



## Swanton Morley VC Primary School

Manns Lane, Swanton Morley, Dereham, Norfolk, NR20 4PX

Tel: (01362) 637219

Head Teacher: Mr Matthew Richards

E mail: [office@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:office@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk)

Web Site: [www.swantonmorleyprimary.co.uk](http://www.swantonmorleyprimary.co.uk)

Autumn 2023 – Newsletter 1

### Introduction

I really hope that you enjoyed the October half term holiday and were able to make the most of spending some quality time together as a family. Now that the clocks have gone back it certainly feels like summer is a rather distant memory especially as we are fast approaching those colder winter evenings.

As always, there has been a considerable amount to celebrate over the first half term at school and lots more to tell you about as we hurtle headlong towards Christmas!

### Communication

Firstly, a reminder that if you have any questions or concerns (however seemingly small) about your child's experience at school, then please do not hesitate to contact us.

In the first instance, I would always encourage you to make direct contact with your child's class teacher either on the school gate, through the front office or via email. All teacher's school email addresses have been previously provided but please contact the office if you need this information again.

Most concerns can be resolved in this way but if this is not the case then please catch me on the gate or email me directly at [head@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:head@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk) where we can then discuss the issues further or arrange a separate meeting if necessary.

I would also like to remind you of our school's recently updated Behaviour Policy and Complaints Policy that outlines all of our agreed procedures and can be found on the school website.

*Please note that in line with our school well-being guidelines staff are not expected to read or respond to emails in the evenings, at the weekends or during holiday periods.*

### Parents Evenings

Parents Evenings will be taking place in the next few weeks (see Dates section). You can still sign up by contacting Mrs Wilton in the school office.

Apart from Alder Class, all appointments will take place in the school hall on this occasion. Please ensure that you are on time for your appointment. There will also be a Parent Survey for you to fill in on the evening so don't forget to complete this before you leave!

### **Class Updates**

In the next few weeks, class teachers will be providing you with a separate 'mini newsletter' specific to what has been happening in your child's class including what is coming up.

### **Reading Cafes**

Each class will be running a Reading Café for parents in the lead up to Christmas so please look out for these. Class teachers will write to you directly with the details.

### **Cross Country**

A range of different children from across the school took part in our cross-country events last week. They did extremely well with some impressive individual performances – some children really surprised themselves! Importantly, all had great fun. I would like to say a special thank you to Mrs Sadler who has put a great deal of effort into running the after school cross country sessions this term and also accompanied the children to the upper school event.

### **Pantomime**

We are all extremely excited about the whole school trip to the Pantomime on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December. A huge thank you to FOSM for covering the cost of all of the tickets and making the trip viable. If you have not already done so then please make your payment as soon as possible as it's not long to go now!

### **Friends of Swanton Morley (FOSM)**

We had our second FOSM meeting of this academic year on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> November. It was great to see new leaders, events being planned out and discussions around how to further support the school, including how to spend money already raised. As the forthcoming pantomime trip has shown, the funds raised really do help to improve your child's experience during their time at Swanton Morley. Therefore, any help or support that you can offer is invaluable. Please contact the school office if you would like to find out more or join FOSM.

### **Fundraising**

Thank you to Mrs Buck for the efforts that she went to in order to organise our Epilepsy Awareness Day on Friday 20<sup>th</sup> October. The children and adults looked great dressed in different shades of purple and the raffle certainly proved to be entertaining in our whole school assembly! The total amount

raised was £323 and we would like to thank you for your fantastic support in highlighting and helping this very important cause.

Harvest Collection – our donation of 72.6kg of food will feed 4 families in crisis for 3 days. Thank you everyone!

Ms Madeley has also written to you separately about BBC Children in Need day which will take place on Friday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

### **Attendance**

I have recently received information from the DfE/NHS and Local Authority regarding attendance, which I have been asked to share with you (see Appendix 1/ Appendix 2 at the end of the newsletter). As you know, we continue to monitor attendance very carefully and I will only authorise absence in 'exceptional' circumstances. We will contact you directly if we have any concerns but if you require any additional support/resources then please follow this link: <http://www.justonenorfolk.nhs.uk/attendance>

### **Healthy Eating**

We actively encourage healthy eating across the school as part of our curriculum teaching about healthy lifestyles. Therefore, please can you ensure that children only bring water to school (unless there is specified medical advice) and that the children do not have chocolate, sweets or sugary drinks in their packed lunches.

In terms of break time snacks, we continue to provide fruit for all children in YrR, Yr1 & Yr2 so these children will not need to bring in their own fruit/snack. For those children in Yr3, Yr4, Yr5 & Yr6 we would ask that they still bring in their own healthy snack each day.

### **Parking**

Parking continues to be a real problem outside of the school despite repeated requests to park considerately for the safety of all our children. As a school we are clearly limited in the powers that we have as it is a public road, but I would encourage you to report any safety issues to the local police and Norfolk County Council (NCC). We have also been in regular contact about the ongoing issues. Once again, I would remind you that the village hall car park is the safest option and only a very short walk from the school.

### **Uniform**

Please come and talk to us in confidence if you are having any difficulties with paying for uniform. The FOSM also have a large bank of spare uniform which can be provided at minimal or no cost.

Please can we also remind you to send your child into school with a raincoat each day so that we are able to keep children outside for as long as possible at break times/lunchtimes and to ensure that they are not sitting in class with wet clothes.

## Dates

### Autumn term 2023

- Monday 30<sup>th</sup> October - Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2023
- Christmas holiday: Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> December - Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024

### Spring term 2024

- Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> January - Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024
- Half-term holiday: Monday 19<sup>th</sup> - Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024
- Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February - Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March 2024
- Easter holiday: Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March - Friday 12<sup>th</sup> April 2024

### Summer term 2024

- Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April - Friday 24<sup>th</sup> May 2024 (Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May is a Bank Holiday)
- Half-term holiday: Monday 27<sup>th</sup> - Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May 2024
- Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June – Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024

### Other School Dates – Autumn Term 2023

- **Parents Evening 1/2** - Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> November 3.30-5.30
- **Parents Evening 2/2** - Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November 4.30-6.30
- **FOSM Discos** - Friday 8<sup>th</sup> December 6.00-7.00/7.15-8.30
- **Lower School Christmas Performance** -Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> December 9.15
- **Alder Class Christmas Charity Sale** - Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 1.00-3.00
- **FOSM Bake Sale** – Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December 3.15
- **Pantomime Trip** (Whole School) - Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> December
- **Upper School Carol Service** – Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2.00 @ All Saints Church

### Finally...

It has been great to welcome our new SENCO, Mrs King, to the staff team here at Swanton Morley Primary. If you have any questions regarding SEND or would like to make an appointment then please contact Mrs King directly at [senco@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:senco@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk) or via the school office.

Kind Regards,

*Matt Richards*

Matt Richards  
Headteacher  
Swanton Morley V.C. Primary

## APPENDIX 1 - DfE/NHS

Dear headteachers and trust leaders,

As you begin to welcome children and young people back for a new school year, we have been asked by the Department for Education (DfE) to provide you with a clinical and public health perspective on mild illnesses and school attendance.

We are aware that the COVID-19 pandemic may have caused some parents to feel less confident with assessing whether their child is well enough to be in school so we have laid out some information which we hope you will find helpful.

There is wide agreement among health professionals and educational professionals that school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. Being in school improves health, wellbeing and socialisation throughout the life course. The greatest benefits come from children and young people attending school regularly.

It is usually appropriate for parents and carers to send their children to school with mild respiratory illnesses. This would include general cold symptoms: a minor cough, runny nose or sore throat. However, children should not be sent to school if they have a temperature of 38°C or above. We would encourage you to share the [NHS 'Is my child too ill for school?' guidance](#) with parents and carers in your schools and communities which has further information.

In addition to respiratory illnesses, we are aware that more children may be absent from school due to symptoms of anxiety than before the pandemic. Worry and mild or moderate anxiety, whilst sometimes difficult emotions, can be a normal part of growing up for many children and young people. Being in school can often help alleviate the underlying issues. A prolonged period of absence is likely to heighten a child's anxiety about attending in the future, rather than reduce it. DfE has published useful [guidance on mental health issues affecting a pupil's attendance](#) and those who are experiencing persistent symptoms can be encouraged to access additional support.

Thank you for your efforts so far to facilitate immunisation sessions within schools. As we head into winter, encouraging high uptake of seasonal flu vaccination and routine immunisations for eligible children and young people will help to reduce absences and the disruption they cause.

You, and the teachers you lead, are already supporting families to build up children's confidence to attend school regularly. The Royal College of General Practitioners (RCGP) recently approved [5 principles to promote school](#)

[attendance](#). We hope this guidance will support GPs in having sensitive and reassuring conversations with parents, carers and pupils.

Thank you and your colleagues for your continued commitment to supporting the health and wellbeing of children and young people.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Chris Whitty, Chief Medical Officer, England

Pat Cullen, General Secretary, Royal College of Nursing

Professor Kamila Hawthorne, Chair, Royal College of General Practitioners

Dr Camilla Kingdon, President, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

William Roberts, Chief Executive, Royal Society for Public Health

Dr Lade Smith, President, Royal College of Psychiatrists

APPENDIX 2 - Local Authority



Every Day  
Counts ✓

Missing a day of  
school a week

is the same as  
missing over  
2 years of school.



Every Day  
Counts ✓

**Every day at school counts, helping with learning, developing skills, and building friendships.**