



Sageston CP School

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This Half Term's Values: Honesty and Confidence

Start of Term Letter – Spring 2023

Dear parents/carers,

I hope that you have all had a great Christmas break and I would like to wish everyone a very 'Happy New Year'. As a staff, we spent yesterday further enhancing our professional learning in a number of areas and it was been a really productive day for us all. However, we were all really excited to welcome pupils back to school today and it has been fantastic to see them all again this morning.

Postponed Pantomime Performances

Next week, we will have the postponed performances of 'Ali Baba and the Bongo Bandits'. I am sure you are all looking forward to this. A reminder of the dates and times for each of the performances:

Monday 16th January: Morning performance – 10am
 Afternoon performance – 2pm

Wednesday 18th January: Evening performance – 6pm

There will be a raffle to win a brand-new television (kindly donated by Tesco) to raise funds for the school. Tickets will be on sale prior to each performance and the draw will be made after the final performance on Wednesday evening.

Swimming

Kingfisher Class will be swimming this term on Tuesdays. This will begin on Tuesday 17th January. Please ensure that pupils come with the correct kit each Tuesday if your child is in Kingfisher Class.

Clubs

Starting next week (week beginning Monday 16th January), clubs for the term will start. If your child wishes to attend these clubs, please complete the online form which can be found here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/MH5mJVv3yJ> Clubs will be limited in numbers dependent on how many staff are running the clubs. I will inform you if and when certain clubs have reached capacity.

Monday: Mrs Bowers' Health and Wellbeing Club for pupils in Robin and Barn Owl Classes
 Mr Davies' Welsh Club for pupils in Swan and Kingfisher Classes

Tuesday: Mr Welch's Early Coding Club for pupils in Robin and Barn Owl Classes
 Miss Cole and Mrs Roach's Expressive Arts Club for pupils in Swan and Kingfisher Classes

Wednesday: Mrs James and Mrs Oakley's Board Games Club for all pupils

Thursday: Mrs Harland's Arts and Crafts Club for pupils in Robin and Barn Owl Classes
 Mrs Goodwin and Mrs Davies' Netball Club for pupils in Year 1 and above (weather dependent)

Please be aware that whilst most clubs will start next week, due to Swan and Kingfisher Classes' performance on Monday afternoon, both Health and Wellbeing and Welsh clubs will not run for this week. They will start on Monday 23rd January instead.

Cricket

For four weeks at the start of term, we have been given the opportunity by Cricket Wales through the 'Chance to Shine' Schools' Programme to have some cricket coaching for Barn Owl, Swan and Kingfisher Classes. For the first three sessions, this will take place on a Wednesday morning. The fourth and final session will be on Thursday 2nd February. Please ensure that, if your child is in one of these classes, that they come to school with their PE kit on these days.

Uniform

It was great to see pupils in their festive wear at various points in the final few weeks of the autumn term. However, I would now be grateful with your support in ensuring that pupils revert back to wearing school uniform every day, unless otherwise advised by teachers through Class Dojo.

Attendance and Holidays

As I have mentioned in previous communications, attendance is a school and county priority this year. At the start of the year, Pembrokeshire County Council launched the 'It Starts in School' campaign. The focus of this campaign is to show all the wonderful things that happen in the county's schools. Therefore, if pupils are missing lots of school, then they are missing fantastic learning opportunities, as well as time with their friends and peers, developing life-long relationships in many cases.

Pupils who attend Sageston CP School are exposed to a superb range of learning activities and experience and they are happy and safe whilst they are here. Missing school, however, denies them of time spent in this wonderful environment.

This year, I am working closely with the Education Welfare Service to monitor attendance. If attendance falls below a threshold of 85%, then I will speak with parents/carers and/or send a letter offering support to improve attendance in the future. If attendance does not improve, then I may need to send further letters, arrange meetings with parents/carers and in some cases, refer persistent absenteeism to the Education Welfare Service

I have also previously mentioned that approving holidays during term time remains at the headteacher's discretion. If a holiday is not approved, then absences are marked as unauthorised. If an absence is unauthorised, it will not be a factor unless attendance drops below the threshold stated above.

Governors are due to discuss the school's policy towards holidays in term time during our next full governing body meeting later this month. Once this has happened, I will be in a position to provide you with further details about the circumstances which will lead to holidays being authorised.

I would, always, encourage you to take any holiday outside of term time, as significant periods of time away from school, such as for holidays, can impact greatly on a pupil's learning and the progress they make during the year. It can also have a negative impact on their relationships with peers, having missed valuable time with their friendship group. However, I do appreciate that, at times, circumstances, such as parents' work commitments makes this difficult. When submitting a holiday request to the school, please provide reasoning for taking the holiday during term so that it can help me make an informed decision about whether to approve the holiday or not.

If you decide it is vital that you take a holiday in term time, then, whether it is approved or not, I would ask that you ensure your child has excellent attendance throughout the rest of the year; it will help them to make the progress they are capable of when they attend school every day.

Guidance from Public Health Wales

Whilst attendance continues to be a priority for the school and county, we have to respond appropriately to public health concerns and follow guidance given to us by health care professionals within Public Health

Wales. Given the current concerns surrounding a number of winter illnesses affecting many people at the moment, Public Health Wales have provided us with a link to current guidance/advice for parents to help protect against these illnesses. Please take some time to read the advice and guidance which can be found by following the link below.

<https://phw.nhs.wales/news/back-to-school-advice-for-parents-in-wales-to-help-protect-against-winter-illnesses/>

Key Dates

I hope to be in a position to provide you with a list of key dates for the term when I send out my newsletter at the end of the week.

Yours sincerely,



Mr A Welch
Headteacher