



Avondale Preparatory School

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Headmaster: Mr Stuart Watson BEd, Dip Tchg

Friday 30 August, 2019

Dear Parents

I trust that the holiday period has been a beneficial one for the family with you taking advantage of the warmer days in recent weeks. To aid you in your planning, all children return to school in **SUMMER UNIFORM** on **WEDNESDAY 4 SEPTEMBER**.

May I take this opportunity to welcome a small number of new families to Avondale. We have had a number of late registrations over the holiday period, notably in our Tots and Nursery areas; we look forward to working in partnership with you in the weeks/ terms ahead.

We congratulate Mr Joshua Tolan and Miss Georgina Barrington who tied the knot over the holiday period. As a school community we wish them every success for the years ahead.

Over the holiday period, the school site has seen a number of improvements; all outdoor storage facilities have had a fresh coat of paint, together with playhouses and the fence adjacent to the river and Astro turf. Additionally, the Year 1 and 2 classrooms are now redecorated.

Prep Department staff have already been in school for a training INSET on implementing Century Online Learning in the classroom. In addition, staff in Years 5 and 6 will be using ATOM learning, which will further support home learning initiatives. This new approach is at the heart of student directed learning. All staff have been kitted out with new laptops and in the coming days, all children from Years 3-6 will be given a laptop as part of their classroom stationery; this will further enhance access to the curriculum for students, and complement the high standards of teaching that currently exist. An investment of £20,000+ has been made in hardware to support this new learning approach, with further investment being made in the Wifi infrastructure across the school. As we look to take the curriculum forward in a number of areas, there will be an 'Academic Information Session' for parents of children in Years 1-6 on Friday 20 September, following the Year 6 Assembly. Whilst the session will focus on the new online platform used for supporting Years 3-6, I would encourage parents of Years 1 and 2 to attend, as it will give you some perspective of what your child can expect as they move through the school. Further correspondence will be sent home from Rachel Cooper, Director of Learning, in the days ahead.

Please also be advised that we now have a parent communication board on the hallway wall directly outside the school office. You will find here a number of items including peripatetic timetables, menus and the termly calendar. Additionally, you will find team sheets for up-coming fixtures and after school activity lists. There is also a Parents Association section that will detail the latest news and information.

Housekeeping for the start of the 2019-20 academic year

Communication and Billing

Firstly, it will come as no surprise to you that you are receiving this letter by means of e-mail; this is our preferred method for correspondence. Furthermore, all ASCC and uniform invoices are sent using this method, in addition to Termly invoices and letters. This way, we anticipate that information will arrive home promptly, whilst cutting down on unnecessary paper wastage. In this respect, please may we ask

that your e-mail details are up- to- date and accurate with the school office. **We kindly ask that your spam folder is checked on a regular basis as this is where a number of items ended up last year. Please be reminded that ASCC bills are now sent out monthly (approximately three times a term).**

Facebook and Instagram

Please be advised that we are in the process of creating new Avondale School Facebook and Instagram pages. We shall advise you in due course of their completion; these sites will be updated regularly, documenting learning across the school as well as school wide events. It will also be used to communicate Open Days, planned for Friday 18 October and a further one later in the Summer Term.

Contact Details/ Permission Slips/ After School Clubs/ Autumn Term Calendar

We are in the process of compiling the Autumn Term Calendar; the start of the new academic year is an incredibly busy time and there are a number of dates that need to be confirmed/ added. I apologise in advance for the lack of sporting fixtures listed thus far; an email was sent out to all schools on the circuit late last term, once the problem was identified; due to the break, it will require some manoeuvring to retain our usual intensity and these will be communicated with you in due course. We anticipate having the Autumn Term calendar ready to go home with your child on Day 1, together with new 'Contact Detail Forms', 'Medical Forms' and permission slips. Please may we ask that these are returned in the named plastic wallet to the office the **FOLLOWING DAY**.

Whilst ASCC shall operate from Day 1, teacher led clubs will start on Thursday 5 September. A full list of clubs shall be made available in the calendar, which shall be accompanied with a permission letter; return of the permission slip promptly will ensure acceptance to some clubs that have restrictions on numbers. You will be contacted by phone if we are **unable** to accommodate your requests. Please be reminded that ASCC now finishes at 6pm every night; the sustainability of this will be assessed throughout the Autumn Term. Please also be advised that school now opens at 7:45am each morning. Children should arrive through the blue gate at the side of the school. Children in Tots arriving before 8am will need to hang their bag up and then play outside with the other children. They will be collected from the playground. In the event of inclement weather, children should go to the library; this will be advised on a notice board in the hallway; absence of my presence outside will be a big clue.

I would encourage you to refer to our website for further information- due to the large scale of changes at this time of the year, we anticipate that updates will be completed by the end of week 3. **Any cancellation of after school activities (or other events) will be communicated via e-mail** should it be known about in advance- children are also told at the start of the week at the conclusion of assembly; **only in the event of late notice, shall we text parents.** After school activity lists will be displayed on the parent communication board leading to the dining room. These lists are the official ones taken for communication with home- please may we kindly ask that you check that the details are accurate, as it is not uncommon for children to start clubs later in the term and for texts to be omitted.

Uniform

We have high expectations in respect to our uniform. Please be advised that only listed Avondale items of uniform are permitted to be worn at school. All uniform requirements and price lists can be found on our website www.avondaleschool.org

All uniform must be **clearly marked** with your child's name on it; any uniform found without names will be put in **lost property which can be found on the left hand side as you enter the school hall**. If it is not claimed by the end of each week, it will be placed in our Thrift Shop. Named items of clothing shall be returned to respective owners.

The uniform shop will be open on Monday 2 September and Tuesday 3 September from 10.00 – 11.00am. If you are unable to make these dates or times, please send an e-mail to the office and your uniform will be sorted during the first week. Mrs Annie Sawkhill is doing a splendid job at running our uniform shop; should you require any uniform, please email the school office at office@avondaleschool.org and Annie

will have it prepared in time. As advised earlier, children should return to school in summer uniform. Children in Reception to Year 6 require a blazer and hat to be worn to and from school; please may we ask for your support in this to avoid any awkward conversations at the gate.

Additionally, PE kit, detailing house colours for those children in Years 1-6, should be brought in for use in PE lessons. (Reception retain the EYFS polo and shorts). **Please be advised that Prep Department games (Years 3-6) will commence on the afternoon of the first day back.**

The summer PE uniform will be worn by the Prep Department until half term (and again in the summer term) and Years 1 and 2 for PE for the duration of the year. All children should have **white** sports socks, **with the exception of Prep boys, who will require the longer red socks for use with shin pads and boots in the football and rugby seasons. Girls will also require long red socks under hockey instruction. It would pay to have both red and white socks in your child's games bag in this respect.** Please may I ask that all items of clothing are named- it is a very easy process handing lost items back to the correct party if items are named, and a very frustrating one for all concerned, if they are not. **The change- over to winter uniform for Prep pupils will occur after the half term break.**

Parents Liaison Meeting

Please be reminded that I shall be conducting a number of Parent Liaison Forums throughout the course of the year, the first of which will be following the Parents Association Meeting on Friday 13 September. These sessions will provide an opportunity to learn more about the direction of learning, for you to discuss any concerns and for me to share with you some of the dilemmas faced in leading a school. Please may I ask that any item to be tabled for discussion is raised with me by Wednesday 11 September to allow me time for an agenda to be created.

Appointments/ Requests for Absence

Inevitably there are a number of appointments that are necessitated throughout the course of a school week- to ensure the safety of all children is kept paramount, please may we ask that the office is informed the moment you take your child and at the point in which they are returned to school. All requests for absences other than doctor's/ dentists and the like, **should be directed to myself in writing. This is a mandatory requirement.** Please may I ask that holidays are booked around the dates outlined in the Termly calendars; we want your children to progress and prolonged absences from school can affect attainment levels.

Peripatetic and SEN Lessons

Timetables for respective peripatetic teachers follow a tumble system so as to avoid children missing the same lesson each week. These timetables are displayed on the Noticeboard in the school foyer/ hallway. Lessons with Mrs Reed commence on Thursday 5 September and with Mrs Sandu on Friday 6 September. Whilst we endeavour to make up any absences for children on school trips, we are unable to do the same, or refund, in the event of sickness or planned holidays.

Swimming

Please be advised that swimming starts at Durrington Pool for children in Reception- Year 3 (*with Year 4 being optional*) **on Monday 16 September. Children in Years 1 and 2 commence their swimming programme on Thursday 19 September. This is somewhat later than anticipated due to refurbishment work going on at the pool.** We have managed to secure a slightly earlier time for both Monday and Thursday sessions from 2:30pm- 3:00pm; please bear this in mind if you intend to collect your child from the pool. All remaining children will return to school at approximately 3:20pm.

We finally got there! Needless to say, we look forward to welcoming you and the family back on Wednesday 4 September in what, I know, will be another successful year.

Yours sincerely
Stuart Watson