

Friday 10th February 2023

February Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your understanding during what has been one of the busiest, shortest half-terms that we have had for while. I can appreciate the lack of certainty over opening last week was most unhelpful. Rightly or wrongly, we managed to remain open without too much disruption.

We have lost two quality members of staff since September due to the pay we can offer and unfortunately, we are likely to lose more before September. In addition, with unfunded pay increases and increased utilities, the school started the year having to find £55,000 of cuts to balance the budget.

The reality is people who are passionate about your child's education are beginning to look for (and take) jobs outside education or becoming increasingly frustrated by the financial restrictions that I have to place upon their teaching.

The next potential strike day is March 1st and we will have to go through the same period of uncertainty. However, please understand that if this action is successful, I can assure you any increase in funding will benefit your child greatly.

Parking around the School Next week With the school educating over 300 families, parking is always going to be difficult around 9 and 3, and is a feature of any modern school. Whilst our neighbours are generally understanding of this, occasionally they do express concern as to how safely, considerably and legally our parents are being.

As a result, I have to spend a surprising amount of time research the laws around this subject which can be summarised at vague at best. I try my best to come and explain this to parents, and I am always thankful for your understanding.

However, the main legal issue appears to be around the perception of whether your parking is blocking a highway or access, or whether it could be seen as dangerous. This has been the most recent discussion linked to the access road pictured which sits adjacent to St. Augustine's Way.

As the picture shows, this is too narrow for cars to pass any parked vehicles as they are using the verge and therefore, I can understand how this may be deemed as illegal parking. This was confirmed to me on Friday when I photographed a car driving across the grass verge instead as they had been blocked in. As I have mentioned before, I would see as dangerous driving as it is impossible for the school to teach the children road safety when cars park and drive on the grass verges and pathways. Therefore, beyond respecting our neighbours, this is ultimately about stopping a child being in an accident.



So this my annual request to please consider where you park and to remind everybody that we have 20 minute windows to drop and collect pupils. It is fascinating to see that a grid-locked 15:10 St. Augustine's Way is often empty by 15:20 and I would ask parents to consider coming five minutes later or, for those with Year 5/6 children, parking 50 metres further and letting them walk as this would be a fantastic preparation for high school.

Documenting the School's Curriculum We are currently in the process of updating the school website in regard to the curriculum that we teach. Whilst your child will not notice a huge amount of difference, we are aiming to provide a clearer overview for parents to see week-by-week what we are teaching within each of the classes.

For much of the school's curriculum, we use the **Primary Knowledge Curriculum** (www.primaryknowledgecurriculum.com), which helps us sequence and connect many of the topics and areas of study that we cover particularly in the Humanities, Arts and Science. We feel this is a fantastic programme of study that provides your children with a huge amount of knowledge about the world around them and benefits hugely from the research and expertise others to ensure a high quality of provision.

In addition to this, for Mathematics and English, the school tends to write its own programme. Whilst these are heavily influenced by other scheme of works such as White Rose Mathematics, the unique make-up of our mixed and straight year groups, means that we prefer to use of our expertise to build something that meets the range of needs that we have in each of our classes.

Finally, we are very proud of our pastoral curriculum—one which focuses on emotional intelligence and preparing our pupils for modern Britain—which is comprised of lesson from a diverse range of places such as the RNLI for Water Safety and The UK Parliament Educational Centre so that this area of learning can link to the many topics that we cover in our main curriculum our wider learning.

We hope to run a parent aware session on this area in the summer term to try and build a better understanding of this area.

Staffing We are sad to announce that Mrs Thorpe will be leaving the school as a Teaching Assistant today after 8 years at North Wootton. She has brought a huge amount to the school during this time and I am very pleased to say that she will continue to be supporting the Gardening Committee and running her club.



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