



St. Mary's Church of England Academy, Stotfold

Rook Tree Lane, Stotfold, Hitchin, Herts. SG5 4DL

Telephone: (01462) 730343

email: office@stmarysacademystotfold.co.uk

www.stmarysacademystotfold.co.uk

Headteacher: Miss Sam Bishop

Assistant Headteacher: Mrs Kathryn Pattullo



Learning with the Community

Thursday, 4th September 2014

Dear Parents,

Health and Safety Issues

At the beginning of the School Year, I have combined several issues related to health and safety in a newsletter. Please take the time to read this letter carefully, as there are some significant issues addressed.

Attached to this letter is an emergency contact form which will provide us with all of the necessary information and permission we require. We would be very grateful if these forms could be completed and returned as soon as possible.

School Site Issues

Could I also remind you that dogs are not allowed on site for health reasons and scooters and bikes should not be ridden on the paths or playground. They can be parked at the covered area at the front of the school while you drop off or pick up your children, but **not** left there during the school day. Children are in the care of their parents/carers on the playground before and after school. They should not run up and down the slope or play Football. Please do not let them do so. Please can you also ensure that the gate by the Reception Classes at the entrance to the playground is securely closed after you when you come in or out.

Medical issues

We operate a 'First Day Response' system regarding absences. If your child is absent and we do not receive a phone call or verbal message via a friend or neighbour before 9.30/10.00 a.m. we will phone to query the absence. We do not do this however, for second or subsequent days.

Following health and safety guidelines, we are now only able to administer medication prescribed by a medical professional. Please bring any medicines to the office.

Parking Issues

Parking continues to be an issue. We would be very grateful if parents/carers could follow the guidelines below, and act considerately towards our neighbours.

- Parents/carers cannot park on or opposite the zig-zag markings outside the school at **any time between 7.45 a.m. and 6.00 p.m.** as there are children on site throughout this period. During this time the staff car park, the area near the kitchen and the drive are also 'out of bounds' the only exception being vehicles with 'disabled driver' labels or those adults with mobility problems who have been given permission by the school to park in the car park. This includes parents picking up children from after School Clubs or after SMASH Club.
- A 'drop off' area is designated and indicated with bollards, just beyond the zig-zags, and operates in the mornings only, from 8.30 – 9.00 a.m. The system works well, but if you need to take your child into school, you cannot use this area. As the name suggests, cars should only stop briefly to drop off children and then drive on.
- We have no authority to prevent parents/carers parking in Rook Tree Close and Brayes Manor, but we would urge you not to do so, as the residents are very fed up of having to deal with problems getting in and out of their own houses.

Local Visits

From time to time we would like, as part of the children's work, to take them on short visits within the neighbourhood. This might include walks to the Church, the shops or the Green. We would like therefore to ask your permission to do this and would be grateful if you could complete the form accordingly. We do obtain permission when the children start school, but feel that it would be appropriate to update this annually.

E-Safety

Our Computer Suite has been in operation for several years and we have had no problems with the children, accidentally or intentionally accessing inappropriate material. This is due to the very effective Filter System which Central Bedfordshire operate. We do, of course, supervise the children carefully whenever they are in the Computer Area.

However, it would be appropriate for us to ask you once again to complete and return the permission slip for children to use e-mail and Internet facilities. With new developments constantly arising and due to the importance of the issue of E-Safety we give the children guidance regarding this issue as part of their ICT work. If there are any queries about this subject, please speak to our ICT Subject Leader, Helen Hunt, Specialist Assistant, or myself.

Photography and Video Recording

From time to time during the school year children might be photographed when engaged in school activities. Examples of this include photographs taken by staff or governors for the School website, for the presentation for new parents, for the collection of photographs in the entrance hall or for classroom displays.

In addition, parents and friends like to photograph or video their children at Concerts, Class Assemblies, Sports Afternoon, etc. In order to cover a school event or visit we occasionally invite the local press, usually the Biggleswade Chronicle, to photograph children involved in the special activity.

Finally, we have Individual and Family Photographs and Class Photographs taken by the very long established firm H Tempest. The Biggleswade Chronicle also have an occasional 'First class' feature on Early Years/Reception classes, which features class photographs.

Our experiences, over many years, and following many conversations with parents, leads me to feel that children and parents enjoy these opportunities, and the Governing Body take the same view. However, if anyone is concerned about this issue and would prefer their child not to be photographed, please let us know, and we will do our best to accommodate your wishes, although you will appreciate the difficulties we would have at events like Sports Day and Concerts.

One further point regarding photographs. If parents take photographs which include other children, such as in a class Assembly or Concert, they must not post them on Facebook and other social networks, as other parents might not have given permission for this. If we were to see this happen we would have to reconsider our policies. I am sure you will appreciate this issue.

Food Allergies

These days, we are all very aware that certain foods and colourings can be harmful to children. More seriously, though, nut allergies can be very dangerous for some children, and can affect them even if they have contact with packaging or children who may have eaten nuts. Consequently, we would request that no nuts are included in packed lunches or snacks. In common with most schools, we need to be a "nut-free" school. If your child has any specific dietary requirements or allergies, please contact the school office to request a medical form.

I would be happy to discuss any of the issues mentioned with individual parents if you would like to do this. Thank you for your co-operation in these areas.

Yours sincerely



Sam Bishop
Headteacher