



# Newsletter 3

Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## September

Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> Practice test at SWGS for the girls  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> Friends of St Mark's (PTA) AGM – 7.30 pm in Training Room (not 19-09-19 as on Planner)  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> Harvest Service (led by Y4) at St Mark's Church at 10.00 am – all Y4 parents invited  
Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> 11+ Test at SWGS

## October

Friday 4<sup>th</sup> MUFTI – Bring a pound to work day (Spire FM)  
Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> Parents' Evening 4.00 – 7.00 pm  
Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Parents' Evening 4.00 – 7.00 pm  
Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> T1 Ends  
Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> Training Day #3 for staff only

## November

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> T2 Starts  
Osmington Bay (Y6 Residential)  
Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> MUFTI – Children in Need  
Friday 15<sup>th</sup> School Photos (Individual/Siblings)

## Harvest donations

Later this month we will hold our Harvest Service at St Mark's Church on **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> September**. The Y4 team will lead the service and all Y4 parents are cordially invited to join us – 10.00 am sharp start. Every year we ask for food donations to the Trussell Trust (<https://www.trusselltrust.org/>) who will be in attendance at the church to talk briefly about the growing need and the difference such contributions make to local families. Donated items (non-perishable) can be brought into school from **Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September** and safely stored in individual classrooms. Items will be carried down to the church on the morning of the service by the children themselves. Thank you in advance.

See attached flyer from the Trussell Trust for suggested items.

## Aldi Appeal

<https://www.aldi.co.uk/kitforschools>

Parents or families shopping at Aldi collect a sticker per £30 spent - once we fill the sticker chart we send it back and could win £20,000.

## Applying for secondary school places

Parents with children in Y6 need to decide on a secondary school place before **Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019**. Please visit: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/schools-learning-forms-guides-policies>

## Claim your free school meals

Our school gets hundreds of extra pounds to help your child if you register for free school meals or fill in a simple form: <http://www.wiltshire.gov.uk/schools-learning-free-school-meals> At present all children in Reception, Y1 and 2 are entitled to a free school meal. Children in a junior school (Y3-6) are not entitled. However, if you are receiving a qualifying benefit, the school could be entitled to an extra ~£1320 Pupil Premium to support your child. Please ask in the school office or see Norma for more information. We use this extra money to subsidise/pay for their school trips, provide specialist support, purchase specific resources, develop strategies to better engage children and parents both in and out of school – and we are always looking for new and innovative ways to make a bigger difference.

## Passenger Assistant opportunities available at Wiltshire Council:

We are currently recruiting Passenger Assistants to join both our casual bank and on a permanent basis across schools in Wiltshire. You will be supporting vulnerable children or adults travelling on Wiltshire Council contracted transport to and from school or their respective social day care services. Working in conjunction with the driver you will ensure that the passengers in your care have a safe and enjoyable journey. You will need to be patient, understanding and have the ability to empathise with vulnerable children and adults, who may have a physical disability, learning difficulties and/or display challenging behaviour. For more information and to apply please visit <http://jobs.wiltshire.gov.uk/>

Alternatively email [Patricia.Newton@Wiltshire.gov.uk](mailto:Patricia.Newton@Wiltshire.gov.uk) for further information.

## Message from Norma

Our first SEN Parent/Carer Coffee Morning of the year will be taking place next Friday, 27th September in Hub 3 from 9am until 10.30am. Come along to our relaxed informal group where we chat, share information, support each other and get help and advice on SEN issues. The group takes place on the last Friday of every month except when there is a school holiday when it is the last Friday before the holiday. For further details speak to Norma Hallett, your PSA.

## Reminders / notes/updates and everything else...

- Parking in school in front of the school gates at home time is not allowed for safety reasons
- There is a strict no nuts policy in school as we have several children who have severe nut allergies
- Pokémon cards, and other tradeable items and toys, are not allowed in school because of the disruption, distraction and disputes they unintentionally cause
- We welcome cycling to school but reasonably expect children to wear cycle helmets, lock their bicycles and walk them whilst they are on site
- We also welcome children to bring in their footballs/basketballs to school. Please ensure they are brought in/taken home in a bag – even better if the ball is named/initialed in case they are lost and returned
- Children have been reminded multiple times that they are not allowed to play football/ball games before or after school. If this continues items may be confiscated. Please help us reinforce this fair rule to avoid future issues
- The adventure playground is strictly out of bounds before and after school for safety reasons

## Turning Circle

Many parents and children noticed that I spent three mornings this week patrolling the turning circle drop off zone in questionable hats rather than work with staff in both schools on the day ahead. I am pleased to report that things worked a little safer and smoother with traffic. However, it is not sustainable for me to be absent from both schools for prolonged periods. I therefore won't be in the turning circle on Monday. My unwarranted optimism is that common sense prevails and the drop off zone remains clear for all users to 'drop-n-go' not to stop/switch off/unload/park. It would be even better if children were ready with their bags to alight from the passenger side – not the driver's side as they could encounter traffic overtaking/passing. The cones will stay a little longer as a clear reminder that it is not a place to park between 0830 – 0900 as the large sign says. When they are no longer needed I will remove them.

There are still a few more issues to crack or consider:

1. If you do drop-n-go please do so where the cones/drop off zone is. Please don't do it anywhere else, especially outside Cyril's bungalow, as it encourages others to copy and it backs traffic up trying to get off the road. Please be patient and wait to pull in to the coned area, closing up the space and maximizing the number of safe drop-offs
2. The main gates are not, and never have been a pedestrian entrance/exit. Too many parents and children walk into traffic and endanger themselves. Please use the pathway provided
3. Double-parking behind staff cars, hoping I'm not noticing as I can't see over the hedge, is not permitted or fair on everyone else. Staff are entitled to be able to park no matter what time they arrive. Parents are respectfully not entitled regardless of whether they need to rush to work. The alternative is far worse i.e. gates closed from 0830 – 0900 to parents.
4. Staff spaces are for staff, not opportunistic or brazen parents. A parent suggested recently I should fine parents for such transgressions. I'd rather appeal to their better nature, initially.
5. There is a 5 mph speed limit for everyone's safety. Not all people wear highly-vis jackets to stop them being run over. Please be vigilant, patient and slow down.
6. We keep a few spaces for visitors e.g. visiting professionals, parents with injured/mobility impaired children, prospective parents, deliveries etc as a courtesy. These are not 'first come first served' spaces for parents to park and walk in with their children. If need to park and escort children in i.e. younger children we genuinely understand – please do so off site, in good time and legally/responsibly.
7. Do not park in Exeter House at the end of the day or behind Cyril's bungalow. It's not that you might get shut in if the gate closes (it has done before) - it's just not ok. Someone recently said to me 'it is better to ask for forgiveness than permission'. I disagreed.
8. We love our neighbours - they are good, reasonable people who have the right to enter/exit their properties safely and free from parental parking foibles or bad manners. As staff we endeavour to model the behaviour we expect from our children every day. We would expect parents to subscribe to the same approach.
9. I was asked if we had considered closure, clamping or cameras – we have.
10. I was also asked if I had banned any parents from the site for repeated transgressions after fair warnings – I have but not for parking. Help me keep it that way please.

The car parking spaces were designed for staff, not for parents to drop off in the morning. Very few schools have this facility. Several parents have asked over the years why we don't. My answer is often the same and never intended to be flippant. Our responsibility is to provide the best education we can for your children. Period.

Thank you in advance. Have a great and safe weekend.