

MMN/KCR

September, 2009

Dear Parent/Carer,

The beginning of the new school year provides an opportunity for us to update you on developments at Kingstone and provide a reminder, regarding the routines and systems that we have put in place, to enable the school to run smoothly. Please accept my apologies for the rather long and somewhat dry nature of this document, which is really an information leaflet. The information it contains is important and, as always, pupils and staff at the school rely on your support.

HOLIDAY DATES 2009/2010

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mon 26th Oct - Fri 30th Oct | Half Term |
| Mon 21st Dec - Fri 1st Jan | Christmas |
| Mon 15th Feb - Fri 19th Feb | Half Term |
| Thurs 1st April - Wed 14th April | Easter (1st April being an INSET Day) |
| Mon 3rd May | May Day |
| Mon 31st May - Fri 4th June | Spring Bank |
| Fri 23rd July | School breaks up for the Summer |

The remaining INSET Days are calendared for 7th and 25th Sept 2009; 22nd February and 2nd July 2010

ADVANCE HOLIDAY DATES FOR 2010/2011

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|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Mon 25th Oct - Fri 29th Oct | Half Term |
| Wed 22nd Dec - Mon 3rd Jan | Christmas |
| Mon 21st Feb - Fri 25th Feb | Half Term |
| Tues 12th April - Mon 25th April | Easter |
| Mon 2nd May | May Day |
| Mon 30th May - Fri 3rd June | Spring Bank |
| Fri 22nd July | School breaks up for the Summer |

NEW STAFF

We are delighted to welcome a number of new teaching staff to the school this year:

| | |
|-------------|-----------------|
| Ms. Worman | English |
| Ms. Maxwell | English |
| Miss Foy | M.F.L. |
| Miss Hilton | M.F.L. |
| Miss Taylor | Mathematics |
| Mr. Bateson | Performing Arts |

DETAILS OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS

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| Thursday 10 th September | School Photographs |
| Thursday 17 th September | Year 10 How to Help your Child Succeed Evening |
| Thursday 24 th September | Beginner Band Presentation Evening |
| Thursday 1 st October | Year 6 Open Evening |
| Thursday 15 th October | Year 7 How to Help your Child Succeed Evening |
| Tuesday 20 th October | Careers Event |
| Wed. 21 st – Fri. 23 rd October | Celebration of Learning |
| Sunday 25 th October | Craft Fair |
| Tuesday 10 th November | Year 11 Consultation Evening |
| Thursday 19 th November | Year 10 Consultation Evening |
| Mon. 23 rd – Fri. 27 th November | Performance Week |
| Tuesday 1 st December | Achievement Evening |
| Thursday 10 th December | Year 7 Consultation Evening |
| Monday 14 th December | Christmas Concert |
| Thursday 14 th January | Year 8 Consultation Evening |
| Mon. 25 th – Fri. 29 th January | Show Week |
| Mon. 1 st – Fri. 12 th February | Mock GCSE's |
| Thursday 11 th February | Year 9 Consultation Evening |
| Thursday 11 th March | Year 11 Consultation Evening II |
| Thursday 18 th March | Year 9 Options Day/Evening |
| Mon. 22 nd – Fri. 26 th March | Performance Week |
| Mon. 19 th – Fri. 30 th April | Year 10 Work Experience |
| Monday 17 th May | GCSE Exams begin |
| Wednesday 30 th June | Year 6 Day/Evening |
| Monday 5 th July | Progress Review Day |
| Thursday 22 nd July | Awards Day |

PASTORAL TEAM

We have an excellent team of experienced pastoral staff, led by Mr. Gallagher, Deputy Head - Learning. Heads of Year are supported by a team of support staff, including Link Tutors. Link Tutors are non-teaching staff who support the pupils with regards to pastoral matters, attendance issues, behaviour concerns etc. This year, the year group teams are made up as follows:

| <u>Year Group</u> | <u>Head of Year</u> | <u>Link Tutors</u> |
|-------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Year 7 | Ms. C. Machen | Miss L. White |
| Year 8 | Mrs. A. Crossland | Mr. S. Janusz |
| Year 9 | Mr. M. Trainer | Miss S. Ward |
| Year 10 | Mrs. M. Johnston | Mrs. G. Parry |
| Year 11 | Mr. P. Storey | Mrs. D. Steadman |

Parents should note that their child's Form Tutor is the first point of contact, either by a note or via their child's planner. Due to the nature of a teacher's working day, a brief note in the planner is often a faster means of contact than by telephone. More serious matters will be dealt with by the appropriate Head of Year, or Link Tutor. Due to teaching commitments, teaching staff are rarely able to speak to parents without prior notification, or an appointment. However, messages can be left and we will aim to respond within one working day. In the interests of safety and security, **visitors should report to the Main Reception in South Building** on arrival and sign the Visitors' Book.

BUSES

The school operates a bus boarding pass system. Pupils are required to show their pass before being allowed onto a school bus. Temporary passes, valid for one day, take the form of a stamp put into the school planner and cost 10p. Pupils may obtain temporary passes or replacement passes from Pupil Point, South Building. Anti-social behaviour on buses is, fortunately, a rare occurrence. However, any pupils involved in any form of anti-social or dangerous behaviour on the buses, will have their passes revoked and will be effectively banned from using the school bus. In the interests of the vast majority of well-behaved pupils, information on any such incidents should be passed on to the appropriate Head of Year, in absolute confidence.

COLLECTION OF PUPILS

Whilst we appreciate that it is difficult to park when collecting children from school, can parents please make sure that they do not park anywhere near the entrance or exit to the Fire Station, opposite Kingstone School. There have been occasions in the past, where appliances have been called out from the station and their exit has been impeded by parents in cars, waiting to pick up children. Ideally, parents should arrange to meet their children some distance away from the school, as other neighbours, including the Keresforth Centre have also complained about difficulties in accessing their premises between 2.30 pm and 3.00 pm. We would encourage as many pupils as possible to walk, use the buses or cycle to school. Many thanks for your co-operation in this matter.

THE SCHOOL DAY

The timings of the school day remain the same as last year:

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|----------|---|
| 8.25 am | Registration/Assembly |
| 8.35 am | Lesson A |
| 9.35 am | Lesson B |
| 10.35 am | Break |
| 10.50 am | Lesson C |
| 11.50 am | Lunch/Form Periods |
| 12.45 pm | Lesson D |
| 1.45 pm | Lesson E |
| 2.45 pm | Period F and after school clubs |
| 4.00 pm | Late bus operates Monday, Tuesday and Thursday (free to pupils) |

ATTENDANCE

The school operates a dedicated absence line Tel: 215759

Regular attendance is essential for progress in learning and we commend good attendance in a variety of ways. We use a sophisticated computer-based registration system for monitoring attendance throughout the day. This system allows us to identify and track patterns of attendance and punctuality. The school provides a service to inform parents of pupil absence from school. Parents will be aware that the Government has clamped down on holidays being taken during term time. As a rule, **the school will not authorise holidays in term time.** Although 'Leave of Absence' will continue to be granted under exceptional circumstances, any other 'holiday' will be registered as 'unauthorised' on your child's record and will lead to a fine being imposed by the Local Authority.

PUNCTUALITY

School starts at 8.25 am each day. Parents who bring their children to school should make sure they are on site by 8.25 am. With 1500 pupils arriving at school, we have to insist that parents do not bring cars onto the site. Pupils who are late can only be excused if they have a note; otherwise they may be required to make up the time after school.

PUPIL PLANNER

Each year every pupil is given a planner. This is a permanent reference document for parents, as well as pupils and contains much of the basic information you require during the year. It is vital that pupils use the planner carefully and we urge parents to ensure that the planner is kept in good order and used appropriately. The planner can provide a vital means of communication between you and school staff. If you write a note for a particular member of staff, such as the Form Tutor, please impress upon your child to show it to the relevant teacher the next day.

LUNCHTIME ARRANGEMENTS

It is in the interests of pupil safety and harmony within our local community, that pupils remain on the school premises at lunchtime. The cash cafeteria provides a much improved range of good quality food for pupils and staff at break and lunchtime. Pupils entitled to a free school meal will be able to purchase either a two-course meal of the day or other food to the value of £1.70.

As a rule, pupils in Years 7, 8, 9 and 10 may not leave the school site at lunchtime. Pupils in Year 11 wishing to go home for lunch, **must** bring a letter stating that they are going home.

- Please make sure that the midday arrangements form in the pupil planner is completed and signed.
- Pupils must have a pass if they leave the site. Pupils leaving the site without a pass will face the appropriate school sanction.
- Once a pupil is off-site, responsibility, safety and welfare passes automatically to the parents.
- Pupils remaining on site must behave appropriately. Poor behaviour will result in detention, or, in serious cases, temporary exclusion from school at lunchtime.

We are always pleased to hear from parents who are willing to act as midday supervisors. We currently have vacancies for temporary and relief supervisors and any parents who are interested in helping in this way can obtain details from the school.

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING

Reports have been designed to give specific information to pupils and parents, highlighting strengths and areas for development in each subject area. We use an electronic package to produce the reports. Surveys of pupils, parents and teachers show that the system is working extremely well. The report is intended as the basis for discussion between pupils and subject teachers, and pupils and parents. Progress Review Days follow the publication of reports so that pupils and parents have the opportunity to discuss reports and their overall implication with Form Tutors.

Our assessment system in school clearly relies upon good communication channels and teachers communicate their assessments in a number of ways. We are working hard to place the onus on pupils to take responsibility for their progress. This involves ensuring that they are clear about their strengths and their areas for development in every subject at all times; pupils are encouraged to talk to subject teachers about these. In addition, we would like to encourage parents to talk to their children about progress in school and any areas of concern. As mentioned earlier, the pupil planner is a good communication tool between home and school; please feel free to write in any comments and do check the planner for comments made by teachers.

HELP AND HOMEWORK

Homework is an essential and integral part of your child's work at school. Teachers will set homework when it is appropriate and we would urge all parents to encourage their children to complete it in full. There will, of course, be variations by subject and from child to child.

BULLYING

The school prides itself on cordial relationships being the norm. Where there are concerns about bullying, it is important that these concerns are raised with the school without delay. All reports of bullying will be treated seriously and the school has a number of procedures in place to safeguard the welfare of pupils. Details of these procedures are available on request.

UNIFORM

The standard of appearance of pupils remains high and is regularly commented upon by visitors to the school. To avoid any costly misunderstanding with regard to uniform or appearance, please consult the relevant section in the planner. Hairstyles should be appropriate for school; the school reserves the right to decide whether a pupil's appearance is suitable for mainstream classes. Heads of Year are only too happy to offer further clarification over the phone.

CONSULTATION EVENINGS

Consultation Evenings run from 4.00 pm to 7.00 pm. Details of parent consultation arrangements will be sent to you nearer the time.

DIGITAL IMAGES OF PUPILS

Teachers are becoming more confident in using the latest digital technologies in their teaching and learning. Most classrooms at Kingstone now have interactive whiteboards fitted and pupils are often encouraged to take photos or video of work that is going on at the school as part of their studies. Such images may end up being used in coursework, display work or even on the school website. Obviously the school will do everything that it reasonably can to ensure that any images are used appropriately. If, however, you do not want images of your child digitally stored or displayed in this way, please contact the relevant Head of Year. It is possible for pupils to be given an exemption card which enables them to discretely withdraw from such activities.

FAIR PROCESSING NOTICE

Parents and carers will be aware that schools hold a great deal of data with regard to their children. Whilst you should be assured that all data is treated responsibly and with appropriate sensitivity; I am obliged to refer you to a detailed (Fair Process) document to which all parents should have access. A copy of this document can be found on the school's website (www.kingstoneschool.co.uk). Any parents requiring a hard copy of this document can obtain a copy by request from the school.

PARENT GOVERNORS

Parents play a key role in the work of the Governing Body, representing parents' views on school issues. The names and contact numbers of our parent governors are available from Mrs. K. Cooper on 738521.

PARENTS' ASSOCIATION

As parents of pupils attending the school, you are automatically members of the association. Our ultimate aim is to enhance the educational facilities available to our children at the school. We do this by raising funds from a number of events held throughout the year. We are always in need of extra help and new ideas from parents, as well as students; if you would like to get involved, please contact either Mrs. K. Cooper on Barnsley 738521, or Mrs. C. Roberts on Barnsley 203816.

SCHOOL POLICIES

The Governing Body sets the framework for the school's Discipline Policy. Within school we have a Behaviour Policy which has been approved by Governors and from this, stems a variety of policies, which we use on a day-to-day basis.

A list of school organisational policies is published in the annual prospectus, the new edition of which is available from mid-September. If parents wish to look at any of the school's policies then they are asked to look on the school website, (www.kingstoneschool.co.uk) or contact Reception. Occasionally, clarification is required over policy matters and we seek to resolve such matters amicably and quickly. The relevant Head of Year will be able to clarify issues regarding specific pupils.

Parents are reminded that in accepting a place at Kingstone, they are effectively accepting the policies which are set out in the School Prospectus and laid down by Governors. Should parents wish to complain, the school has a clear procedure based on the LA guidelines. This procedure is available from the school website. Parents are always asked to telephone the school immediately and if necessary make an appointment with senior staff, who will carry out appropriate investigations. Parents who contact the Local Authority or Governors about any matter will first, as a matter of course, be referred back to the school. Parents have the right of appeal to the Governors following the outcome of any school-based internal investigation.

PUPIL ACTIVITIES OUT OF SCHOOL

During the coming year your child may have the opportunity to take part in after school curricular/sporting activities, some of which may involve competitions against other schools. Such activities will probably involve travelling to another school. Where activities are undertaken after school, full details will be given to the individual pupils involved prior to the event or fixture, usually verbally by the lead teacher. This will include information relating to where pupils will be going, the activity/sport undertaken, what they will need and the expected time back at school.

The school also organises a number of routine visits and journeys away from the school site, as part of the children's learning experiences. Such visits take place during the school session times and tend to be local within the Barnsley area. Visits and journeys during the school day are always an extension to their classroom activities. Such activities are always approved by the Headteacher and present no significant risk to the health and safety of the pupils, and follow the Local Authority's guidance.

If you are happy for your child to participate in these routine activities then you need take no action, however, if you do not wish your child to participate, please contact Reception.

KINGSTONE ON THE WEB

You can find out more about Kingstone, by logging onto our rapidly developing website that you will find at www.kingstoneschool.co.uk

Finally, we look forward to working with you to ensure that all pupils are given the very best chance of success at Kingstone.

Yours sincerely,

Mr. M. Milburn
Headteacher