



Newsletter 2
October Half Term 2011

Dear Parents,

I had hoped that you would be able to read this 2nd newsletter online but unfortunately the installation of the new server and Edwards House computers that is currently taking place has delayed this. Please watch this space for further developments with our usage of online communication systems during the next half term.

In some respects, this first half of term has flown past yet, in other ways, it feels like I have always been a part of FKS! It has certainly been a very hectic few weeks with a large number of curriculum and parents evenings and it has been good to meet so many of you. I am gradually putting faces to names and hope that the process will be complete by Christmas!

As usual, there are a whole host of points within this newsletter which are in no particular order.

Early drop off at both Houses and after school care at Andrews House

I am delighted that the introduction of early drop off has been beneficial to so many of you. I am now pleased to announce that as from Wednesday 3rd November, the after school 'Holding Class' will be up and running at Andrews House. Should you wish for your child to attend, we need written permission. If it is a regular commitment, one letter to your child's class teacher at the start of next half term will suffice. If you will be using the facility on a 'casual' basis, we would ask that you write a note in your child's homework book each night you require your child to stay. Alternatively, if a decision is made to use the facility on a particular occasion after you have dropped your child at school, we would ask that you please phone Andrews House directly to inform them that your child will be staying. This is purely to allow us to make an accurate check that the correct children are staying. At the end of the normal school day, any child staying will come to the library to be registered. Pick up will be from the front door no later than 4.30pm.

There is a £5 per night charge for this facility which will be added to your termly fees invoice retrospectively.

Computers at Edwards House

I am very pleased to announce that a brand new suite of computers have been installed at Edwards House this week as well as new machines and software for the office. This means that we are now fully up to date and the children can look forward to benefiting from this straight after half term.

Mathletics / Spellodrome

Linked to the above news, I am now able to confirm that the whole school will be benefiting from Mathletics and Spellodrome after half term. Many of you will have had first hand experience of Mathletics from one of my demonstrations during the recent curriculum evenings and I know that the reaction towards it was very favourable. Year 3 have been trialing Mathletics over the last fortnight and have really enjoyed using it. Once fully installed, the children will benefit from online Maths and English exercises, challenges, tutorials and games which can be accessed both at school and home, 365

days a year. Having run Athletics at my previous school, I know how successful and popular it will be with both children and parents alike. There will be a small charge of £6 per child per year which will be added to your bill but I can guarantee that it will be money well spent.

Clarion Call

After half term, we are also going to be trialing Clarion Call; a communication system between school and home. This will enable us to make instant contact with parents whenever we need to relay urgent information – e.g. cancellation of matches, school closures due to inclement weather, trips arriving back late and so on. Messages will come to you via a text message on your mobile phone as well as by email. It is another way in which I would like to improve communication between school and home.

Open Day

I would just like to say a huge thank you for all of your assistance towards the recent Open Days. The weather matched the mood of the days and it was really good to get so many visitors through the doors. Everyone was so positive with regard to helping the advertising with flyers, banners and posters and, as a result, I am pleased to announce that at least fifteen new families were introduced to FKS. A special thank you to our Parents' Association for organising the wonderful refreshments.

Term Dates 2012-2013

I have almost finalised the term dates for the next academic year (2012 – 2013) and will be publishing these after Half Term.

French Trip

Organisation for this year's Year 6 French Trip are well underway and a letter will be sent out with further information at the start of the next half term. This is just advanced warning that the first meeting for Year 6 parents will be held in school on the evening of Monday, 7th November.

House Competitions

I made the decision this term that House Competitions should include all children at Edwards House. This is not always easy in a school the size of FKS and the decision was made for this week's event to have two separate competitions which could also allow our Year 2 children to get involved. It is always a tricky call letting children play in mixed age group teams and for safety reasons, Year 3's were not allowed to compete with Year 6's. As a consequence, some children played more than others and sometimes this is difficult to avoid. I did enjoy the afternoon and felt that the children got a lot out of the experience. I am very much for children taking part for the right reasons and this is a large part of their education. Learning how to win and lose with good grace is an important lesson especially when there are so many bad sporting images portrayed on television on a regular basis. We did however have some negative feedback from parents about the afternoon and I will obviously take account of these comments before deciding of the format of future House events.

Online Questionnaire

My online questionnaire is now ready but because of the IT changes mentioned above, I have decided to delay its publication until the start of next half term. You will be sent a link which will take you directly to the questionnaire and hopefully you will not feel that its completion is too onerous. My thanks in advance for this.

Holiday Requests

Although we ask that you refrain from taking your child out of school during term time, I understand that there are times when this is unavoidable. Could I please ask that you submit any such requests to me in writing via the office in plenty of time. It is a requirement that we have such requests in writing to ensure that they are officially authorised.

Medicine

With the colder weather approaching and the likelihood of more coughs and colds, should you need for your child to be given any medicine (Calpol etc) during the course of the day, could you please make sure you have completed a form which can be obtained from Mrs Botting/Mrs Stanwyck.

Townrow

I found out only last night that we are still having major problems accessing school uniform from this source. Please be assured that the matter is currently being investigated.

Mrs Stewart / Mrs Beaton

I am very pleased to say that Mrs Stewart will be returning full time after half term. At the same time I would like to publicly thank Mrs Beaton for the superb way in which she has deputised for Mrs Stewart in her absence. She has certainly given her Year 1 charges the very best start to the year and I thank her for all of her efforts. Mrs Beaton will, of course, continue to be a regular face in the at Andrews House as she continues with her musical commitments.

The staff and I wish you all a very enjoyable extended half term and hope that you enjoy some quality family time.

Best wishes,

Mr. Nick Jones
Headmaster