

MARCHWOOD JUNIOR SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 2007 -NEWSLETTER

Welcome back to the new school year, and a special welcome to those who are joining us for the first time. The children have settled well with a very positive attitude and looking very smart too; thank you for supporting the wearing of school colours.

Start of School Day: The bell is rung at 8.50am for the start of the school day. Children are allowed onto the playground from 8.30. From Monday 10th Sept, they will be allowed into classrooms as well, so long as they engage in an independent, purposeful activity such as reading, homework, learning spellings etc. I have made the children aware of this in assembly.

End of the School Day: In the interests of safety could parents please ensure that children (especially young children) do not climb or swing on the gate and that they do not play on the slopes outside the classrooms at the end of the school day. This is obviously dangerous but also tends to disturb the classes which are still in session.

Staff Car Park: would parents please not park or drive in to use it to turn round. Not only does it prevent staff from parking but it is also dangerous to pedestrians.

School Crossing Patrol: Please could parents ensure that they and their children are crossing the road with Mrs Ross, our 'lollipop lady'.

Attendance/Absence and Punctuality
Although absences and lateness are not a great problem at this school, we would like to improve upon our figures

and aim for 100% attendance by all pupils during the year unless absence is by way of what is termed "authorised absence", i.e. broadly speaking for sickness/medical reasons, authorised holiday leave or for reasons of religious observance. Quite simply, if a child is not in school, he or she cannot be taught and if absence is frequent will not progress as he or she might. Please do all you can to support us in our aim for 100% attendance and punctuality.

Notification of Absence: Please telephone the school, if possible, on the morning of the **first** day of absence to inform us of the reason for your child's absence. Follow this up with a written note when your child returns to school.

Holiday Leave During The School Term: As you may know, a headteacher may authorise leave of absence for up to two weeks (10 school days) in any school year to enable a child to go on a family holiday. (Only in exceptional circumstances may the amount of leave granted exceed (in total) more than two weeks in a year. Above and beyond two weeks leave will normally be classified as "unauthorised absence"). However, apart from the technical side of taking holidays in term time, I am sure you appreciate that such an absence can have an adverse effect on the continuity of your child's learning. With the demands of the National Curriculum being as high as they are, any significant period of absence will result in a child missing out on an area of learning and this may have a long term effect on a child's overall understanding of a subject area.

Whilst I am very aware that travel companies offer some exceptional bargains during term time and whilst you are able to apply for leave of absence up to the ten day limit, I would ask that you consider very carefully before booking a holiday during term time, for the above reason.

End of Key Stage 2 Tests (SATs):

The dates for the end of Key Stage 2 tests for Year 6 children are 12th to 16th May 2008. Please would parents of Year 6 children try to ensure that no holiday arrangements are made for this week as the tests may not be taken at any other time and if a test is missed no SAT level can be given in that subject.

P.E. Kit: Please remind your child to bring P.E. kit into school on a Monday morning, leave it in school all week and take it home on Friday to be washed. If this routine is established, every child should have a P.E. kit in school whenever it is needed. *Please label all P.E. kit.*

Bookbags: Our smart black and yellow bookbags have been paid for by our P.T.A., for which we are very grateful. These bags should be used for books only and are not intended to carry P.E. kit, packed lunch etc. We bought particularly tough, robust and expensive book bags with the intention that one bag should last a child through from Year 3 to Year 6; with reasonable care a bag should last 4 years. If a bag is lost, or badly damaged due to lack of care, a child will be asked to contribute £2.00 towards its replacement.

Upper School and Lower School Assemblies: Again this year, the Lower School and Upper School will each be holding a separate "Achievement Assembly" on a Friday, celebrating achievement and success,

recognising effort and hard work through the presentation of certificates. One feature each week of each assembly is the presentation of the "Headteacher's Certificate". Only one Upper School child and one Lower School child will receive this certificate each week. It is awarded after careful consideration to a child who has made an outstanding effort during the week, has worked hard, has shown an excellent attitude in all respects of school life, is of smart appearance, has displayed exemplary manners and behaviour and demonstrates independence. The staff and I have made all children aware of the above criteria and many children try very hard to aspire to these qualities so that they might be considered worthy of the award. Please continue to encourage and support your child(ren) so that all of these attributes become and continue to be the norm for them every day.

School Lunches: Kindly note a school lunch now costs **£1.80**. To help us to process lunch money easily and quickly, it would be helpful if you could do the following:

- send in cash/cheque on a **Monday** morning in an envelope clearly marked with child's name, class, amount enclosed and for which days
- send in exact money
- cheques to be made payable to Marchwood Junior School
- please avoid asking for lunch for odd days unless in an emergency
- Dinners can be taken for a whole week, or if only certain days are required, then the correct amount of money for those days for the **whole half term** should be paid in advance. **Days should not be**

changed unless with prior agreement with the office.

- you can pay by cheque for half-term or the whole term (ask at reception for details)
- you can pay for all siblings with one cheque; just remember to state clearly on the envelope who the payment is for and what class they are in.
- any days over paid at the end of term can be carried forward or refunded if requested.

Sweets/Snacks: As a school, we are involved in the County's "Healthy Schools Award". One aspect of this is the emphasis on encouraging healthy eating. In this respect, may I remind you that sweets are not allowed in school; this extends to the contents of lunchboxes and birthdays and other such treats, when at times, with the best of intentions, children have brought in sweets and lollipops etc for their classmates. Please do not allow children to bring in sweets at these times as it somewhat goes against the type of healthy eating we are trying to encourage.

Regarding breaktime snacks, may I remind you that, again to encourage healthy eating, only fresh fruit or vegetables are allowed. Cheese strings (because of the fat content) and fruit bars (because of the high sugar content) should not be brought. Our Healthy Tuck Shop, our 'Snack Shack' will operate from Monday, 10th September.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Water Bottles: All new children will be given a water bottle supplied by our P.T.A. as soon as they arrive. Replacement bottles cost £1 and we do have replacement caps that cost 30p.

Maths and Literacy Groups: The first week of term is what we call our "Start Right" week – an induction week during which we familiarise children with routines and expectations and reinforce skills needed for the coming year. Maths and Literacy groups start again next week with an introductory session this Friday. The parents of all Upper School children who will be moving groups have already been contacted.

We operate two parallel, mixed-ability maths groups and literacy groups for Yr. 3 children and likewise for Yr. 4 children. Mainly, children in Yrs 3 and 4 will be with their 'same-age' classmates for maths and literacy. As ever, teachers will differentiate work for the children in their groups; the more able will be appropriately challenged and those who have some difficulty will receive support. Once the groups are underway, I would urge parents to contact Mrs. Denison or me should you have any questions about your child's group.

We have ensured that children are in the most appropriate and beneficial group for them which in some cases may not be the same as last year.

Clubs: A number of lunchtime and after school clubs will be starting as the term progresses and children will be informed of these in assemblies.

Shoebboxes: Mrs Denison would be grateful to receive any empty shoeboxes for science.

Tesco Sport Vouchers: Available in Tesco stores from 10th September to 4th November. Please start collecting and send into school so we can purchase more PE equipment. Thank you.

Box Top Tokens: We will also be happy to receive any Nestle Box Top Tokens to go towards library books.

The collecting box is just inside the front doors.

School Kitchen Supervisor vacancy: we have a vacancy in our school kitchen – please see details attached to this newsletter.

With best wishes for the new term,

S BASSETT
Headteacher

E DENISON
Deputy Headteacher



Diary Dates:

- Wednesday 12th September 7 pm Meeting for Yr 5 parents re Normandy trip Oct 08
- Monday 17th September 7 pm – PTA AGM – Drama Room
- Wednesday 19th September 7pm Meeting for parents of Yr. 6s re SATs and Secondary School transfer
- Tuesday 2nd October pm - Individual School Photos (please let us know if you would like brother/sister photo as well as or instead of individual photos. Not applicable if siblings do not attend this school)
- 8th, 9th, 10th October Meet the Teacher Evenings (details to follow)
- Wednesday 17th October 10 am Harvest Festival – St. John’s Church (more details to follow)
- 22nd Oct – 26th October School Closed – Half-Term Holiday**
- Friday 2nd November PTA Fireworks evening - details to follow
- Wednesday 14th November Parents’ Forum – 7pm - details to follow
- Friday 23rd November INSET day – School closed**
- Friday 30th November PTA Christmas Fayre 5 – 8pm
- Tuesday 4th December 1.30 pm Christmas Concert Dress Rehearsal
- Wednesday 5th December 7pm Christmas Concert – details to follow
- Thursday 6th December 7pm Christmas Concert – details to follow
- Wednesday 12th December Carol Service in Church – 6.00 p.m.-to be confirmed
- Wednesday 19th December Last Day of Term**
- Thursday 3rd Jan 2008 Children return to school**
- Wednesday 16th January 08 Meeting for Parents of Yr 5 children who will be going to Little Canada – 7 pm