



# Lydeard St Lawrence SCHOOL NEWS

Autumn 2009

21<sup>st</sup> October

Half term is almost here, and I am sure you all remember Friday is a teachers' training day, so tomorrow (Thursday) is the last day of half term.

After the holiday, the reception children will be in school full time, the new building should be finally finished(!), and the field getting more recognisable as a play area and not a building site.

The children will still not be able to use the field after school until the groundsmen are happy that the grass has taken well. In school time we can monitor the use of the field and restrict the children to certain areas, but this is difficult to monitor in the evenings, and it would be nice to get rid of the orange fencing soon.

In future, if the field is out of use in the day, it will continue to be out of use in the evening, as there will have been a good reason for staying off it in the short term. There are still plenty of areas for the children to have supervised play after school.

Our last security report made several suggestions as to how we could improve security and safety for the children, most of which were acted upon straight away. One concern was that the bottom gate, next to the taxi parking bay, was unlocked during the day and this allowed free access to adults on site and posed a risk as an unlocked exit for the children. Although we have never had such an incident, the gate is often left open, and we would be unwise not to follow security recommendations. From the beginning of next half term, the field gate will be locked from 9.15am until 2.30pm. This has been discussed with Pre School, and we have decided on these times together. The parents picking up at lunchtime can use the main gate, which takes them past the office, where we have good visibility of adults arriving on the site.

The PTFA are busy planning the Christmas Fair, which is on the evening of 27<sup>th</sup> November. They are having a meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> November between 3pm and 4pm to make some final plans and arrangements. If you could help in any way on the night, please come along or send your suggestions to the meeting. Children can go to after school club for the hour, without charge, as long as they are pre-booked. If you drop them off on the night then the charge is the usual £3 an hour, if there is space to have them.

The PTFA have unfortunately had to postpone the disco planned for Thursday evening. This will take place next half term, and I am sure if the children had dressing up planned, they will still be able to wear it at Halloween instead!

Well done to the children who represented the school in rugby, football and athletics last week. It was great to see so many children out and about taking part in sporting events.

I have had several enquiries about team games and selection, so to clarify the situation, teams are based on the following: Staff recommendations – the coaches who teach the children give me their recommendations as to the best players for the competitive leagues. This is the key starting point. (Provision of after school clubs give every child the opportunity to play in a variety of sports, but not all will represent the school competitively); sportsmanship and conduct – we still have a small minority of children who do not treat the visiting coaches with sufficient respect, and frequently impact on the time for sport for the other children in the group. It is unlikely that these children would be selected if they continue in this behaviour, even after being reminded; final decision of the head of PE (me!) who tries hard to be fair, while balancing the needs of the team, the individuals and the school discipline policies. I know some children are disappointed when they are not picked, and I hope they will use this as the motivation to take every possible advantage from their coaching to progress in skills and team-playing.

Thank you to everyone for helping the Parents' evening run smoothly last week. We will be asking for feedback next half term, so do let us know what works well and what we can improve.  
Have a good holiday. See you on the 4<sup>th</sup> November!

Gill Stripp  
Headteacher.