



Avondale Preparatory School

Ignite Your Purpose, Become Your Potential

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Headmaster: Mr Stuart Watson BEd, Dip Tchg

Monday 21 August, 2017

Dear Parents

I trust that the holiday period has been a beneficial one for the family despite the wetter than usual summer. May I remind you that all children return to school in **SUMMER UNIFORM** on **WEDNESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER**. As a polite reminder, we open the gate at 8am each morning.

May I take this opportunity to welcome a small number of new families to Avondale. We have had a number of late registrations over the holiday period, notably in our Tots and Nursery areas; we look forward to working in partnership with you in the weeks/ terms ahead.

Over the holiday period there have been a number of school improvements which have drawn a number of favourable comments from the passing public. After much time, noise and expense, the rear corner of the school section has been cleared of debris and now houses an all- weather surface, slightly larger than our existing tarmac area; whilst all parts of the school will benefit from it's creation, the newly created area will allow hockey to be given greater coverage in the coming months for both boys and girls in the Prep Department, and provide a suitable alternative for both netball and football during inclement weather.

A large proportion of land has been excavated, giving extra space on our school field towards the river; a new fence aligns the property with a much improved long jump area, that will also serve as an Early Years sandpit in the warmer months. The small mound, that has been the affection of many children over the years, has grown in both height and width and now rolls onto the playing field. It will provide an excellent 'slippery slip' launchpad, come Water Day near the end of the year!

In time, the school will house two substantial maintenance sheds on the far side of the field. These will provide much needed storage for the future, whilst providing a 'workshop' area for maintenance jobs. An adjoining path now links all parts of the school site around the back of our gazebo area.

As can be expected with the scope of developments, there will be some disruption to the Prep Department games programme as the field recovers from constant heavy machinery running over it! A large amount has been invested in facilities over the summer holiday period in what will benefit all parts of the school in years to come; much of the work that our Parents Association do this year will contribute to the funding of the astroturf area, for which I am most grateful.

Housekeeping for the start of the 2016-17 academic year

Staffing

I should like to welcome to the staffing team Miss Tamsynn Barrington as Nursery Leader. As advised in the Summer Term last year, Tamsynn is an Early Years Specialist and is the sister of Georgina Barrington (Years 3/4); like her, she is an accomplished sportswoman who, I know, will add vitality and vibrancy to the school.

Please find below, the full staffing allocation for the year.

Year 6- Mrs Jo Stephenson- Jarrett (**Head of Prep**)

Year 5- Mrs Rachael Banham (**Core Subjects Leader**)

Year 3/4- Miss Georgina Barrington, supported by Mrs Carmel Everett- Collins

Year 2- Mr Anthony Rahman

Year 1- Mrs Melissa Beresford (**Head of Pre- Prep**), supported initially by Mrs Suzanne Stone

Reception- Mrs Alison Humphrey

Nursery- Miss Tamsynn Barrington, supported by Mrs Teri Hayward (full time)

Tots- Miss Victoria Scadden, supported by Mrs Sheryl Davis (AM), and Mrs Aprille Nicholls (PM)

Communication and Billing

Firstly, it will come as no surprise to you that you are receiving this letter by means of e-mail; this will be our preferred method for correspondence. Furthermore, all ASCC and uniform invoices shall be sent using this method, in addition to Termly invoices and letters. This way, we anticipate that information will arrive home promptly, whilst cutting down on unnecessary paper wastage. In this respect, please may we ask that your e-mail details are up- to- date and accurate with the school office. **We kindly ask that your spam folder is checked on a regular basis as this is where a number of items ended up last year. Please be reminded that ASCC bills are now sent out monthly (approximately three times a term).**

All trips are now invoiced in arrears and will appear on the following term's invoice; there is an exception to this arrangement- all Nursery trips in the Summer Term and all Prep residential trips such as Hooke Court, and Romania; these will be invoiced separately and shall be billed in advance, due to deposits required from us as a school. Please note that excursion fees are calculated, based on the cost of the activity, (including transportation) divided by the number of children participating. In the event of sickness, excursion fees are not refunded.

Contact Details/ Permission Slips/ After School Clubs/ Autumn Term Calendar

We are in the process of compiling the Autumn Term Calendar at present; the start of the new academic year is an incredibly busy time and there are a number of dates that need to be confirmed/ added. We anticipate having the Autumn Term calendar go home with your child on Day 1, together with new 'Contact Detail Forms', 'Medical Forms' and permission slips. Please may we ask that these are returned in the named plastic wallet to the office the **FOLLOWING DAY**.

Whilst ASCC shall operate from Day 1, teacher led clubs will start on Thursday 7 September. A full list of clubs shall be made available in the calendar which shall be accompanied with a permission letter; return of the permission slip promptly will ensure acceptance to some clubs that have restrictions on numbers. You will be contacted by phone if we are **unable** to accommodate your requests. **Please be reminded that ASCC finishes at 5:30pm every night.**

I would encourage you to refer to our website for further information- due to the large scale of changes at this time of the year, we anticipate that updates will be completed by the end of week 2. **Any cancellation of after school activities (or other events) will be communicated on the whiteboard at the side blue gate** should it be known about in advance- children are also told at the start of the week at the conclusion of assembly; **only in the event of late notice, shall we text parents.** After school activity lists will be displayed in the hallway leading to the dining room. These lists are the official ones taken for communication with home- please may we kindly ask that you check that the details are accurate, as it is not uncommon for children to start (or stop) clubs later in the term and for texts to be omitted.

Uniform

We have high expectations in respect to our uniform. Please be advised that only listed Avondale items of uniform are permitted to be worn at school. All uniform requirements and price lists can be found on our website www.avondaleschool.org

All uniform must be **clearly marked** with your child's name on it; any uniform found without names will be put in lost property which can be found on the left hand side as you enter the school hall. If it is not claimed by the end of each week, it will be placed in our Thrift Shop. Named items of clothing shall be returned to respective owners.

The uniform shop will be open on Monday 4 September and Tuesday 5 September from 10.00 – 11.00am. If you are unable to make these dates or times, please send an e-mail to the office and your uniform will be sorted during the first week. Mrs Sam Wallace will continue to run the uniform shop this year; should you require any uniform, please email the school office at office@avondaleschool.org and Sam will be happy to meet with you. During term time, the uniform shop hours are Mondays and Fridays (8:30-9:30am).

As advised earlier, children should return to school in summer uniform. Children in Reception to Year 6 require a blazer to be worn to and from school; **all children from Nursery to Year 6 require the school hat to be worn to and from school;** please may we ask for your support in this to avoid any awkward conversations at the gate.

Additionally, the new PE kit, detailing house colours for those children in Years 1-6, should be brought in for use in PE lessons. **Please be advised that Prep Department games (Years 3-6) will commence on the afternoon of the first day back.** Children in the EYFS will have the older style 'blue' PE kit.

The summer PE uniform will be worn by the Prep Department (Years 3-6) until half term (and again in the summer term) and Years 1 and 2 for PE for the duration of the year. All children should have **white sports socks, with the exception of Prep boys, who will require the longer red socks for use with shin pads and boots in the football and rugby seasons.** Due to the recovering field conditions, boys will be using the astroturf for the first half of the Autumn Term and will require trainers for games lessons. Please may I ask that all items of clothing are named- it is a very easy process handing lost items back to the correct party if items are named, and a very frustrating one for all concerned, if they are not. **The change- over to winter uniform for Prep pupils will occur after the half term break.**

Appointments/ Requests for Absence

Inevitably there are a number of appointments that are necessitated throughout the course of a school week- to ensure the safety of all children is kept paramount, please may we ask that the office is informed the moment you take your child and at the point in which they are returned to school.

All requests for absences other than doctor's/ dentists and the like, **should be directed to myself in writing. This is a mandatory requirement.** Please may I ask that holidays are booked around the dates outlined in the Termly calendars; we want your children to progress and prolonged absences from school can affect attainment levels.

Peripatetic and SEN Lessons

Timetables for respective peripatetic teachers follow a tumble system so as to avoid children missing the same lesson each week. These timetables are displayed in respective classrooms and on the Parents Noticeboard in the school foyer/ hallway. Mr Knott shall commence his teaching programme on Monday 11 September. Lessons with Mrs Reed commence on Thursday 7 September and with Mrs Sandu on Friday 8 September. Whilst we endeavour to make up any absences for children on school trips, we are unable to do the same, or refund, in the event of sickness or planned holidays.

Swimming

Please be advised that swimming starts at Durrington Pool for children in Reception- Year 3 (*with Year 4 being optional*) **on Monday 11 September**. Please may we kindly ask that your child is collected from the pool at 3:30pm if you are able to do so. We appreciate that this is not always able to happen and we will endeavour to collect as many children as possible from the pool in the school minibus at 3:45pm.

Ofsted

We anticipate a visit from our friends at Ofsted some point late in the academic year; (most likely the second half of the Summer Term). Last year I corresponded with parents over the findings of a questionnaire we conducted. As a reminder we had only 27% of Early Years forms returned, with approximately 2/3 of parents from Years 1-6. Communication is vital if we are to provide the high expectations that both we, as a staff, and you, as parents, wish for. We are keen (as I am sure you are too) to gain an 'outstanding' rating in as many areas as possible. Please may I ask that you approach your child's teacher in the first instance should you have any queries; most concerns can be dealt with quickly if communication is prompt and regular. Likewise, we also require your feedback in terms of what is working well and areas of strength for the school.

We finally got there! I have no doubt that there will be other little snippets that come up in the next couple of weeks- in this respect, please may I draw your attention to the whiteboard at the side entrance to the school as a means of communication. Needless to say, we look forward to welcoming you and the family back on Wednesday 6 September in what, I know, will be another successful year.

Yours sincerely

Stuart Watson