



Headteacher:

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13th March 2018

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Dear Parents/Carers

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Well, here we are in March and I'm glad to say that it looks like spring has finally sprung! After the 'Beast from the East' last week, hopefully things will start to get warmer as the mornings and evenings get lighter.

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Holiday requests and pupil punctuality



A reminder please that all pupil absence requests (other than sickness or medical appointments) are to be made to me **in person** please. The office does not have the forms required to be completed, and all requests must be made at least a week in advance wherever possible please.

Usually I am available at drop off or collection times should you wish to make a request. Please also remember that holidays should not be taken during term time unless it is absolutely unavoidable. OfSTED judge us critically on the quantity of days of unauthorized absence, as well as punctuality, so please also make every effort to ensure your child is in school on time.

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The KS2 door closes now every morning at **8.55am**, so arrival after that means children must go via the front office and these arrivals will then be recorded as tardy arrivals. I am pleased to say that since we introduced our *Punctuality Trophy*, punctuality has improved quite a bit, and **Green Class** is currently by far the most punctual class – so very well done to them!

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Updated contact details

If you have not already done so, please return these as soon as you can. It is vitally important that we can contact you in an emergency. We also use mobile numbers to text parents about last minute changes to timings or after school clubs.

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Parking in school



Parents are reminded that cars should **not** be brought on to school property at any time regardless of whether or not the school gates are open or whether children are in school. It is part of our school insurance policy and risk assessment that we do not allow parents' cars on to school when dropping off and picking up children from school and/ or nursery. Thank you for your important support with this.

Snow

Not something we see that often around here! Our children had such fun in the snow and a big thank you to all those parents who made the journey in to school for the morning. We were one of only very few local schools that managed to remain open that Friday, so a huge thankyou to all those who made it in safely and thanked the school for doing so! [NB – we would of course never ask parents or staff to travel to school if the driver considered the roads too dangerous.]



And it was World Book Day too, and thanks for all the fabulous costumes too! Well done everyone.

World Book Day



Did you see our mini videos on Twitter and the school website? Some of our brave staff agreed to be filmed reading some of their favourite books which were then played to the children during World Book Day. Do go and have a look if you haven't! Even though it was snowing, we managed to get our World Book day assembly in. As usual, we had some fantastic costumes and have raised over £50 for some new books for the library.

School Funding (or the lack thereof!)

Hopefully you read the letter sent out last week about the school funding WorthLess? campaign. In the interests of transparency and helping you to understand, here are a few facts:



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West Sussex is 287/324 in the worst funded counties. Small rural schools with under 150 pupils (Birdham has 145) are hit the hardest – lower pupil numbers = less money per pupil, therefore less total budget.

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Without going into too much detail, of this amount, our biggest expense is staffing costs (80%) leaving the remaining 20% for the important things like pencils, paper, heating, lighting etc. I am sure you get the picture. A similarly sized school in another county, with similar admission criteria in a similar socio-economic area could be as much as £1 million per year better off. Fair?



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If you haven't already, please contact your MP (Gillian Keegan in the Chichester area) as requested by the letter. It is now only by more people getting behind their children's schools and asking the government 'Why is our children's education less valued than others?' that they will listen and who knows, maybe your letter will be the one that makes the difference.

Driving



Please remember that we have children walking to and from school and they are sometimes unaccompanied. Please take care on our village roads, where there are no pavements and lots of potholes, and particularly as there are extensive roadworks going on at the moment.

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Kind regards

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Mark McCadden
HEADTEACHER

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Dates For your Diary:

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March 2018

- 13th Orange Class school trip (returning to school at 4.00pm)
- 21st Cornet assembly (Green Class parents) – 2.35pm
- 22nd Little Big Sing
- 26th Blue & Yellow Class to the British Museum
- 26/27th Sponsored spell
- 29th End of Term

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April 2018

- 16th INSET DAY (Monday)
- 17th First day back to school

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May 2018

- 9th Class Photographs
- 14th Start of SATS week
- 28th Start of Half Term

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