



ST. MARY'S RC PRIMARY SCHOOL
WHITELEES ROAD
LITTLEBOROUGH
OL15 8DU

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Headteacher: Mrs C Ruane



"We love God, We love learning, We love each other."

Parents welcome letter from Mrs Ruane

4th September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

A very warm welcome back to this new school year. I am really happy to see all our children back for this new school year, looking so smart and happy. I am sure we will all have a very productive and happy, fun filled year ahead. We especially welcome all our new children. By sending your child to our school, we expect parents to accept and ensure they follow our school policies etc. Please see the following important information:

Uniform and jewellery

All the children look so smart today in their new uniforms! Thank you so much. Can we just make sure that they *stay* looking this smart! Just a reminder that trainers, jewellery (except **small plain stud** earrings and standard watches – not apple/smart watches that connect to phones) and inappropriate hairstyles such as extreme styles and colours are not allowed. High standards are maintained in school through insisting on children being appropriately equipped for school and this includes appropriate uniform. I ask for your continued support here. Please see our website for more information and our uniform policy or see me if you are unsure of anything.

Correct PE kit should also be worn - plain white t-shirt and blue or black shorts, and plain tracksuits in winter/for outdoors. If you have any financial issues regarding uniform please speak to me or your child's teacher and we will do our best to help. We have spare, used good quality uniform and PE kits in school.

Attendance and Punctuality

The school day begins at 8.45am and finishes at 3.15pm. Registers will close at 8.55am and after that, children will be marked as late. After 9.15am a 'U' code will be given which shows on the registers as unauthorised absence. This can be picked up by the Education Welfare Officer (EWO) who does regular attendance regular inspections.

I am sure you all agree, school attendance and punctuality is so important for children's academic and social development.

Fixed penalty notices for unauthorised absences or poor attendance

I cannot authorise any holidays during term time. Unauthorised holidays during term time will result in a fixed penalty notice. This has now risen to £160 per child per parent. This is reduced to £80 if paid within 21 days. However, repeated unauthorised absences within the next 3 years now leads to higher fines.

Also, PLEASE PLEASE inform school if your child is going to be absent. Just leave a message on the school answer machine or schoolcoms app any time - even if this is late at night or early morning. If we cannot account for a child who is missing from school, I have to do a home visit, and then would need to report this to our Education Welfare Officer (EWO) or Children Social Care.

Homework

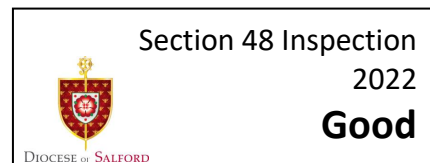
Just a reminder about homework. Please see the welcome letter from your child's teacher to explain what their homework will be, the days this will be given out and when they are expected to be returned. If the children do not complete these homework tasks at home, they will have to do this at break time on Friday. We do offer a Homework Club that all children from Year 1 to Year 6 can join. Look out for more information here on the after-school clubs' letter.

Reading is the key to all learning – new systems this year

For EYFS up to Year 2, the children will now be following a new scheme with brand new books called '**Phonics Bug**'. These parents will be invited to a session to explain this further. Children in Years 3 to 6 will be using a new scheme called '**Accelerated Reader**'. Children can either choose a colour coded reading book from our library to read at home and will do an online quiz to show they have read the book. Or they can go on '**MyOn**' and choose from a wide range of eBooks and complete the online quiz. All this will be explained in a letter coming home from



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your child's teacher. Please ensure your child reads at home as we want them to not only enjoy reading for pleasure, but it is proven that children who can read fluently, find learning throughout their school life much easier, and more accessible. Apparently, children who read in their spare time are more likely to do well in school, have strong friendships, have better mental health, better paying jobs and happier lives! We have invested a lot of money on these new schemes including lovely new books. We must ask parents to pay £5 towards a new book if they are lost or damaged.

Data/School comms

Can all parents please make sure that they let us know if any information has changed eg address or emergency contact numbers. All parents must be registered for all school communications via the schoolcomms app. This can be found by downloading the School Gateway app and registering, please contact the office if you are unable to register. All details can be updated via schoolcomms, clubs and trips booked and full communication via the app and emails. This app is the only platform used by school to communicate with parents and for payments, as we are now cashless.

School meals are provided by 'Dolce'. Parents need to register on their meal ordering site 'School Grid'. Please search for no_reply@schoolgrid.co.uk to register for this, alternately please call 01506 300310 to place orders and make payments over the phone. It is vital that parents notify Dolce of any allergen information on the School Grid system and keep these details up to date. School will not share medical information with Dolce, this is the sole responsibility of parents.

A gentle reminder that parents are expected to keep their lunch accounts in credit. Dolce will enable your account to be in debit by 2 school meals before your child's lunch account is suspended. Debt reminder emails are issued by Dolce. If your lunch account is suspended, then you will need to provide your child with a packed lunch until the debt is cleared.

We urge all parents to apply for FSM via the Rochdale Council website, even if in receipt at the time of UFSM (KS1). Any parents struggling to access either system please contact the office for support.

Healthy school

We are a healthy school with 'enhanced' healthy school status. You should only send your child with healthy snacks/packed lunches. Children are not allowed sweets or fizzy drinks. Only juice or water is allowed with packed lunches and we ask that children bring in a bottle of plain water each day to drink in class. Also, Junior children can bring snacks for break time. Only fruit is allowed for break time snacks. Children can wear their own clothes on their Birthday, rather than bringing sweets, which means they get plenty of fuss and attention! Sweet treats will only be allowed for special occasions and parties within school.

Any questions or concerns

No question or query is ever too big, small or silly regarding your child. Please always feel free to come and see your child's teacher firstly if you have any concerns. If this does not resolve your concerns, then please see Miss Moore, Mrs Heyes or myself - we will always find time to meet parents. We pride ourselves on having an open-door policy and being very approachable to parents. We would much prefer you to come and talk to us rather than just share concerns with each other, or discuss matters on social media, parents chats etc.

Meet and Greet

We would like to invite you to come and meet your child's new teacher and have a look at their new classroom and even have a wander round our school this **Thursday 5th September after school**. Please just feel free to pop in after school until 4.00pm. This gives you chance to put names to faces and have an informal chat. I will also be around to talk to/meet parents, as will Miss Moore and Mrs Heyes, who are both Special Needs Coordinators.

Weekly newsletter/school Facebook page and schoolcomms app

PLEASE read any messages sent via the schoolcomms app, as last year we had some parents complaining that they hadn't been given information or reminder messages but messages had been sent several times via the app! Finally, can I ask all parents to read the weekly newsletter - a link is sent out each week via text and it is always on our website and school Facebook page. Everything you need to know each week is here, as well as advance dates etc. I look forward to a successful and happy new school year this year for your children.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Ruane



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