

05 April 2017

Dear Parents/Carers

I know in my last letter to you that I said the need for such summative letters would diminish as we made more effective use of the website and Twitter. I hope you find the website and twitterfeed with stories and photos of activities at Ninestiles useful. However I recognise that there still needs to be direct contact at certain times of the year and this is one of them.

A number of changes will be taking place in the next academic year which I would like to give you early warning of.

Term Dates

Please find alongside this letter the confirmed term dates for the next academic year 2017-2018. As a working parent I know that having these for reference as early as possible is vital. Whilst they have been published on the website previously I would now draw them to your attention.

School Day

The Trust has made the decision to cease the early finish at 2.00pm on the Friday of each week two. We all as Principals agreed that the extra curriculum time was needed. This change means that every day in the timetable will now run from 8.40am to 3.00pm.

Cashless School

We are currently working towards Ninestiles becoming a cashless school by September 2017. This would entail all parents/carers paying for meals, trips and visits electronically.

We have recently contacted parents who have not been actively using ParentPay, our secure online system, with further details of how they can use the system but I felt it is appropriate to give the information to all parents.

There are many reasons why a cashless system is appropriate in a school of our size.

- a. Safety – students have no requirement to carry cash with them to school or around it. This makes them less vulnerable to losing the money.
- b. Cost – You will be aware that schools are currently looking at a difficult financial future. We have to pay a significant cost for cash to be collected from the premises by an external company. In addition, if we were to continue with using cash we would be hit by a considerable bill for updating our machines to accommodate the new £5 note and £1 coin. Our machines are currently unable to accept both.
- c. Ease – the system is easy to use and enables parents to manage their financial commitments online or use local shops to access PayPoint. The list of local businesses which facilitate PayPoint are listed overleaf.
- d. Security – the system is very secure.

If you have any queries please contact Sue Perry in our Finance Office on 0121 628 1311 or by email sue.perry@ninestiles.org.uk. Alternatively your child can visit Mrs Perry in the Finance Office if you require further clarification.

Whilst I appreciate that there may be some work to be done in transitioning to a cashless system we know it will enable us to offer you a better service in the long term. I would like to finish by reminding you that from 1st September 2017 cash will not be accepted.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support of Ninestiles and our work and to remind you that school will close at 12pm on Friday 7th April for the holidays. We have an INSET day on Monday 24th April so students will return on Tuesday 25th April.

I wish you all a restful holiday.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Sian Hartle', written in a cursive style.

Sian Hartle
Principal