



## PARENTS NEWSLETTER DECEMBER 2015

Dear Parents and Carers

The count down to our Christmas celebrations has started; just a reminder of dates below.

### Dates for diaries this half term are:

9 <sup>th</sup> December	Families	Cooking Club
15 <sup>th</sup> December (10 am)	Families	Secondary Christmas Performance
16 <sup>th</sup> December (2 pm)	Families	Primary Nativity
17 <sup>th</sup> December	Pupils only	Christmas Lunch + Carols
18 <sup>th</sup> December	Pupils only	6 <sup>th</sup> Form Christmas Lunch

### Christmas Winter Fayre

This year's fayre was the **best we have ever had!** Such a happy atmosphere with lots of pupils and families, including I am pleased to share, many of our new families joining us. Thank you for making it such fun. I am delighted to add that the **Friends of Granta (FOGS)** who arrange these wonderful events are all set for another year ahead. We do desperately need your help though so please look out for event information and get involved where you can. You will meet lots of warm and welcoming people and it's good to network with other families who face some of the same challenges as you do.

### Panto news!

Once again in January, thanks to FOGS and a very generous donation from a local company, our pupils will be off to the panto at Cambridge Arts Theatre on January 6<sup>th</sup>. This year's panto is Cinderella. A separate letter will be with you soon.

Whilst it is a great event, it doesn't suit all of our pupils; class teachers will be in touch with families of pupils who in the past have tried the panto and not found it to be an enjoyable event for them (some find it too noisy or too crowded) to discuss family views and possible fun alternatives.

### Website

If you haven't visited our website for a while you might find these items interesting and I would like to draw your attention to them:

- Our new prospectus
- A service update leaflet from the school nursing service. Many of you will be aware that we no longer have a named nurse based on site. Instead we have access to a small team of nurses who cover all of the area special schools in Cambridgeshire. I hope that you continue to find the service offered meets the needs of your child but if you have any concerns or comments that you would like to share I would be happy to pass them on. You can share them via your child's diary or by contacting the office on 01223 896890.

- The Moving On booklet has been updated by the Additional Needs Team and is now available from our website. Families of pupils from year 9 upwards will find this a huge help because it contains lots of information about post school options. Last years leavers' parents have shared that they have found some changes in finances and benefits systems a challenge this year and I also have a factsheet available on request about those.
- We have been busy updating some of our policies and as a result are adding a policy news section to our website.

### **Poor weather closure**

Below is our usual reminder about our procedures in the event of deep snow/school closure. However, snow is not the only problem and the vast majority of our pupils travel into school in buses and cars from a very wide area across which conditions can vary significantly. Please assess the suitability of your own child's journey and liaise directly with your own transport provider if you have any concerns (and then let us know). Occasionally, very understandably, individual routes have to be cancelled as unsuitable by transport providers when school is able to remain open.

We publish our announcements on the county council website and the school website and on local radio (BBC Radio Cambridgeshire, Q103Heart and Star FM) but we are not always able to get into school to alter the telephone answer message.

Parentmail will not be used at this stage as we have had a limited uptake for the new system. We strongly advise that you register over the Christmas period.

### **Mobile phone safety tips:**

I have taken this mobile phone safety tip list for pupils from [safetynetkinds.org.uk](http://safetynetkinds.org.uk):

- 1) Remember if you are being bullied it isn't your fault and there is nothing so awful that you can't speak to someone about it. Talk to a trusted adult at home or at school.
- 2) Don't reply to any nasty messages you receive.
- 3) Don't reply to a text from someone you don't know.
- 4) Keep the messages you have been sent so you can show them to a trusted adult and make a note of the time and date of the messages or calls you receive.
- 5) Don't answer calls from withheld numbers or numbers you don't recognise, let it go to voicemail.
- 6) Block numbers from people who are sending you nasty messages.
- 7) If you are bullied repeatedly can change your number.
- 8) Don't give your mobile number to someone you don't know.
- 9) Don't send pictures to someone you don't know.
- 10) If the problem is serious you can report it to the police, cyber mentors, or ChildLine.