

Ickford News

Strange that, although it is the first week back after the half term break, chatting with teachers confirmed my suspicion that it feels different and more like an end of term feel. Maybe it is the new lockdown or the pervasive sense of the unknown that has us anxious. I am yet to decide but I have to make at least some use of the newsletter to clarify a few things particularly for those parents who may have moved their children from other schools and also because we have had some changes to the administration staff.

Mrs Rhodes has been thrown in at the deep end and coped admirably during her first week. However, it has been clear that some arrangements in the past about collecting children and signing up for co-curricular clubs may have been over reliant on the relationship with Mrs Addis and her knowledge of the school. I think I am correct in saying that we ask for prior notice of such things like, who is going to collect children from school, whether they are going home the bus, if they are attending after school club or if they are taking part in an activity. Understandably, arrangements sometimes need changing at the last minute but, if they do, it is important that you **telephone** the school and speak personally to either Mrs Rhodes or Mrs Palmer. It is not good enough to send an e-mail because these may not always be read in time particularly considering the huge volume of emails that come in each day.

I also have to remind you that a deadline is set for signing up to co-curricular clubs and these should be adhered to. I recognise that there has been a drive to get everything completed by Parentmail so as to remove the possibility of queues of parents at the office during this current Covid period but, we may have to return to paper slips if the new system causes confusion and adds to a

workload rather than reduce it. I really want to maintain activities after school but I won't be able to if they cause problems. The easiest thing to do if in doubt at all, is to telephone the office and ask the question. If Mrs Rhodes is unable to answer it, she will find someone who can and get back to you.

One of the strengths of our school is the behaviour of the children. I am often asked why they behave so well and the simple answer is, "Why wouldn't they?". Our school is calm and our classrooms are conducive to a successful learning environment in which all of the children, including the most passive, quiet, eager to please and learn, children, should feel happy, safe and secure. Classical music can be heard in the corridors and it is very rare indeed to hear a raised voice. I want it to stay this way and it is not fair when a very small minority begin to have an impact on the well-being of the majority.

The teachers, support staff and I have discussed behaviour this week and agreed that some can improve. Please help your children by ensuring that they have the correct uniform on, that it is clearly labelled with their own name, that they wear a coat to school in the winter and bring their homework back completed and on time. They are the easy wins! The small minority need to have a further chat about appropriate behaviour in the classroom and understanding that their class teachers work hard and the specialist teachers such as Mrs Shackleton and Mr Fatialofa, are a bonus we can ill afford to lose.

On a much brighter note, I was relieved to finally get the Secondary Transfer tests (11+) over and done with this week. The children in Year 6 seem to have been waiting an age to complete these and there is always a sense of relief when they are out of the way and a feeling that we can now get on with things. I am always very proud of our children in Year 6 who seem so unphased by any challenges

that they have to face, particularly in terms of statutory assessments and seem to take everything in their stride. I am really lucky to be doing some teaching in the class at the moment (The Islamic Golden Age and Islam the religion) and enjoy every minute of it. The children in Year 6 are enthusiastic, engaging and make every effort to 'do better than they have to'. They are a credit to their parents and to the wonderful teaching of Mme Basnett and will be an asset to any Secondary School they choose to go to.

I saw evidence of the potential at the other end of the school this afternoon and, if the school finances take a sharp turn for the worse, I know who to turn to. The children in Class 1 have taken over egg collecting duties and started to graph the daily laying rates. A sale of this week's produce at the end of the school day, resulted in a contribution towards the cost of chicken feed and I could see a few eyes lit up as hard cash changed hands for eggs. I may need to give a lesson on the laying capabilities of an individual hen because otherwise I fear some hens may be under fierce scrutiny from Class 1 for not laying enough! I have a feeling we may need a few more to increase production and Class 1's market share. Local supermarkets beware!

Have a good weekend.

Mr Ronane

Violins

Mrs Shackleton has requested I send a message to everyone who intends to purchase a violin for a child. Whilst, we welcome the enthusiasm and support in terms of resources, she is concerned that the quality and size of a violin is not correct for children. She is concerned that some parents are spending money on unsuitable instruments and has asked that anyone thinking of a purchase consults with her first

so as to get the correct size and an instrument that offers good value in terms of cost and use. She can be contacted directly at:

eshackleton@ickford.org.uk

Ickford NEWS from the office

Dates for your diary...

26 th November	Class 5 visit to Bletchley Park
7 th November	*No Y5/6 Badminton*
18 th December	Inset Day

School Lottery

A winner within school every week!

If you would like the chance to win, and support the school, please click on the link below and get signed up!

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/ickford-school>



Huge Thanks

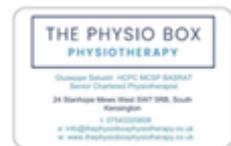
A really big thank you to everyone who offered the use of an exercise bike for the staff. Mr Barber has provided an excellent spin bike on loan but we are very grateful to all those who offered.



Chicken Club from the Archives!



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