

Cavendish News

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HAPPY NEW YEAR!

We hope that you all had an enjoyable break over Christmas and the new year, and that 2014 is happy and healthy for you all. Over the holiday, Miss Elwood in Reception got married and is now Mrs. Taylor. Just before the break, Mrs. Doogan had a baby girl and has called her Olivia May.

The children have settled straight back into school, and I spent a fabulous afternoon with Year 4 as they began researching into their new topic 'Freedom'. They were finding about people such as Thomas Jefferson, Emmeline Pankhurst, Susan Anthony, Aung San Suu Kyi and Martin Luther King. I've asked Miss Threlfall's class to find out a few facts about William Wilberforce, so please give them a hand with that if you can.

Earrings and PE

Some children have had their ears pierced over the holiday. We'd like to remind all parents about our PE policy in relation to jewellery:

Jewellery and watches must be removed for any sporting activity.

If earrings cannot be removed, they must be covered up. In some cases, covering may not be adequate for the activity in which case, where possible, the activity will be amended. If it is not possible to amend the activity, the child will be deemed at risk and will not participate in the lesson.

A plaster over a stud earring (put on by the parent/carer at home on PE days until the child is able to do this independently) would be suitable for some activities, but would not be sufficient to prevent the stud-post from penetrating the flesh or bone behind the ear following an impact of even moderate force. Clearly then, a child with earrings would not be able to take part in, amongst other things, any competitive game or activity and this presents us with a dilemma.

We are trying to increase the amount of competition in school in line with the new National Curriculum and in the interests of the health and fitness of the children, and are beginning to introduce inter-class tournaments half-termly so children can apply the skills and tactics learnt so far. Does the whole class miss out on this competitive element of PE so as not to alienate a few children, or do we just exclude those who have earrings which cannot be made safe? Neither is an acceptable option as they will have a detrimental effect on children's physical development.

It's such an easy problem to solve: ***please*** postpone ear piercing until the start of the 6 week summer holidays so that they have time to heal before the new school year and can therefore be removed safely for PE.

Please bear in mind also that only ***small stud earrings*** may be worn at school. Dangly earrings are unsuitable because they can be caught in clothing and cause tears to the earlobe.

Dates for this term

The spring term in schools is always less frenetic than the autumn term, so there are fewer dates to remember – phew! Please pay particular attention to the dates for parent/carer/teacher evenings, because not all classes will be doing them on the same day. Here goes:

January

- 15 – school nurse doing YR heights/weights
- 16 – school nurse doing YR heights/weights

February

- 04 – YR trip to Skipton Castle
- 05 – Y4MT trip to People’s History Museum
- 07 – Y4MD trip to People’s History Museum; Y3 trip to Manchester Museum
- 10 – 13 – Black History project
- 11 – Y5 parent/carer/teacher evening
- 12 – Y1, 2, 3, 4 parent/carer/teacher evening
- 14 – school closed for staff training
- 17 – 21 – school closed for half term
- 27 – Y4 trip to Tatton Park

March

- 04 – Y5HD trip to Longendale
- 05 – Y5RK trip to Longendale
- 12 – Nursery trip to Sealife

April

- 04 – Easter egg and bonnet competitions for EYFS, KS1, KS2; end of term

Parents/carers of children in YR and Y6 will be informed separately about arrangements for parent/carer/teacher meetings. Other events have yet to be confirmed and I will update you as they get put into the school diary.

Parent Survey

Many thanks to all parents and carers who returned their before and after school care survey forms. Our vision is that our wrap around care from 7.45am to 6pm becomes the natural choice for any of you that need to find quality childcare. Your responses have already been collated by Mrs. Powell and Mrs. Erdemir and they are putting together a plan to deliver the improvements and changes you want to see. Hopefully, as our school expands, we will be able to work with the local authority to modernise the building as well. One area where we have struggled is the provision of consistent holiday care that operates the same hours as during term time. To a limited extent, we have tried to provide this with our own staff, but of course they aren’t available all through the school breaks as they too have families, and can only take their holidays when school is out. However, we are now meeting with external providers who are interested in investigating this further, so we have our fingers crossed that we will be able to develop the kind of holiday provision that you have told us you need.

You can also give your opinions on the overall work of the school by visiting www.ofsted.gov.uk and clicking on the white Parent View button. It’s anonymous, and covers many areas, from academic achievement to pastoral care, behaviour and homework. 16 responses are on the Ofsted site at the moment, which isn’t many for a school this size, so please take 10 minutes to go online and complete the questionnaire if you can.

Appointments with School Staff

We genuinely believe that maintaining open and honest relationships with parents and carers makes Cavendish a more positive place, and we try our best to be available to see you. However, please be aware that class teachers can't get involved in long conversations with you at the start of the day. Our registers need to be done quickly so that lessons get off to a prompt start at 9am. We have more time at the end of day, but please bear in mind that we have a weekly staff meeting each Wednesday from 3.45pm to 4.45pm, and that some staff run after school clubs or deliver extra teaching sessions between 3.30pm and 5pm. It is therefore helpful if you let us know in advance that you want to make an appointment to see a particular member of staff. You can do this by emailing office@cavendish.manchester.sch.uk, or by popping into the school office to leave a message. Mr. Griffiths and I try our best to see people as quickly as possible, but we aren't always available straight away due to prearranged appointments, being in class, or being off site. We all know how frustrating it is not to be able to be seen immediately, and if something is very urgent we will of course do what we can to respond quickly, but please appreciate that for non urgent issues you might have to wait a day or two for an appointment. From a headteacher's perspective, it's always difficult to know which serves parents and carers best – being out on the playground at the start of the school day when possible which is nice for a quick hello with you, or being in the main building so that I am easy to find if you want to have a more private word. Let me know what you think!

Something else that we'd like feedback about is the issue of home-school communication. Cavendish News comes out each Friday and is sent to you either electronically or in hard copy according to your preference. It is also on our website. We use text messages for some things, but this is the most expensive way for us to communicate with you so we try not to use it too frequently. Some of you also said that you don't like to receive text messages about non urgent issues.

Despite our efforts, we still find that some parents/carers tell us that they don't know when things are happening in school. If you have any ideas for improving how we get information out to you, please email them or write them down and hand them in at the office.



YEAR 4 BUSY AT WORK ON THEIR FREEDOM TOPIC