



Loanends Primary School

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MARCH UPDATE

1 March 2024

Dear Parent

Please note the following:

- **Thursday 7 March:** World Book Day will be celebrated on Thursday 7 March. This year we will not be dressing up; instead, we are planning two special events as well as classroom activities. Firstly, we are taking part in a special 'Booked Potato' celebration. We are asking each pupil to turn an ordinary potato into a favourite character from a book or story. You will be able to come up with your own wonderful and imaginative creations, but for inspiration, you will find lots of ideas on Pinterest. We ask that each pupil brings their potato to school on the morning of Thursday 7th March. There will be prizes awarded within each class for the best 'Booked Potatoes'.

The School Council have requested that we have a Book Swap this year as part of our World Book Day celebrations. We are asking each pupil to bring one or two books to school to swap for another book. Please send Book Swap books to school, **week beginning Monday 4 March**. We ask that books are in good condition and are free of writing etc. This will be done in Key Stages throughout the school day.

Each class will also be taking part in planned activities to celebrate this special day and our aim through all of our activities is to develop a lifelong love of reading.

- **Health Promotion Week w/c 4 March.** Thank you to Mrs Lilley for organising the week of events. The week beginning 4 March will be Health Promotion Week in School. A variety of fun activities have been arranged for every class throughout the week. This has been made possible by the PTAF (money raised through sponsored slide in June) which has allowed us to bring in a number of outside agencies to help make the week a fun, educational and exciting one for all the children. Teachers will send some pictures on Seesaw/ website with photos to give you a flavour of what the pupils have experienced over the course of the week.
- **Science Day-Friday 15 March:** More details to follow from Mrs O'Neill.
- **St. Patrick's Day:** Please be aware that we are **NOT closed** for St. Patrick's Day. However, there will be **NO school bus and no meals or breaks from the kitchen**. Please bring own break and lunches.
- **Milk Scheme (beginning Monday 8 April to 27 June 2024).** Milk *must* be ordered and **paid for in advance**. The cost is **21p** per day. The total amount for the third term is **£11.34**. Money cannot be refunded if a pupil is off school for a short period of time. The milk company does not accept any returns.

Please note that this should now be ordered using the online (SchoolMoney) payment system not later than **Wednesday 20 March** for the order to be placed with Dale Farm on time. You will find it listed as an item in the 'shop'.

- **Passports:** Unfortunately, the Principal or teachers **no** longer can sign passports. This is regrettable but this is the advice that has been given to us.
- **Important Reminder:** School opens at 8:45am. Pupils are parents' responsibility until then. Just a reminder that parents SHOULD NOT enter the **playground**; pupils should be left at the side gate.
- **Lateness** is an ongoing problem. Please ensure your child is in school for a prompt start at 9:00am. Lateness is recorded and is shown on the pupil's electronic attendance record.
- **Absences:** We would be very grateful if you could provide a written reason for absence in order to keep our registers up to date, from our website – it's quick and easy. Absences are monitored by the Education Welfare Officer. "Miss School Miss Out Strategy" highlights the following:

95% attendance = 9 days' absence

85% attendance = 28 days' absence

90% attendance = 19 days' absence

80% attendance = 38 days' absence

Taking family holidays during term time is not recommended and I cannot grant permission for such requests. I would therefore advise parents to arrange holidays outside of term time. Should parents decide to take holidays during term time, this must be put in writing to the Principal and will be held on file and copied to the EWO if required. **Teachers will not provide work in advance.** The worksheets and homeworks that have been missed can be requested when a pupil returns from holiday and not before departure.

We all have a collective responsibility in trying to achieve high standards of attendance.

- **March Menu 2024:** Please find also attached separately, the March Menu for School Dinners (also sent out on Seesaw on 6 February) which is a rotating menu from 19 February 2024 until 27 June. **Meals should be booked and paid for in advance.** We appreciate that this isn't always possible. If a meal is booked 'late' through the school office/kitchen, please pay any outstanding monies as soon as possible. Thank you.

Also, many pupils who are not booked in for either break or lunch, often just inform the teacher at registration time. This shouldn't happen and causes problems with the kitchen and secretarial staff who try to make numbers balance. Please make every effort to book online but do not ask your son or daughter to simply inform the teacher. The SchoolMoney App costs almost £1000 per year so please use it for the purpose for which it was designed.

- **Car Park-**Once again, the EA Bus Driver has raised concerns with me regarding the car park and how parents are blocking his path through to the staff car park either by parking in an undesignated space, double parking or drawing alongside the bus preventing children getting on and off safely. This is concerning and not acceptable. I write often for care, courtesy and consideration in the car park but some parents feel that this doesn't apply to them and continue to ignore requests. I have asked Stevie (bus driver) to speak to "offenders" directly if an obstruction is being caused. Please also DO NOT use the staff car park for drops offs and relay this message to grandparents/carers who perhaps are unaware of the protocols.
- **Please read communications:** Unfortunately, this has become a bit of a problem. We spend a lot of time (and money) communicating with parents and still notes remain unread. When there are changes to school routines, invariably we have found children are left behind, turn up for after school activities without having booked in, come wearing the wrong items etc which means staff have to follow up with phone calls home. We do like to be accommodating and facilitate where possible but please try to get into the habit of marking dates or changes on your calendar when communication is issued. This would be greatly appreciated.
- **Easter Holidays:** School closes at **12:15pm on Friday 22 March** and reopens on Monday 8 April.

Yours sincerely

Linda Armour

Mrs L Armour
Principal