



Stimpson Avenue Academy
Stimpson Avenue Northampton NN1 4LR
Telephone: 01604 631383
Fax: 01604 454471
E-Mail: head@stimpsonave.northants-ecl.gov.uk

Executive Head: Sarah Bennett
Head of School: Kim Kemp

29 April 2016

Dear Parent/Carer

PRINCIPAL NEWSLETTER

A few weeks into the summer term and already lots has been achieved and amazing experiences had! Although we cannot always rely on the English weather, the children have certainly enjoyed being able to go into our newly opened garden (more about that later in the letter). This term is my favourite, with lighter and longer days to be enjoyed by all. The children certainly seem to be even more upbeat and cheerful than normal and their smiles continue to remind me of what is important – the children and their happiness.

Parent/Carer Questionnaire

Thank you so much to all the parents/carers who have completed the questionnaire. We now have 125 questionnaires completed of which 20 are in Nursery, 27 in Reception, 25 in Year 1, 23 in Year 2, 15 in Year 3, 22 in Year 4, 20 in Year 5 and 15 in Year 6. However, there is still time to complete it as we really value your viewpoints so we can evaluate what we are doing well from your perspective and how we can improve. The link to access this questionnaire is: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/GQ7MP8N>

If you do not have access to the Internet, then paper copies are available in the foyer by reception. Thank you.

Opening of our garden

I am delighted that we have managed to clear the garden and have it open for the summer term. The children have certainly loved this and have already thoroughly enjoyed this additional space at lunchtimes and break times. The joy children get from nature and marvelling at the 'little miracles of life' has certainly reminded me of the importance of stopping for a short while and appreciating the world around us. The opening of the garden has also enabled the children to engage in more creative and fun ways of learning. Outdoor learning is certainly very motivating and enjoyable for all. The garden has already become a crime scene and a site for 'bug hotels' and it is only the third week of opening!



A massive thank you to Helping Hands and all the volunteers who have given up their own time to help us open the garden. Additionally, Barclaycard nominated our school for their Community Citizen Project and sent some volunteers to support this work in the Easter holidays – thank you to Karen Pollard, a parent of children in Years 2 and 3, who arranged this for us.



Attendance and Punctuality

At Stimpson our attendance figure has dropped slightly to 95.96% and therefore I would really appreciate your support in helping us to raise this over the next couple of weeks. Thank you. Please can I remind you that holiday is not permitted during school time and this will be unauthorised.

Punctuality continues to be a target to improve. Please ensure your child arrives **promptly** in school; it is so important they do not miss valuable learning times and additionally, interrupt the learning of others when they arrive. English and Maths lessons commence promptly at 9.00am so it is imperative all children are in registration by 8.55am at the very latest. A reminder that the school doors open at **8.45am** and the gates will close by **8.55am**. Parents/Carers of those children who are persistently late will be contacted directly by the school office and a letter will be sent home. If you are having difficulties getting your child into school on time, please do contact the school and we will endeavour to do all we can to support you to ensure your child can arrive on time.

Thank you for your continued support on such an important matter.

Teaching your child to be safe on line

With modern technology being such a key part of so many children's lives, it is really

important we keep vigilant with their use of the Internet and media networking. Below are just some recommendations I received which you might find useful.

Join the fun. This is no different from attending a sporting match or chaperoning on a dance or field trip. If your child has taken an interest in an online community such as Webkinz, Neopets, MySpace, Minecraft, etc., find out what they like about it. Sign up for your own account and add your child as a "friend". This allows you to have a better sense of what they are doing and what sort of things they are coming into contact with, but it also shows your children that you're interested in their activities.

Use available technology. There is no shortage of Internet Safety tools available to help you control, track and/or limit what your children can say and do online. Take the time to learn about internet filters, firewalls, monitoring software, browsers for kids and other tools. While they are not a replacement for strong parenting, they can help make your task easier.

Do a little sleuthing. Use your browser history, cache and cookies to find out what sites your children have been visiting. This is not to suggest that you should spy on your child, but a spot check now and again is a good idea. Enter their names (including nicknames) into popular search engines to see if they have public profiles on social networking sites. Do the same with your address and phone number. You might be surprised by how much of your personal information is online!

Watch for online game playing. If your child plays online games, like Minecraft via an iPad, PC, PlayStation, X-box that are connected to the internet then make sure you are being vigilant as to who they are playing with and what information they are sharing.

Watch for warning signals. A child who is reluctant to talk to you about what they're doing online or seems to be withdrawing from family and/or friends may have a problem. Cyber-bullying is just one experience that may cause your child to withdraw.



If you ever have any concerns or would like any support, please do not hesitate to contact the school.

Safeguarding

On a serious note, as no one would question, the safety of our children is paramount. I would really appreciate it if you could remind your children about stranger danger, especially remind older children who walk to school about the importance of walking with others and not talking to strangers. If you, or your child has any concerns, please always share them with us.

Please know that if your child walks alone or with other children, they may be at an increased risk. I would strongly recommend that children in Year 4 or younger are escorted into school and if they are in Years 5 and 6, they walk with other children. If your child is to be allowed to walk home after school, you must provide us with written permission.

Thank you for your support in such a crucial matter.

I hope you have a great Bank Holiday weekend and that the sun shines for at least some of the time! I look forward to seeing you all back on Tuesday 3rd May.

With very best wishes,

Kimberley Kemp
Head of School

KEY REMINDERS AND KEY DATES:

SATs

Please remember that the KS2 SATs occur week commencing Monday 9th May. The SATs occur nationally, throughout this week and all Year 6 children have to take their tests during this time and are not allowed to complete them at alternative times. It is therefore VERY important your child attends school for the whole of this week and the final week leading up to the tests to ensure they receive all the tuition required to help them feel as knowledgeable and confident as possible. However, it is also really important we keep children as calm as possible and at school, we will endeavor to keep the tests as stress free as possible. If your child is becoming nervous or anxious about the examinations, please ensure you contact the school so we can work together to help reduce this anxiety. As adults, although we recognise SATs are important, we must ensure the children's happiness remains key.

The KS1 SATs also occur next half term and they will commence on Monday 16th May and will finish on Friday 27th May. Unlike the KS2 SATs, there is more flexibility when the children can complete the tests and therefore if a child is really poorly, they can sit the tests on a different day. Again, it is really important the children are in school to receive the appropriate learning opportunities to help them achieve the best they can. However, I am very mindful the children are still very young and it is really important they do not feel any stress or anxiety about them. If they are, please contact the school so we can ensure this stress or anxiety does not continue.

Open Door Policy

I strongly believe in close partnership with parents/carers and the importance of this to ensure every child achieves the best they can in all areas of school life. I would therefore like to remind you that if you have any concerns, please do always come in and discuss them with staff. If you would like to speak to any member of staff or me, and you cannot get hold of us directly, please call the office. You can also email me on head@stimpsonsavenorthants-ecl.gov.uk.

Car Parking

Please may I remind all parents and carers collecting their children from school to ensure they are always parking in permitted areas and always show respect for the local community. The links we have with our community are so significant and it is therefore really important we do not park in private car parks or on restricted areas, including yellow lines. This is also for the safety of us all.

Polling Days

As I am sure you are aware, there are two sets of elections coming up and various venues across the country are used as polling stations. I have been informed that Stimpson Avenue Academy is one of the venues used every year and therefore unfortunately the school will be closed on both of these dates. The two dates are Thursday 5th May (General Elections) and Thursday 23rd June (EU Referendum). Using the school site as a polling station is compulsory and therefore this is unavoidable; apologies for any inconvenience caused. **On Thursday 5th May, due to such close proximity to the Year 6 SATs, the**

school will remain OPEN for YEAR 6 pupils only. These classes will be contained in one area of the school away from the general public.

We understand the inconvenience this causes and we value the children's education. However, the arrangements for the school being used as a Polling Station are beyond our control.

Illness/sickness and procedures for informing the school

Please may I remind you that if your child experiences any sickness or diarrhoea, in line with guidelines, you are politely requested that your child is kept off for 48 hours. Thank you for your support and understanding with this.

If your child is absent, please ensure you report their absence by 9.00am on a **daily** basis. An answerphone is available to leave a message and please ensure you leave their name, class and reason for absence. This is really important for safeguarding purposes and if we do not hear from you, our first day response procedures mean we will always follow up children not attending school with a phone call. Naturally, this can be a time-consuming process and you calling will help the office run more efficiently. Additionally, it means if an older child who walks to school on their own does not arrive at school, we can ensure we are aware at the earliest opportunity. If your child is off with vomiting or diarrhoea, in line with the policy of 48 hours they are required to be absent from school, we will mark them absent for both days **as long as you make it clear this is the reason they are off on the first day**. If your child is not back into school on the third day, you will please need to telephone the school again. Thank you for your help with this.

Term Dates

Please can I remind you that as we are an Academy on some occasions our term dates are different to Northamptonshire County Council. Therefore, looking on Northamptonshire County Council's website will sometimes not provide you with the actual term dates of Stimpson Avenue Academy. Our term dates are on our website and they are as follows:

2016 – Term starts	2016 – Term ends
Monday 11 th April	Friday 27 th May
Monday 6 th June	Wednesday 20 th July
Monday 5 th September	Friday 21 st October
Tuesday 1 st November	Tuesday 20 th December

2017 – Term starts	2017 – Term ends
Thursday 5 th January	Friday 10 th February
Monday 20 th February	Friday 31 st March
Wednesday 19 th April	Friday 26 th May
Monday 5 th June	Friday 21 st July

Please Note that Teacher Training Days may change

Teacher Training Days 2016 Children not in School
Thursday 1 st September
Friday 2 nd September
Monday 31 st October

Teacher Training Days 2017
Children not in School
Wednesday 4 th January
Tuesday 18 th April

EMLC Academy Trust is a charitable company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales under registered number 08149829 and registered address Bridge House, Bridge Street, Olney, Bucks, MK46 4AB. Stimpson Avenue Academy is a business name of EMLC Academy Trust