



NEWSLETTER 1

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 12TH 2008

Welcome back!

This is a first! Welcome to the first of the new weekly newsletters that the school will now be sending out each Friday. This will hopefully improve communication between home and school and will also give other members of the community a chance to share items with the school.

I want to welcome everyone back to school, and to all the children and their families in RP and RR, a big welcome! We have had a fantastic first week back, and the children have been delightful as they have settled into their routines so quickly. I am sure this will be a very exciting year!

I would like to say how grateful I am to all the parents who attended my introductory meeting on Tuesday evening. There was a very large turnout and I am sure this reflects the commitment parents are making to their children's education at Longwell Green. Some parents have asked if I would send out the contents of the meeting for them to read, so please see the main points below.

Mr Sibley's meeting with parents on Tuesday 9th September 2008- copy of the speech made

As parents, most of you will already know the school very well under the leadership of Mr Leggatt and I know the reputation that the school enjoyed was very high in the local community. Of course the OFSTED inspection last summer was extremely positive and it showed that there were many things that the school community could be justifiably proud of. I have been fortunate to have had opportunities to work with staff from LGPS over the last few years- I accompanied Mrs Bowker and Mr Leggatt on a trip to Denmark, and my previous school, The Tynings in Staple Hill, had links with LGPS, especially related to technology which meant that we worked together on several occasions. I came to the school for in-service training and felt that I had a good understanding of the quality of the school. That is one of the main reasons why I applied to be the new headteacher. In short, I know that the school is extremely good, and that you as parents will want to know that it will remain so. It is my job to see that this happens. The changeover of headteacher can cause uncertainty and part of the purpose of the meeting tonight is to reassure you all that LGPS continues to be in good hands- and during this presentation I will outline some of my thoughts about where the school could move forward to.

I have been in primary education for nearly 30 years so I have a wealth of experience to bring to the role. All my early teaching took place in London and then I moved to the Bristol/Bath area eight years ago to take up the position of headteacher at The Tynings. I live in Bath, I have three children, the youngest of which has just started her GCSE studies, so I

have personal as well as professional experience of supporting and helping children. I hope I have never been too pushy as a parent, and I hope I haven't been one of those parents that teachers dread coming into parents' evening because they challenge all the time- but I believe that having children helps me to see things from both sides. I know what I expect from a school as a parent, so I try to ensure that schools I am associated with deliver that.

As I take on the role of headteacher I obviously bring experience, as outlined above, but also a good sense of what has made LGPS successful in the past and I believe my **values** regarding primary education are similar to those demonstrated at the school over the last few years. I would like if I may to go through what these values are, remembering that as far as possible these values are not just for the children, but the whole school community.

1) Opportunities to succeed

By which I mean the following;

children having an engaging and relevant curriculum that meets their needs; good after school clubs and enrichment activities; plenty of praise so that they know they have done well; good guidance so that children know what they have to do to get better;

staff having a rich diet of professional development that helps them become better teachers but also helps to maintain their morale and their desire to remain in the profession;

parents having opportunities provided in school for them to develop their understanding of how to help their children and also to develop their own learning.

2) High expectations for oneself and others

As **professionals** in the school we always endeavour to do our very best for all the children. We expect a high level of commitment and dedication from all the staff; it starts with us as individuals, and my knowledge of LGPS is that this has been the norm here; it is my intention to build on this. We have high expectations of each other as colleagues, and the level of support shown here this evening I think demonstrates that these high expectations are met.

We want the best **from our children and for our children**, so with support and challenge we can get great things out of them, according to their ability. All children are different so we want the best for every single one but what we expect from each may be different.

As a school we have many partners who support us in our role, such as the educational psychologist and the education welfare service; we have high expectations of these partners too.

I want to make a plea for **parents** to play their part in meeting the high expectations as well. How parents respond to what school wants is key; if parents respond positively their children see that school is respected and that it has a high status. Parents who do not respond in such a way may well be giving a far more negative message about the importance of school, and this makes it much harder for us to get the best out of the children. Your support is therefore crucial, for example in respect to the importance of punctuality, helping your child fulfil tasks at home and not taking holidays in term time.

3) Well-being of all Children

Emotional well-being- are children happy? Do they have friends? Are they confident? Will they take risks? Do they like to work independently as well as with their best friend? Do they feel safe? These are questions that we as a school need to be asking, and ensuring we are doing our very best to provide for.

Physical well-being- we hear a great deal about obesity and childhood- a school is nowadays expected to provide for children's exercise (two hours a week) and their nutrition. School meals have improved hugely, but sadly as the nutritional content in meals has improved the take-up has gone down- that sets us a challenge and one that links back to the high expectations we have of our parents. If we are to be serious about improving children's health, as I hope we are, we have got to be active partners in the food provided for children through the school day.

Sustainability- for children's future well-being I believe they need to be fully aware of and actively involved in issues surrounding sustainability- understanding the basics of reduce, reuse, recycle and being actively involved in the school's Eco-schools programme and the Travel Plan.

Staff well-being

We need to ensure that the working conditions are as good as they can be, so that teachers are able to do their job to the best of their ability. That means I have a responsibility not to overload them with paperwork, but parents can also play their part by being patient and understanding about something that happens regarding their child. As a parent you have your own child or children in mind- a teacher on the other hand has got a class to think about, and sometimes there is a difference between what a parent wants and what a teacher feels is in the best interests of the class. Please remember that teachers have always got the overall well-being of all the children in mind.

Parent well-being

Children's well-being is closely linked to family well-being. If there are circumstances that are impacting on you or your family it is often better that we know so that we can bear it in mind when providing for your child but we also may be able to offer some support or point you in the direction of help.

4) Kindness

I would like to build on the culture that already exists and to highlight the community as one acting in the spirit of kindness, within school and also reaching out beyond the school e.g. the current links with Uganda.

I would like to conclude by saying what sort of Headteacher I will try to be. At my previous school I was known for not shouting- I will endeavour to make sure this continues. I will be as fair as I can be, I will always try to listen to other people's views and will include as many people as possible (including children) in the decision making process. I have an 'open-door' policy, which means I will see anyone with a concern, or indeed with a nice thing to say, as soon as I possibly can.

I feel it is a privilege to be the Headteacher of such a fine school, and I look forward to working with you all as partners in your children's education.

Don Sibley

Headteacher

MEDICAL REMINDERS

If your child has medicine in school, inhalers, epipens etc, please remember to note down the expiry date on your calendar before handing information into school. In doing this it will ensure your child's medicine is in date.

Please let the office know or Mrs George if your child no longer has any medical issue, this is just as important as letting us know if there is a new issue or change with their health.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 17th September – Parents invited to meet their child's new teacher. 5.30 pm for children in Years 1, 3, and 4; 6.15 pm for children in Years 2, 5 and 6.

Tuesday 7th October – Open afternoon for admission September 2009. 2.15 pm – 3.00 pm.

AN INVITATION TO AN E-SAFETY AWARENESS EVENT RELATED TO THE SAFETY OF CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN A DIGITAL WORLD

The world that young people live, learn and work in is significantly influenced by the use of computer technology, the Internet and mobile phones. Amongst the many benefits of using this equipment and the Internet come dangers in their use. Incidents of such problems are often the subject of national news and can affect children and young people of any age.

In October 2008 South Gloucestershire Council, with the support of South West Grid for Learning Trust and the Police, are to hold a set of e-safety awareness events for parents and carers whose children and young people attend South Gloucestershire schools.

We would like to extend an invitation to you to attend one of these events in your area. The dates and times of the events for summer and autumn are given below. Should you not be able to attend the event nearest to your child's school you are welcome to attend any of the others. The same presentation will be given at each.

Similar events, held in the summer term and autumn terms of 2007 and summer term 2008, were very successful and were highly regarded by the parents and carers that attended.

This action forms part of South Gloucestershire Council's strategy in addressing e-safety issues. The Council is also in the process of updating its policy in relation to the Internet and new technologies. This policy will be publicised in the near future.

We strongly urge you to consider attending one of the autumn term awareness events detailed below. Thank you.

Venues and Dates:

Parents/Carers should arrive between 7.00 p.m. – 7.30 p.m. The presentation will start at 7.30 p.m. and end at 9.00 p.m.

<p>Chipping Sodbury Secondary School Bowling Road Chipping Sodbury South Gloucestershire BS37 6EW</p>	<p>WED 08 OCT 08</p>
<p>Sir Bernard Lovell Secondary School North Street Oldland Common South Gloucestershire BS30 8TS</p>	<p>THU 09 OCT 08</p>
<p>Mangotsfield Secondary School Rodway Hill Mangotsfield South Gloucestershire BS16 9LH</p>	<p>THU 16 OCT 08</p>
<p>Bradley Stoke Community School Fiddlers Wood Lane Bradley Stoke South Gloucestershire BS32 9BS</p>	<p>WED 22 OCT 08</p>