King Street Primary & Pre - School

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6th September 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

The sound of chatter, learning and excitement fills our classrooms once again and the school feels full of life. Our children have settled very quickly into new classrooms and have already formed good relationships with their new staff. We are very fortunate to have children and families who are so friendly and welcoming and it feels like our new families have been here forever. I apologise in advance for the long newsletter already but there is always a lot of information at the beginning of a new school year and it is important that all of our new families receive this information too.

We are very pleased that the continued building work went well over the summer and we were able to return without any major disruption and we are really thankful for this. Internal works are still being finished and some decorating still needs to be finished but staff worked hard on Monday and Tuesday to ensure that classrooms were lovely for children to come back to. The final stages of the work will be undertaken in the summer of 2025 and hopefully that will leave us with a warm, dry and energy efficient building.

Many of you may have also noticed that the bungalow on the way into school has now sold. We do not have any further updates on this or who it has been sold to but we did raise a complaint which has been acknowledged by the council and I am grateful for all of our families who have done the same. The portal now shows a huge amount of concern for the across the whole community and I hope this is successful in ensuring permission is not granted for the change. If we find out any more, we will pass this information on.

**School timings**

I would like to give a reminder to all families that school start time for children in Reception to Year 6 is 8.45am. We have a ‘soft start’ to the school day, which children can access from 8.30am when the school doors open. This 15-minute session not only allows children to settle before the school day but also allows staff to extend learning opportunities through additional reading, maths and consolidate other curriculum knowledge. The school day finishes at 3:15pm.

Our Nursery sessions are 8:30am- 11:30am (mornings) and 12:15pm -3:15pm (afternoons).

Where children are persistently late, will invite families into school to look at how we can support to improve this so children can achieve their potential.

**Meet the teacher and phonics event**

Next week (Monday 9th) we will be hosting our annual ‘meet the teacher’ event, for children in Year 1-6, where you can see your child’s classroom and meet the staff. Teachers will build upon information given in their newsletter and you will hear more about specific expectations within their year groups and can ask any questions you may have. We will run 2 sessions so that families with more than one child can attend both meetings. The sessions will run from 3:30pm-4.00pm and then repeat at 4.00pm-4:30pm. There will be no need to book a place at these sessions. You are welcome to attend either of the sessions. Please enter the building via the doors your child uses on a morning and you will be directed to the classrooms.

On the same night, for children in Reception, there will be a phonics information event for parents. This will also run over the same 2 sessions. This will be very informative, helping parents understand the phonics programme we use and how they can help extend learning at home as this is a crucial stage in helping your child learn to read. We look forward to seeing you all there.

**Diary dates**

Each Autumn term we send out the school event dates for the whole year. These will be issued next week so please look out for them and put any key dates into your diary. It is rare that we change any dates but I always add forthcoming dates to the end of the newsletters so keep you up to date. As always we will be holding Christmas nativities, fairs, parent events, discos, movie nights and sports days. Child all love it when you attend these events so please do put the dates into your diary and remember to sign up to anything that requires pre-booking.

**Attendance**

Changes to the issue of Penalty Notices to address School Attendance from 19th August 2024

From 19th August 2024, new legislation has come into force regarding the criteria for and the issue of penalty notices, to address school attendance. A national framework for parental fines has been introduced for any pupil who misses 10 or more half days within any 10-week period

Please note that if you have requested a Leave of Absence that commences from September 2024 onwards, any Penalty Notice/s issued will be at the new rates and trigger the start of the three year threshold period, as specified below.

The following changes have been made:

* the number of unauthorised absences that may trigger a potential fine - **10 unauthorised absences (5 days) in a 10 school week period.**
* the number of penalty notices that can be issued to a parent in respect of the same individual child - **a maximum of 2 penalty notices will be issued (per parent, per child) within a 3 year period**
* for the first penalty notice issued to each parent in respect of the same individual child in a 3-year period - **the amount of the penalty notice has increased from £120 to £160 if paid within 28 days and £60 to £80 if paid within 21 days**
* any second penalty notice issued to the same parent in respect of the same individual child within 3 years of the date - **the second penalty notice issue is now set at £160 to be paid within 28 days - NB: No discount for earlier payment is offered**
* any further absences will proceed for prosecution in the Magistrates Court for the same parent in respect of the same child within 3 years of the date of the first penalty issued - **The maximum fine the court can impose for a first offence is £1,000 per parent, per child. If, however, you have a history of offences of this nature, you may be prosecuted under Section 444(1A) Education Act 1996 and the court can fine you up to £2,500 per child, order payment of the prosecution costs, impose a Parenting Order and/or sentence you to a period of imprisonment of up to 3 months. This reflects the seriousness of unauthorised absence from school**

Please contact school if you have any concerns regarding your child's attendance so that we can offer support and work together to ensure your child attends school, on time.

I will also note that half term dates are quite late this year, with Easter being very late. If you are looking to book a holiday, please check our term dates first.

**After School Clubs**

We are restarting our after school activity clubs the week beginning 16th September. These will run for the whole autumn term. A booking form will be issued next week through Eschools so please look out for this. We do expect the clubs to be popular, as always, and spaces will be limited. If children would like to attend, they must be able to attend for the whole term. Many of the clubs/coaches are being paid for by the school at no cost to families and we do not want to waste coaching costs if children do not attend. Where children regularly do not attend clubs they have requested, this may limit their ability to access other clubs in the future. We do not offer children in Reception a club in the Autumn term as many of them already find the days quite long but they will be included in both the Spring and Summer term offers.

**Community information/fundraising**

Thank you to the families who have informed us of the Asda rewards scheme and for nominating us as their school. We have accepted the nomination and should now be registered with the scheme so, if you are shopping, please register us as your chosen school and we will receive money every time you shop. This money is always used to give our children the best possible experiences in school.

**School applications**

It is that time of year again. The application process for both Primary and Secondary Admissions 2025 Intake (current Nursery and Year 6 children) is now open.

If your child is due to start **Reception (Primary School)** in September 2025, you can now apply online. Please visit [www.durham.gov.uk/primaryschoolplaces](http://www.durham.gov.uk/primaryschoolplaces) to apply. We will be holding an open evening for our Reception class places on 23rd September, 4.30pm for anyone wishing to visit. **The closing date for making your application is 15th January 2025.**

Parents can make their application for **Secondary School ( Year 7)** online by visiting [www.durham.gov.uk/schooladmissions](https://eur03.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.durham.gov.uk%2Fschooladmissions&data=05%7C01%7Cj.bromley200%40kingstreet.durham.sch.uk%7C685015fadb284750356408da8f2b0f9d%7C45dfff5283644d73bf3a8f98bdf10d87%7C0%7C0%7C637979712346575138%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=zI3OLbaF7Jj63PvN4I2Z%2B%2BzUi3yt7p0aaZFUcVwIY74%3D&reserved=0)  **The Closing Date for Secondary School Applications is the 31st October 2024**.

If you have an queries please contact school admissions directly on schooladmissions@durham.gov.uk or by telephone from the School Admissions and Transport Team on 03000 265896.

**Contact details and medical information**

We are aware that over the summer break some families have moved home and have not updated their contact details. This is also the case with mobile phone numbers and email addresses. Please keep contact details up to date. Phone and email details must be kept up to date as this is how we will contact you in the event of any queries or an emergency situation. Our Eschools platform also relies on these details to keep you up to date with newsletters, parents’ evenings and other letters and events. Please do not miss out on this information by not updating your details.

You can contact the office at kingstreet@durhamlearning.net

If you do not have your log on details for the Eschools platform, please contact the school office who can organise this for you. When we hold our parents’ evening later this term, we use the platform for your convenience so you will need to know your details.

This term we are asking families to update any medical information we hold on your child. When children are young, conditions can change over time and sometimes medication is no longer required. Please ensure we have the most recent information available and that medication we hold is in date and clearly labelled. We cannot administer any medication with parental consent.

**School lunches/packed lunch**

A reminder that if your child would like to swap from school meals to packed lunch (or vice versa), we do require one week’s notice. This is done by emailing the school office.

We look forward to a very busy Autumn term and hope to see many of you on Monday at the information events.

If you have any queries or concerns please do not hesitate to get in touch. If there is any information you believe is important to pass on about your child, staff are always available on the school yard, by email or you can make an appointment through the school office.

Joanne Bromley

Head Teacher