



# Lydeard St Lawrence SCHOOL NEWS

Spring 2009

22nd January

Well, it's Friday, and although it is wet and miserable, the school is still open, which is a great relief.

I would like to thank the parents on the cascade list for their help in spreading the information about school closure last Wednesday and would like to clarify why a late closure was unavoidable. In both Taunton and Williton the roads were safe for travel, but as we got to Lydeard St Lawrence it was clear that there was much more localised snow and, as before, the hill from Barry Farm was treacherous and the parking and safe pedestrian access to school not good. We would, however, still probably have stayed open if we had not had a mains pipe break on the wrong side of the stop tap and the only way to stop the flooding of Class 1 was to turn off the water at the main. At this point we had no heating, no water and therefore no toilets! We were left with no option but to close the school, and Mrs Mowatt took over the cascade list, as our line was blocked with incoming calls from parents who were snowed in.

The parents who field the cascade calls need to do this quickly, and this is probably not the time to discuss the wisdom or appropriateness of school closures, as it slows down the cascade system. I am more than happy to speak to any of you who were concerned about the decisions made, as the conditions were extremely variable and you may not be aware of all the circumstances that contributed to our decision. Thank you for your continued support and understanding in this. I hope we don't need to use it again this year!

Miss Donovan has been working with the class teachers to begin a slightly different system of spelling practice and testing based on assessments of all the children and the levels they have reached. All the children will have the same number of spellings, but they will be targeting the words from the appropriate level. If your child achieves these really easily they will be given the next level of spellings and teachers will be checking that they are using these skills in their daily writing. Please see Miss Donovan if you would like to discuss this.

Following some parental and staff concerns about the behaviour of a small number of children when they are being supervised by sports coaches, music teachers or other professionals, the whole school met to decide on a code of conduct that they felt was reasonable and appropriate so that all children can get the most out of the many opportunities they are offered.

The outcome was that each child will undertake to:

- Be polite and well-mannered
- Stop when asked to and listen
- Be responsible for their own actions
- Use positive and encouraging language
- Show respect

I am sure you agree that children have constructed an excellent and reasonable code of conduct. I would greatly value your support in promoting this and want every parent to be aware of the expectations. We agreed that there will be a consequence for not

following this code and this will be developed over the next few weeks, but currently, it is three reminders and a break time in class. A second three will involve a letter home to inform you of the situation.

We are now at the stage where some children do not want to attend clubs because of the behaviour of unruly children, who are difficult for some tutors and coaches to manage. The onus is now put very firmly on the child to do as they are asked or face up to the consequences.

Sarah is sending a uniform order soon, so contact her if you need new clothes or bookbags.

Hot lunches got out of order because of the snow. Next week is Pasta bake. If you can't remember if you ordered this, or would now like to order, please contact Sarah as soon as possible.

Fruity tuck money is made payable to Lydeard St Lawrence and swimming money to Somerset County Council (see last week's letter).

Cool milk have sent us the latest milk lists and several children who think they should have milk are not on these lists. This is normally because the payment hasn't been received by the company. Please contact the company to check if you have paid, or ask Sarah if your child is on the list. Our milk supplies did not meet the number of children taking milk today.

Class 1 is now dried out again and we are waiting for the carpet and computers to be replaced. In the meantime, the walls look very shabby and it would be good to give it a coat of paint before the carpets go down. Would any of you be prepared to help get Class 1 painted and ready for the children to go back to a welcoming fresh classroom? Please let me know if you can help us with this, as it will be very much appreciated.

Congratulations to Sid Appleton and Rich Baker, who represented the school in the County indoor athletics trials last week. This was for years 5 and 6 and Sid has been selected to represent Somerset in the upcoming inter-county event.

The footballers did very well on Monday night, and conducted themselves in a very sporting manner. Well done!

And finally, a warm welcome to Matteus Macdonald, who has joined Class 2 this week. Matteus is in yr 4, and already joining in with clubs and activities! If you meet him or his family around school, please give them your usual warm welcome.

Have a good weekend

Gill Stripp  
Headteacher