



Hello and welcome to our first newsletter of the new school year. Can I ask you to read through the newsletter and keep up to date with future ParentMail emails and our school calendar available on our school website. Most importantly can I ask you all to keep our school in your regular thoughts as we venture together into a wonderful new school year. Keith Wysner

Attendance Matters: Attendance at school is a legal requirement for children who are registered with a school. Only in exceptional circumstances should our children not attend school. For this reason an advice sheet on attendance has also been sent home with this ParentMail. As a school we ask that sickness is reported via the ParentMail app. There is no need to call the office to report sickness as long as it is reported while your child is off or as soon as they come back.

Canteen Menu: Our new canteen menu was emailed home recently and is available on our school website. It rotates every four weeks and dates are displayed in the top right corner. Parents are asked to make sure there are sufficient funds in your child's Dinner money Account in ParentMail. Dinners currently cost £2.60 but this is under review by the Education Authority (EA)

Medical, Pastoral & Safe ICT: Parents received last week ParentMail Forms requesting Medical, information and consent regarding Pastoral Care, Photography and ICT use. I would ask you to return these forms straight away. Policy information is also always available all year round on our school website. I encourage parents to read over these documents and ensure your child understands the spirit behind each of the documents. Our children are all precious and as a school we endeavor to protect them and nurture them in a safe and caring environment.

Social Media & Our Website: Our social media feeds are not intended for the use of our children as the guidelines state that users should be 13 years and over. Our social media is a form of communication for the school to reach out to our parents, local residents and wider community to learn about our school and to keep them informed in a positive way as to what makes our little learning community so special.

Arriving & Departing School: Our staff car park is for staff, deliveries and in exceptional circumstances for the medical need of our parents or children, this is with my prior consent. It is not large enough to be used by every disabled badge holder in our school community and I would ask all adults dropping off or collecting our children to respect this as it is very small for the needs of such a big staff. Our school website outlines the pressure our local community comes under due to school traffic and I would ask parents to direct all adults collecting our children to follow this guidance. For safeguarding reasons visitors should remain in the foyer after calling into our school office. Adults collecting or dropping off our children at the *Boys Junior Door* should not let our children play in the raised beds or climb on the *Whiteabbey National School* stone sign from 1863. This sign is part of our heritage and we wish to respect it.

Communication with School: ParentMail is the main way our office communicates with our parents and our teachers use the Seesaw App please check these daily or set push notification to let you know on your mobile device when we communicate with you. Teachers are under increased pressure and are currently following industrial action as it has been three years since they have had any form of pay rise. I would ask parents to be understanding if communications are not responded to out of school hours. Our staff will respond within one or two school days to general communication and within one school day to urgent communication. **Our office can be communicated with via:** office@whiteabbeyps.co.uk

Clubs Timetable: Some providers who use our school will be commencing shortly but our own school clubs will commence from Monday 18th September for P2-P7. A timetable will go home soon. My thanks to Mr Hill who so capably offers such a wide variety of opportunities to our children.

Uniform, Coats & Shoes: Parents are to be congratulated on how well our boys and girls all look in their school uniform and PE Kits. They are all looking so well and I hope this continues throughout the year. Just a reminder that school shoes are to be worn to school and home again and our P5-P7 children can change into play trainers for break, lunchtime and outdoor play. Trainers or Black PE plimsolls are to be worn for indoor PE. Please remember that black school shoes (not trainers) are a requirement of our school uniform all year and not just until your child grows out of these lovely new ones. Coats are also necessary as we proceed towards autumn as the weather can be very unpredictable and yet our children will be outdoors at break and lunch as much as possible, even in light rain.

House System & Elective Pupil Bodies: Since 2017 we have had a House System with children in all year groups in our Houses led by elected House Captains and Vice Captains. Mr Hill will be leading this, and all our staff can award House points to our children for excellent behaviour, sporting endeavor and going that extra mile in whatever they are doing to be kind, honest and diligent. House Badges are available in our Parentmail Shop for our parents to purchase. Teachers will be reminding and informing our children this week of their allocated House to make this as easy as possible. P4-P7 pupils are encouraged to stand for our elected Pupil Council

Early Friday Finish: Since 2018 we have closed early every Friday at 2pm. This is the ideal time for our children to have routine checkups at the dentist, doctor or hairdressers. Please use this time if possible, rather than during the normal school week.

Staff Training: School will be closed on Friday 29th September for staff training.

Our Clothing Banks: Textiles, shoes, towels and bedding can go into our purple clothing and fabric bank just outside the Junior Door (right hand side of the main front door). Items in this bank raise funds for our school.