

Welcome to the Family of St. Catherine's

I want to start by saying all our new pupils seem to have readily settled into life here. The Welcome Celebration this week was excellent, with all behaving beautifully. Thank you to our Year 6 Buddies, who have been marvellous with the new Reception children, helping them during lunch and afterwards on the playground. Likewise, year three and four pupils and staff have tried their best to make sure that new pupils feel wanted and

comfortable at our school. I hope that everyone feels happy and safe. However, if there are any problems, please do come in and discuss these with me, or the class teacher. This applies to all children at the school and their parents/carers. We are committed to working together to give the best possible education to your children.



Year Three Sacrament of Reconciliation

We would like to congratulate the children in Year Three who received the sacrament of Reconciliation over the past two weekends, (along with other children from our parish of Our Lady and St. Michael's). Our prayers and best wishes are with them as they continue with their preparations for the sacrament of First Holy Communion on the 1st and 2nd May, 2010



Haiti Appeal

We are extremely grateful for all the donations received towards this important appeal. Parents and children have been very generous and we are already over the £800 mark, with many of the children doing chores to raise money for this fund. The coffee morning this week will no doubt bolster this amount.



Attendance

Our attendance figures for last term (September – December) were not as good as we had hoped, with an absence rate of 3.86%. We are sure that this term will be better and ask parents to please make every effort to send their children into school regularly. We will be monitoring this carefully and parents will be contacted should their child fall below 90%. The Attendance Officer will become involved with any child whose attendance is below 85% of the possible sessions. Holiday during term time is another area in which we would ask parents to please consider very carefully before taking their child out of school.

New procedures for mornings from 22nd February - Lateness

From after half-term, we are asking children to come straight into class from 8.45 a.m. Entrance

doors will be opened at this time. There will NOT be a whistle or lining up. The breakfast club is available for parents who wish to drop their children off early. We feel that this initiative will make things easier for parents and pupils will benefit because they should all be settled and ready to start lessons at 8.55 a.m. prompt

Unfortunately a few children are constantly late and we know that this is not their fault. We would therefore ask parents to change their routines and bring pupils here in good time, ready for learning. We will be recording lateness much more closely, sending home letters and inviting parents in to bring about improvements. Persistent lateness not only disadvantages the pupils concerned but is also disruptive to others in their class. It does not set a proper example and it is now that we need to establish good habits for their future.

Free School Meals

If you are in receipt of any of the following you may be entitled to Free School Meals:-
Income based jobseeker's allowance or
Income related employment and support allowance or
Pension credit (guarantee credit) or
Child Tax Credit with a taxable income of no more than £16,040 and not in receipt of Working Tax Credit.

The system for applying for Free School Meals has changed and it is now much easier to apply. All you need to do is fill in your application form online or phone Customer Services on 01923 471370 to apply.

The Digital Divide - Are you eligible for a Home Access Grant?

Home access is a government drive, with funding allocated for 270,000 low

income families to get access to a computer and the internet, to get online at home. It is expected to run from now to March 2011.

You need to be a parent or guardian responsible for and living with a child, who is in school years 3 to 9. You need to be receiving at least one of the above allowances.

Depending on what you need, the grant allows eligible applicants to buy one of the following packages:

1. Full package (a computer, one year's internet access, service and support)
2. A computer with service and support only
3. One year's internet access only

www.dcsf.gov.uk
The Helpline number required for all applications and enquiries:
Tel: 0333 200 1004



'Live, love and learn joyfully together through Jesus and his Church'