



# Avondale Preparatory School

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Headmaster: Mr Stuart Watson BEd, Dip Tchg

Wednesday 28 December, 2016

Dear Parents

This term we welcome eight new children to the school, seven of which, join our Early Years Department and we extend a warm welcome the Faulkner Family from Australia. Cooper will be joining Year 6.

I do hope the Christmas period was an enjoyable one for all of you and the milder weather got you out and about. I find it hard to believe that the Spring Term has already crept upon us; this term is slightly longer than usual and is spread over 12 weeks, with two residential trips near the end of the term for the bulk of our Prep Department. Whilst Years 3 and 4 will visit Hooke Court once again to complement their history and science studies, about half of our Years 5 and 6 children will visit Romania in the last couple of days of the term, getting first-hand experience of the Romanian language and gaining an appreciation of the challenges (and opportunities) in the orphanages there.

There is also a great deal going on in classroom learning programmes that will be communicated with you in due course. On the first day back (Wednesday 4 January) there will be a copy of the Spring Term Calendar given out to the eldest child in the family, together with accompanying correspondence that will give you the full picture.

**As we start a new term, please find below a number of housekeeping points that I should like to draw your attention to:**

### **Parents Association Christmas Parties**

I would like to extend a huge thanks on behalf of the children and staff for the work gone into preparing the Christmas Parties, late last term. A wonderful time was had by all and it did not go unnoticed that Santa's elves put a considerable amount of time into preparing presents!

### **Carol Service and Community Involvement- Prep Department**

A huge congratulations to our Prep Department for the work put into the Carol Service on the penultimate evening of the Autumn Term, and to Mrs Sandu for stepping in at the eleventh hour! All children were wonderful ambassadors for the school the following day at the Durrington Community Village Hall, singing calls for the elderly at their Christmas lunch.

### **Pupil Progress Reports**

For parents of children in Years 1-6, you will now be familiar with our new system for e-mailing 'Pupil Progress Reports' home every half term. Please be reminded that there will be the usual Mid Year Report that will go home on the Friday before Spring Half Term Break in hard copy format. This report is a more comprehensive report, analytical in nature, whilst reflecting the grades in your child's 'Pupil Progress Report'.

### **Parking Reminder!**

One of my least favourite jobs, but one that I need to do from time to time is car parking attendant! Please may I remind ALL parents that our agreement with the Working Men's Club allows us to park **ONLY** beyond the **yellow line** at the far end of the car park and not in front of the delivery doors. Please may I ask that this understanding is passed onto family members and childminders who may pick up or drop your children off, or for those who may be attending performances at the school.

Every year I get correspondence from the BWMC advising me that they wish to cancel our agreement due to it not being adhered to. With this facility lost, there would undoubtedly be chaos at the school gate! Please consider all parents by parking where we are permitted and walking those extra few steps. **Please also avoid parking in Camilla Close outside the gate or nursery as this prohibits other vehicles from turning and creates traffic congestion.**

### **Sickness**

Tis the season for colds and flu! Please be reminded that should your child be sick, they are required to be kept away from school for a period of 24 hours. This measure is to safeguard both teaching staff and other children. Correspondence from the Department of Health, sent home in the Autumn Term regarding the Norovirus, requires a period of 48 hours away from school. Your support in this is much appreciated.

### **Hockey Sticks for all Prep Children**

All Prep children (Years 3-6) require hockey sticks, mouth guards and shin pads for the term ahead. The group shall be travelling to Avon Valley College on Mondays for games lessons. Those swimming in Year 3 will have a period of hockey instruction before walking across to the pool for their scheduled swimming lesson. We are able to provide an adequate stick for those without their own, however, we would encourage children to be equipped with their own equipment if they wish to take the game further. Those without mouthguards will be able to participate in drills and skills, but will not be permitted to play in games. Mouthguards are available at any sports store for as little as £2. Although the temperature has been mild of late, all Prep children should now be kitted out with tracksuit top and bottoms for games lessons- all items MUST be named.

### **Uniform**

Our uniform shop shall be open for any necessary purchases on Tuesday 3 January from 10:00am-11:00am. The uniform shop is also open from 8:30- 9:30am every Monday and Friday, led by Mrs Sam Wallace or by appointment with Mrs Lister. We are very proud of our uniform; please may I take this opportunity to remind you that only **Avondale uniform is permitted to be worn at school**. As a polite reminder all children from Nursery upwards should arrive and depart school wearing the school cap or hat. Fleeeces/ rain jackets should be worn over the top of blazers in cold weather conditions.

From time to time, we have items of uniform that go missing, or items that are misplaced! Should this happen to your child please may we kindly ask that contact is made with your child's teacher and NOT the school office. Items that are named usually find their way back to the correct party quickly. It is a very frustrating experience for all concerned should items not be named. In this respect, please may we ask for items that have been purchased from the Thrift Shop to have previous names taken out of garments and for them to be renamed with your child's name!

### **Separate Calendar Letter**

Please be reminded that children leaving at 4:30pm, following an after school activity, need to be signed out with Mrs Lister in the school office. Children, after this time, report back to the ASCC team and need to be signed out with them. All Spring Term activities are communicated in the calendar letter and will come into force from Thursday 5 January. **There will be no tag rugby club on Friday 6 January as I will be away.** All up-to-date information regarding school events can be found on our website.

This term will see our Prep Department preparing for their end of term production- 'Joseph and the Technicolored Dreamcoat'. Like last year, all Prep children (Years 3-6) will be required to be at school until 4:30pm on Thursdays for the duration of the term to allow adequate rehearsal time. This is a free club and will allow curriculum time to proceed without compromise.

### **Romanian Shoebox Appeal and Spring Term Charity Event**

A huge thank you to all those who supported our Christmas Shoebox Appeal. Our target was 90 shoeboxes (as we have achieved in the last two years). I am delighted to share with you that we surpassed this comfortably this year with 113 shoeboxes being brought into school for sharing with both orphaned and disadvantaged rural children. This is a remarkable feat given that the school is approximately 20% fewer in number compared with this time last year.

I have received footage back of these children unwrapping our wares which I hope to share with you via our website in the term ahead. They are most grateful for the difference you have made this Christmas!

Additionally, there will be a sports- based fundraising event later this term providing an opportunity for supporting the orphanages further. Details will be shared with you in a few weeks about the need and our response. We also intend to provide the same opportunity as last year with four orphaned children joining us for the final four weeks of the Summer Term. Mrs Hayward's family enjoyed the experience so much, they are having Gabi return!

### **Adverse Weather Plan**

As the colder weather is now well and truly upon us, the likelihood of our Adverse Weather Plan coming into effect becomes a distinct possibility with the onset of snow. Please find the plan attached for your reference.

### **Early Years / Foundation Stage (EYFS) and planning for the year ahead**

Parents of children in our Nursery, whose children are eligible to move into Reception next year, can expect a letter to go out in the next week or two asking for clarification in respect to confirming places for next year. We have had a number of enquiries and places taken from outside families already.

Additionally, those families with children moving into (or continuing) in our Nursery, will have letters sent out asking for confirmation in respect to requested hours in the new academic year. From 1 September, 2017, Free Entitlement Funding will be increased to 30 hours a week for working families. There are specific requirements that need to be met for this to be taken advantage of; the letter will detail these points. Your advice in determining requested hours will aid us tremendously in planning for the year ahead.

### **Pick- ups at the End of the School Day**

From time to time, your child may be collected by another parent at the end of the school day. Please may we politely ask that if your child is going home with someone else, that this is communicated with the school office to avoid any confusion. This should not be left to the parent collecting your child.

There will undoubtedly be further things that come to light in the weeks ahead. Please refer to the whiteboard at the gate entrance for changes to programmes and up- coming events. This is put out daily and documents any club cancellations that we know about in advance. *In this respect, please may I politely ask that younger children are monitored at the end of the day whilst waiting to pick up older siblings- messages are often rubbed off and stones removed from the garden beds.* Short- notice cancellations due to inclement weather will be communicated via text message as usual.

Best wishes for another successful term.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Watson