

22nd January 2010

Dear Parents,

An extremely interesting and cold start to 2010. Sadly, like many schools across the country, we were forced to close because of the adverse weather conditions and the dangerous condition of our school sites. May I apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused families and for lost learning time. We do carefully consider the need to close and inspections of our school sites are carried out. I am sure you agree that our first priority is the health and safety of your children. Fortunately, we only had to close for one day and two afternoon sessions. Let's hope that we have no further enforced closures for the remainder of the winter months. In this respect could I remind parents that if you have registered your mobile phone number on our FASTSMS text messaging system, then you will receive a text from us informing you about school closure. We also use this system to inform parents about forthcoming school events. A letter has been sent to you, with your child, detailing the information we need from you in order to register your details on our system. If you are not registered, school closure announcements will be made on local radio stations, on our website and on our answer phone service.

Following farewells to leaving colleagues at the end of our Autumn Term, I am delighted to welcome the following colleagues to our school family:

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| - Mr. Ali | - Teacher of ICT |
| - Mr. Willard | - Teaching Assistant |
| - Ms. Chandegra | - Cleaner |
| - Mr. Wood | - Teacher of Science – PGCE placement |

Our welcomes are extended to any new pupils and their families. We are delighted that you have joined us.

Examinations continue next week for our Sixth Form students. Fortunately, the exams were unaffected by the bad weather and we wish our students well at this important time of the year.

Clubs and extra curricular learning activities continue to grow and we are able to offer a wide range of sporting opportunities to our children. The school clubs starting for pupils to attend this term are:

- the breakfast swim club
- archery
- canoe club
- girls only rugby
- dance sessions

together with the usual after school training sessions and competitive fixtures. In association with such sporting opportunities we maintain our strong focus on a fit and healthy lifestyle for all of our children. Please continue to support us by insisting on:

- a healthy lunch, preferably in school
- few, if any, fizzy drinks
- less bags of crisps
- more fruit and vegetables
- some regular daily exercise

Such changes to eating habits and daily life will make a huge difference. Also a reminder that crisps, fizzy drinks, sweets and lollipops are banned in our school. Thank you.

With the poor weather and short daytime hours, please insist that your child returns straight home at the end of the school day unless they are attending extra learning opportunities. We are always concerned when we see our pupils wandering around the streets long after school has finished.

Charity fund raising events are ongoing and we will shortly be having two theme days to raise monies for our school in Pakistan. As you know, we are committed to providing money towards the running costs of the school and such fund raising events will be very important for its future. We are presently engaged in 'bucket collections' for the victims of the Haiti earthquake disaster. I am sure like me, you watch the daily news about Haiti with great sadness. Any monies you would like to donate would be greatly appreciated. The collections will continue next week.

With laptops and PCs now accessible in most homes our children spend a great deal of their time on the internet and social sites such as Facebook. Internet safety is of paramount importance and on **Thursday, 4th February** we will be offering parents the opportunity to attend an **Internet Safety Evening**. This will be followed by a series of workshops over the forthcoming months. You will shortly receive a letter giving you full details of this important event. Free software will also be made available to parents to help with internet security.

With an increasing focus on internationalism in our school, I am delighted to inform parents that we have now qualified for the full International School Award. This is a most prestigious quality mark and reflects the international partnerships we have built and the emphasis we place, through our curriculum, on cultural diversity. Later this term, through what is known as the Comenius Project, a party of our children will be visiting Latvia. This follows our very successful visit to Greece in November by a group of our pupils. Exciting stuff!!

With my very best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

P. Slough
Headteacher

Dates for your diary

Internet Safety evening	- Thursday 4 th February
Y10/Y11 Subject Evening	- Tuesday 9 th February
Curriculum Enhancement and Enrichment Day	- Thursday 11 th February
Half Term	- Monday 15 th February to Friday 19 th February
Training Day	- Monday 22 nd February
Pupils start back at school following the half term break on Tuesday 23 rd February.	