



BYERS GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

THURSDAY 18 OCTOBER 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

Please note the following points:

NEW HOME TIME ARRANGEMENTS – STARTING MONDAY 29 OCTOBER

Since the walking bus ceased to operate at the end of the previous school year, the number of children being collected at home time has increased considerably. This has resulted in a great deal of congestion at the school gate. Therefore, when we return after the half-term break, we will be putting in place new arrangements for those children who are collected at the end of the day. These are as follows:

- The side gate will be opened at 3:15pm.
- The children being collected will remain in their classrooms.
- Parents/carers will be able to walk round to the playground at the rear of the building and collect their children directly from their classrooms.
- If more than one child is being collected, please collect the younger child/children first.
- We always encourage good communication between parents/carers and teachers but please note that teachers will only be able to speak to parents/carers when all the children have been dismissed. The safety of all the children in our care is our number one priority.
- If parents/carers are running late, please contact school so we can alert the class teacher. This ensures we know which children are likely to be left behind and also enables us to reassure your child with an explanation as to why you will not be there at the usual time.

The only change for children who use the school bus or walk home by themselves is that they will assemble in the hall rather than on the playground. They will continue to be supervised onto the bus or off the school premises by members of staff as is currently the case.

Please complete the attached form to confirm the normal home time arrangements for your child/children. If there is any change to these arrangements please contact Mrs Blenkiron in our school office.

BOOK CLUB

Following discussions with our School Council, we are planning to make some changes to the way our book club runs and further information about this will follow after the half-term break. However, one change, that we would like to inform you of in advance, is that the book club will no longer take place on a Friday at 3:00pm. Please be aware this means the new collection arrangements explained above will also apply to the home time routine on a Friday with all children finishing at 3:15pm.

COFFEE AFTERNOON – FRIDAY 19 OCTOBER

Our first coffee afternoon of this year will commence at the usual time of 1.15pm. We are always grateful for the donation of any raffle prizes and cakes, biscuits etc. for the refreshment stall. The book club will run throughout the afternoon. Parents/carers are welcome to take their child/children home with them after this event. All proceeds from our coffee afternoons go towards our school fund which is used for the benefit of all of the children in our school.

SCHOOL PHOTOGRAPHER – MONDAY 29 OCTOBER

The photographer will be in school on the above date. Family groups with pre-school children will be photographed from 8.30am. Parents will be given a ticket on arrival and photographs will be taken

on a 'first come, first served' basis. All other individual and family photographs will be taken during the morning session.

HALLOWEEN THEME DAY – WEDNESDAY 31 OCTOBER

Following our Friends of School meeting at the start of term, we have made the decision to have a Halloween theme day on Wednesday 31 October. Your child is welcome to come to school dressed in a Halloween costume. Please can you make this as child-friendly as possible as some of the more scary costumes can frighten the younger children. The children will take part in Halloween-themed lessons in the morning and then have a disco and games on the afternoon. The children will go home at the usual time of 3:15pm. There will no charge to parents for this special event.

MESSAGE FROM DURHAM CONSTABULARY

People in County Durham and Darlington are being urged to protect their property from opportunistic thieves this winter. The onset of dark nights can lead to a rise in burglaries, as a house which is in darkness can look empty to an opportunistic criminal. As part of Durham Constabulary's Winter Nights campaign, people are being urged to take simple steps to secure their homes to help prevent themselves from becoming a victim of crime.

Chief Inspector Caroline Davies, from Durham Constabulary, said: "All too often people are making their homes attractive to burglars and thieves by leaving them unlocked or in darkness during the winter months. However, a few simple steps are all it takes to reduce this risk and protect yourself from becoming a victim of crime." Follow these tips to keep your home safe this winter:

- Lock all windows and doors – even if you're at home.
- A well-lit home gives the impression someone is in.
- Leave a light on or use timer switches so lights come on when it gets dark.
- Don't leave valuables on show.
- Don't leave your house and vehicle keys in the lock or on a side table in view of a window, making it easy for a thief to fish them through your letterbox.
- Don't leave curtains closed during the day, only in the evening and overnight.
- If you have a house alarm, use it.
- Contact your local neighbourhood police team if you see anything suspicious in your area.

As part of the campaign, people are also being reminded to always lock their vehicles when leaving them unattended, and remove all valuables from sight. "Vehicles left unattended with valuables left on display or unlocked are a magnet for criminals, who will often try a number of car door handles until they find one that has been left open," added Chief Inspector Davies. "It only takes a few seconds to make sure you've locked the door, but it could mean the difference between having your car stolen or having it there when you return. In the run up to the festive season when traditionally people are doing more shopping, they should also remove items from their vehicles before leaving them unattended, or lock them out of sight in the boot."

During the campaign, PCSOs will also be patrolling key hotspot areas which have seen an increase in burglaries, thefts from vehicles and antisocial behaviour. To report any suspicious activity in your area, contact Durham Constabulary on 101, or call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

HALF-TERM HOLIDAY

School will close for the half-term holiday on **Friday 19 October 2018 at 3.15pm**. We return on **Monday 29 October 2018**.

Mr W. Kirtley (Headteacher)