



SILCHESTER CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL

Compassion, Courage & Respect

Dear Families of Silchester,

We've had another busy week at school and the children are really starting to settle into their routines with their classes. It has been lovely to see new relationships being formed between the children and staff, and also with Wilma, our therapy dog! The children have all got to meet her now and are keen to spend more time with her!

Meet the Teachers!

This is just a reminder that we invite you to come into school on **Monday 23rd September from 2:45pm**. This will be an informal opportunity for you to see your child's new classroom, look at the work they have started this year and to meet their class teacher. We will be having open classrooms to enable your child to show you around. Having seen their class and work, should you wish to take your child home before 3:15pm that day, they will need to be signed out via the front office. We hope that those who are able, will enjoy the opportunity and that it will help you to get a better picture of time at school.

Shout Outs!

I just wanted to share a big thank you to The Edwards and Calladine families. After that torrential downpour day, when the gutters overflowed and the children had to 'walk through a waterfall' to get into school, these guys volunteered their time at the weekend to complete some much-needed repairs on our gutters. I know they may be embarrassed by a public shout-out, but it is this sort of community spirit and action that makes our school the special place it is – so thank you.

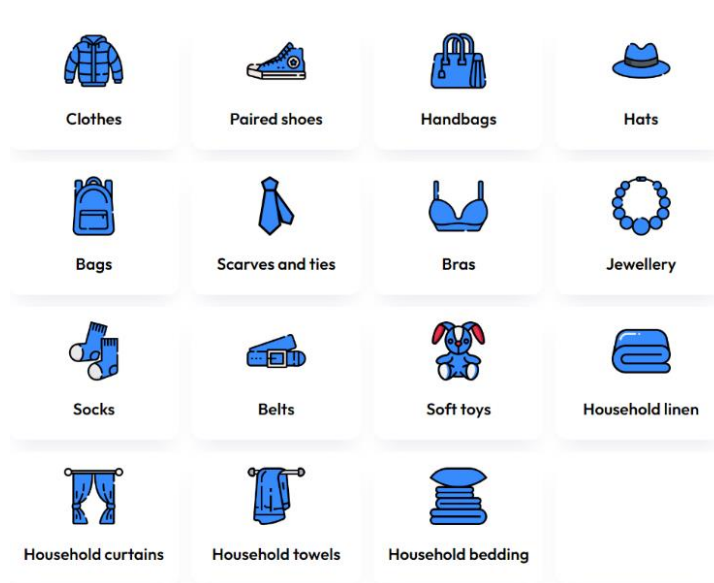
PTA Christmas Cards

This week, your child will have brought home a template for them to design their Christmas Cards upon. Should you wish to place an order for any of the items, proceeds will return to school via the PTA. Please see separate email for more details. Huge thanks to Helen Blair for organising this for us. Please return completed designs to school by **Monday 23rd September**.

Bags2School

Should you happen to have a clear out over the weekend, we are having another Bags2School collection on **Tuesday 24th September**. Please bag up any of the items pictured and leave under the bike sheds before 9am on Tuesday 24th. All proceeds made by this venture go directly back into enrichment experiences for the children via our wonderful PTA.

Here is a list of items that can be donated to Bags2School:



Halloween Alternative

Sam Dunn, Children & Youth Community Pastor, is hosting a blazing lights party again this year.

It is an alternative for kids that don't like Halloween or get a bit scared!

More information can be found here: www.ctat.org.uk/blazinglights. Limited spaces are available.



Changes to attendance rules

As many of you may be aware, there have been several changes to the legislation around school absence and the details regarding penalty notices. As a school, we adhere to the new regulations and will be adopting the same policies.

The information in the poster below provides a useful summary of the changes.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

New attendance rules!



There are new rules for unauthorised absences, whether this is due to holiday, irregular attendance, or otherwise. Don't get caught out!

1

I'm a single parent of one child and we want to go on holiday for 5 days.

Make sure you use the absence request form. Your holiday will not be authorised. Let the school know before you book anything. As your child will miss 5 school days, you'll be given a penalty notice fine.

1 parent & 1 child = £160
Reduced to £80 if paid in 21 days



For each child a penalty is given...



1 parent & 4 children = £640
Reduced to £320 if paid in 21 days

For a family of 2 parents & 4 children



What happens if school suspects children are actually on holiday?

Photos on Facebook?
Foreign mobile dial tone?
Other children talking about your holiday?
Amazing sun tan?
Home visit shows no-one at home?

Please don't be offended if we ask for evidence or mention these questions to you. We're required to do this to ensure a fair system!

2

What about subsequent absences? Is it still the same penalty amount?

No, not anymore. If in any period of not more than 3 years, your child has a 2nd and 3rd leave of absence OR pattern of irregular attendance, which is unauthorised, then...

2nd TIME

2 parents and...
1 child = £320
2 children = £640
3 children = £960
4 children = £1280

NO DISCOUNT FOR EARLY PAYMENT

3rd TIME

A penalty notice fine will not be given. Instead, your case will be taken to court. A magistrate can fine each parent £2,500 for each child.
1 parent & 4 children = £10,000
2 parents and 4 children = £20,000

3

What about irregular attendance? Could I get a penalty notice?

If your child is absent for 10 or more sessions in 10 weeks, and their absences are unauthorised, then the school is required to consider penalty notices / prosecution.



So, half a day here and day there could all add up to 10 sessions in 10 weeks. If unauthorised, then it would be a penalty notice. Remember, 1 day is 2 sessions (morning and afternoon).

YES

4

What are typical reasons given that won't be authorised?

Examples of unauthorised absences

| | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A family member's birthday | Sickness of parent or sibling |
| Shopping for uniforms | Sibling's school closed |
| Inadequate clothing for school | Refusing to attend, but able to |
| Child being used as a carer | Poor family organisation |
| Problems with transport | Family holidays |
| | No absence request completed |

Where attendance is irregular, or historically poor, sickness absences may be unauthorised unless medical confirmation by a GP surgery is given.



EVERY DAY COUNTS – ATTEND TODAY, ACHIEVE TOMORROW

Upcoming Key Dates

| | |
|---|--|
| Monday 23 rd September | Meet the teacher – open classrooms from 2:45pm |
| Tuesday 24 th September | Bags 2 School Collection Day |
| Tuesday 1 st October | PGL Year 6 Parents information meeting – 3:15pm |
| Tuesday 1 st October | Year 4 trip to Reading Museum (packed lunch needed) |
| Friday 4 th October | Harvest – receiving donations for Basingstoke Food Bank |
| Friday 4 th October | Year 2/3 visit to St Mary’s to decorate for Harvest |
| Sunday 6 th October | Harvest Festival at St Mary’s Festival |
| Monday 7 th October – Friday 11 th October | Year 6 PGL Residential |
| Tuesday 8 th October | Year R – 5 nasal flu immunisations |
| Thursday 10 th October | 5pm – 6pm Phonics Workshop for parents |
| Tuesday 15 th October | Year 4/5/6 Pilgrimage to St Mary’s (wellies and waterproofs!) |
| Tuesday 15 th October Wednesday 23 rd October Thursday 14 th October | 9am – 10:30am Open Mornings for prospective Year R parents – 25/26 intake |
| Thursday 17 th October Friday 18 th October | 9am – 9:30am Year R parents welcome to Ladybirds Phonics Teaching |
| Friday 18 th October | Tempest Individual Photos |
| Friday 18 th October | Year 6 trip to Burnham Copse – Free theatre workshop on creation (after photos!) |
| Monday 21 st October Wednesday 23 rd October | Parents Evenings |
| Friday 25 th October | INSET DAY |
| Monday 28 th October – Friday 1 st November | HALF TERM |
| Wednesday 6 th November | Year 6 nasal flu immunisations |
| Friday 8 th November | PTA Non-School Uniform Day – for collection of tombola items |
| Monday 11 th November | Remembrance Service at War Memorial (Yr5/6) |
| Friday 15 th November | Children in Need |
| Saturday 23 rd November | PTA Christmas Fair – SAVE THE DATE! |
| Friday 6 th December | PTA Christmas Market |
| Wednesday 11 th December Thursday 12 th December | Nativity |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Tuesday 17 th December | 6pm – 7pm Christmas Carol Concert |
| Friday 20 th December | Last Day of Autumn Term and break up for Christmas Holidays |
| Monday 6 th January 2025 | First day back at school for Spring Term |
| Monday 24 th February 2025 | INSET DAY |
| Monday 21 st July 2025 | INSET DAY |
| Tuesday 22 nd July 2025 | INSET DAY |

I hope that you and your families have a really great weekend, and I'll look forward to welcoming you on the gate next week.

Rachel Moir

Rachel Moir
Head of School