



Dear Parents,

The term has now settled down after a difficult, disjointed start. I had hoped to welcome everyone back to the new term, hope you had a restful break and wish you all well for the New Year. This was not quite to be! Instead you had letters and ParentMails from me giving updates on our arrangements for dealing with the atrocious weather conditions. With the limited options I had, I hope you will understand the actions I took which had inevitable inconvenience to many families.

First and foremost I had to be sure of the safety of our children and the staff. Given that the sites - as well as the surrounding roads and pavements - were both treacherous, and with cancelled buses, motorways shut and many roads impassable, I had to make the decision whether to close. The decisions had to be made very early in the morning, before localised conditions were fully known. The Local Authority updates headteachers as often as possible on conditions and recommendations. When it was possible to open, a late start time was implemented to give extra time to get to school safely. Ultimately, it is a judgement based on the best information available, and thus it will not always be possible to make the right decision and by default there will be some who are not happy about decisions that are made.

I would like to thank those members of Friends of Hamilton who made sterling efforts to clear the surrounding paths and playground areas. Unfortunately we do not have on-site services to keep snow cleared and pavements safe and I would not put anyone at risk of accident by asking them to do something clearly dangerous. I have expressed my concern to the Cabinet Member for Transport at Bucks County Council about the dearth of consideration given to keeping schools open in such weather conditions in the hope that planning may mean better salting and clearance in future snow conditions. I hope this assures you that every consideration was made - safety had to be paramount. The Senior Management Team has looked at the various comments and view points I have received about the closures and will use them to improve our future emergency planning. I thank you for your patience and support during this period of disturbance.

SCHOOL NEWS

Staff News

We welcome the following this term:

Miss Jowana Abou-Alfa and Mrs Deborah Jervis in the Nursery; Mrs Natalie Ward in Y2; Mrs Sharon Potts in Y3 and Mrs Donna-Lynn Shepherd in Y5.

Mrs Wynn has gone on maternity leave - we wish her and her family well.

Primary School Link - Zambia

We have been invited by Wye Valley School to be part of an international linking project with a school in Zambia. Wye Valley has a well established link with Libala High School and are now working with their local Primary Schools, which they call Basic Schools. I am sure that your children have told you all about the assembly taken by the pupils at Wye Valley (including an ex-Hamilton pupil) who explained the project to us. Chisengalumbwe Basic School will be our link, and in order to let them know about our school we are putting together some material to give them an idea about what Hamilton is all about. The pupils were extremely excited after the assemblies and we are putting together a pack to send. We have also been asked if we could send items listed below, as they do not have access to the equipment we accept as normal. The students at Wye Valley will be travelling to Zambia in half term, so any contributions will need to be in school by Wednesday 10 February. We are looking forward to finding out about schooling in Zambia and developing the link over the coming years. Thank you for your support.

SPORTS KIT

- Any sports shorts, tracksuit bottoms, sports tops/teeshirts suitable for PE/games would be fine.
- Trainers or football boots in good condition are particular needs

EQUIPMENT AND BOOKS.

- We can take books e.g. textbooks, library books, storybooks that are in good condition - consider if you would be pleased to receive them rather than clearing out the back of the cupboard.
- Any paper or exercise books
- Pencils, colouring pencils, or felt tip pens, biros would also be appreciated.
- Other items which children use in class e.g. pencil cases, rubbers, pencil sharpeners etc.

NOTICES

Knitting Club

Miss Fulton is running a Knitting Club in Years 3 and 4. Any gifts of balls of wool and/or spare buttons would be gratefully received.

Absence

If your child is ill, please let the office know by telephone or email by 9.30am on the morning of the first day of absence.

Vouchers

We are still collecting Morrisons' Let's Grow vouchers. We are grateful for any you may collect and send in. Thank you.

Snow days and instrumental lessons

The agreement to which parents sign up when a child begins instrumental lessons, as you may remember, states that

The cost of instrumental lessons is £65 per term. Instrumental teachers will offer a minimum of 30 lessons per year. Missed lessons, except where such an event is caused by the school, cannot be replaced.

The snow days caused some lessons to be missed, but over the course of the year it should still be possible to fit in the minimum 30 by the end of the year.

Towards the middle of next term Ms McMillan will check the number of lessons each instrumental teacher has given over the course of the year and will ask them to make extra visits if there is any danger that we might not meet the minimum 30 by the end of the term

Arts & Crafts Club

The Arts & Crafts Club has put out a request for donations of any arts & crafts materials, and games that you may be clearing out. Please bring them to the Priory Road office. Thank you in advance.

Lost Property

The lost property bins at both buildings were emptied for the start of this term, but already there are a number of items which are not named. We will attempt to return named items to their owners, but in future on the last day of each half term any un-named items will be removed and recycled. Please ensure that all uniform and possessions sent into school are marked with the child's name.

Sharing Assemblies

We will be continuing this term with our invitation to families to join our sharing assemblies.

Hampden Road

	Date	Information
5B	Monday 1 March	Parents to be seated by 1.35 for 1.40pm start. Finish by 2pm
5P	Monday 8 March	
5J	Monday 15 March	
1Y	Friday 5 March	Parents to be seated by 2.55 for 3pm start. Finish by 3.30pm
1K	Thursday 11 March	
1W	Friday 19 March	

Priory Road - all assemblies will start at 2.50pm, seating from 2.40pm. Finish by 3.15pm,

3B	Thursday 4 February
3F	Thursday 11 February
4M	Thursday 25 February
REB	Thursday 4 March
REA	Thursday 11 March
4W	Thursday 18 March
4G	Thursday 25 March
REC	Thursday 29 April
3C	Thursday 6 May

A reminder - pre-school children are expected to sit quietly so that everyone can be heard easily. School will finish at the normal time on these dates.

Hampden Road Library

We are still looking for helpers in the Hampden Road Library. If you would like to help, please contact Mrs Jefferson.

Haiti Earthquake Appeal

A fantastic total of £1,052.34 was raised for Haiti from the Mufti day.

Instrumental Tea Concert

Please put in your diary the date of Sunday 25 April for the Instrumental Tea Concert. More details to come.

TRAVEL PLAN NEWS

Parking

I would like to remind you that the staff car park at each building should not be used for dropping off or collecting children at the beginning and end of the school day, unless authorised to do so by the Headteacher or Deputies.

A repeated reminder: Zig Zag lines are not a turning or dropping-off area for the red Toyota seen last week performing such manoeuvres, or for any other cars!

Cross Patrol Officers and Crocodile Co-ordinators!

We still have vacancies for both of these roles. Please look out for the information on the new posters - Can You Help?

FRIENDS OF HAMILTON

The Quiz Night has been rescheduled for Saturday 27 February at Hampden Road hall from 7pm, quiz starting at 7.30pm. Flyers have been sent out by ParentMail, and by pupil post. Please send your ticket requests into the office asap.

Yours sincerely



Mr G Aldous
Headteacher