



Ottery Primary School Newsletter



12th January 2018

Happy New Year!

I'd like to wish everyone a happy new year. I hope that you all had a restful and enjoyable Christmas and that 2018 is good to you all!

It's great to see the children back again ready for their next set of adventures in school. They have already taken on the challenge of our new lunchtime arrangements brilliantly. The lunchtime operation is much slicker now and all the children have played their part in this. I'd like to particularly thank the Lunch Buddies in Year 5 and the Play Leaders and Sports Leaders in Year 6 who regularly give up their time to help the younger ones during lunchtimes. They really are incredible in what they do.

The eagle eyed among you will have noticed that our IT suite is still in place. During the tendering process some interesting ideas and options presented themselves and I wanted to make sure we have considered all of these fully before making a significant financial investment for the school. We have postponed the refurbishment now until the Easter holiday but we already have a lot of the new furniture on site. We will be tendering for IT equipment during this term in order to have it on site for the beginning of the summer term.

To that end, as before, if there are any willing and able volunteers who would be willing to spare some time helping us to rip out the existing IT area during the last week of term (the week beginning Monday 26th March) we'd love to hear from you. I'd really, really like to find an electrician out there who could help us with the cabling in particular.

I apologise for the delay and any inconvenience, but, with school budgets as tight as they are, I want to make sure we can maximise every penny we spend.

Mark Gilronan

Free School Meals

While on the subject of school budgets, I feel it is worth mentioning that all children in reception, year 1 and year 2 automatically get universal free school meals.

However all parents and carers are encouraged (*really* encouraged) to apply for free school meals if you are in receipt of any of following, as this can help to attract additional '[pupil premium](#)' funding to support your child's learning.

To qualify for free school meals parents need to be receipt of one of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance

- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

If you qualify then please, **please** see the office who can help you with the application process. Alternatively, please follow this link to find out further information and apply online:

<https://new.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/school-meals/new-starter-pupil-premium>

Not only will your child receive a free school meal once they are in Year 3, but you will be helping to secure an additional £1320 per eligible pupil for the school to support the children.

Holiday Requests

Please be advised that Devon County Council are now issuing penalty notices for unauthorised absences and therefore parents and carers will be required to pay fines for unauthorised absences during term time. Please be advised that as a general rule holidays will not qualify as exceptional circumstances and will not be authorised.

Penalty Notices Penalty notices will require the parent of a child of compulsory school age, whose attendance has been unsatisfactory, to pay a fine, currently £60.00 if paid within 21 days or £120.00 if paid within 28 days. In Devon, penalty notices will be issued by the Legal Proceedings Officer employed by the Council and based within the Education Welfare Office. The Legal Proceedings Officer will ensure that the issuing of penalty notices is closely monitored and that recipients pay the relevant fine. In any case where the penalty is not paid within the appropriate period, the Local Authority will instigate action through the courts as required by legislation. A penalty notice will only be issued to a parent(s) if the pupil has at least ten, half-day unauthorised absences recorded against their name within the previous six months.

Absences

Parents and carers are reminded to contact the school by 9.30am if their child is going to be absent from school due to illness. Please contact the school absence line on 01404 815780 and leave a message or email absence@ottery-primary.devon.sch.uk. If your child has an appointment that you know about in advance, please ensure you have informed the office. Please do not rely on children to pass on messages, instead please write a short note to the office staff or let us know by phone or in person at Reception. The school has a duty of care to know the whereabouts of children and when we have not been informed of the reason for a child's absence the office staff have to spend time phoning various contact numbers to find out the reason for child's absence from school.

Primary School Admissions

If you have not already done so, primary school applications for September 2018 are open and can be made online at www.devon.gov.uk/admissionsonline

If you can't apply online, please telephone the Education Helpline on 0845 155 1019 or email: primaryschooladmissions@devon.gov.uk – the closing date is Monday 15th January 2018

Nuts – All Year Groups

May we respectfully ask parents NOT to provide their child with nuts for their mid-morning snack or lunch as some children have severe nut allergies.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

How does it work in Devon?

Sessions for parent and carers

What support is there for children with SEND?

What is 'assess, plan, do, and review'?

What do all these changes mean for me and my family?

What is the SEND Local Offer?

We will help you to understand the system in Devon. To book a place, click on the Eventbrite link.

<https://fenitonsendinfoevent.eventbrite.co.uk>

Date: Wednesday 17th January 2018

Time: 10am-12noon

Venue: Feniton Youth Centre, Silverton Rise, Feniton, EX14 3UW

For more information, call 01392 383000 ask for SEND Local Offer

Email: sendlocaloffer@devon.gov.uk

Support group for parents and carers of children with Autism and/or ADHD

First meeting: Tuesday 23rd January 2018. 10.30am - 12.00noon Room 21 The Oak Suite

The Beacon Medical Centre Sedemunda Road Sidmouth Devon EX10 9YA

Sharing ideas and experiences with behaviour issues and some practical stuff in an informal and supportive environment.

Further details from Kevin Hickson. khickson17@yahoo.com