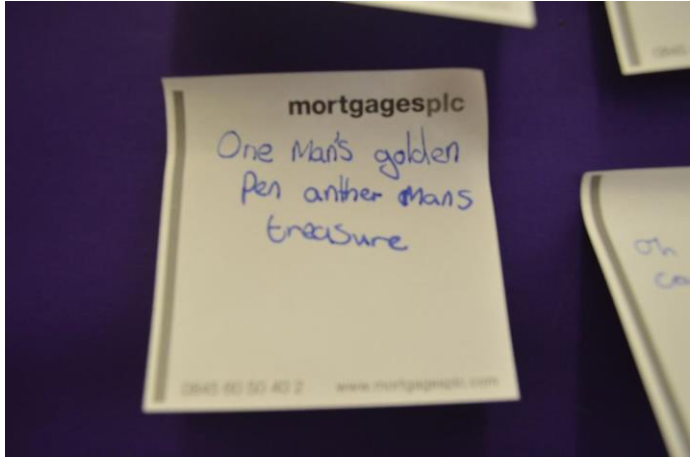
- Please use the pavements around the car park and do not take a short cut.
- Please be mindful of other pavement users and don't force them into the road.
- Please walk down to the crossing lady if you have to cross Station Road.

We appreciate your continued support in this matter.

Year 5 work hard to use persuasive language.

And what better occasion than to try and persuade bestselling children's author, David Walliams to come to our school by helicopter as part of World Book Day. Having spotted the competition being advertised on television, we decided to put our learning about persuasive language into practice. But with only 50 words to persuade him with, we knew we needed to be smart and creative. So when we discovered that David is a fan of James Bond, we decided to adapt the lyrics to the latest James Bond film "Skyfall" to get our message across. We made excellent use of flattery and humour and hope it will PERSUADE him to Skyfall into our school.

Watch this space! Well done Year 5's.



Humanities News Page

Is your child interested in the news but not sure where to start? Would they like to follow up on topics raised in the classroom about current affairs? Would you like to broaden their topics of conversation!?

Having an interest and awareness of current affairs gives students an enormous advantage both in their academic performance in the Humanities subjects as well as creating well rounded citizens of the future!

We are proud to announce the launch of our 'Humanities News Page'. Here you will find current news stories relevant to the subjects of History, Geography and RE. They may be linked to topics which have arisen in class discussion or just be a way to keep up to date with current affairs.

Please take a look - encourage your child to have a look and stay informed!

Food Technology - Cooking skills

The Technology department would like to thank all parents for supporting their children in food Technology this term. With your support pupils have made excellent progress with their cooking skills. We try to work with ingredients that are both affordable and convenient as possible to use.

Miss Lumsden

Children Email Finland

As part of their email project in Computing, all Year 5 children have been given a school email address and have then been taught how to use it. This will give them a way to send work to and from home as they progress through the school. Your child can access their email account at home through a link on the school website, ask them to show you.

Through a connection I have in Finland, (my sister is a teacher there) we have been lucky enough to set up email penfriends for children in 5B and 5M. The majority of the pupils have already received an email from their pen pal and have sent one in reply. It was great to see the surprise on their faces as they opened up their emails.

This is an interesting opportunity for the children to find out how other children live in a different country as well as practicing their writing skills. The children they are communicating with have varying levels of ability with their English. They all learn it at school and this is a useful project for them to be able to write to someone in England.

Please encourage your child to ask interesting questions about what life is like for children in Finland when writing as this will help them to get more out of the project.

Thank you

Mr B Palmen, Head of Computing



Safer Internet Day 2015 is on Tuesday 10th February 2015, with the theme 'Let's create a better internet together', offering the opportunity to focus on both the creative and positive things that children and young people are doing online, as well as the role that we all play in helping to create a better internet.

At school we have been doing a number of different activities which focus on our use of the internet and what we can do to make it better including quizzes and making pledges.

Your child will receive an information leaflet which is for you to go through with them, when you have done so can you please sign in their planner to say you have done so.

We have also attached a link from our website to the "Childnet" website which has a lot of useful information for both children and adults.

The internet is wonderful place and can be used for so many good things, as well as make our lives easier, unfortunately this is not always the case. The leaflets and the website will help to provide information about what you can do if your child comes across something that is upsetting.

Hopefully with your help, as well as your child's, we can all help to make the Internet a better and safer place for your children to use. Mr B Palmen, Head of Computing.