



THE PERSE PELICAN NURSERY AND PRE-PREPARATORY SCHOOL

08 January 2010

HAPPY NEW (SNOWY) YEAR!

We send our good wishes for the new year and hope that the holiday season brought rest and good health to you all.

WEATHER

By all accounts we are in for a couple of weeks of particularly wintery weather. We will do what we can to remain open, but there are considerations which must be borne in mind at times like these: the health and safety of those who are here at school and whether or not sufficient staff can make the journey into work. In view of these issues the three Perse Schools may need to take independent and different decisions as to whether or not to open each day.

We will keep updating the website so that parents are aware of what is happening and this is by far your best method of finding out. **IF we have to close before school begins you will also receive an email via PersePost**, so please check your inbox. There will be a message on the school's answer phone to this effect as well, but experience tells us that this system cannot cope with a very high volume of calls so it is best not to use it unless your computer is down. **IF school is to open for the day you will not receive an email and the standard answer phone message will not be adjusted.**

Whilst it is so cold I am very happy for boys and girls to come to school wearing their navy blue tracksuit bottoms instead of the boys' shorts or instead of, or as well as the girls' tunics. We strongly advise the children to bring hats, scarves and gloves to school too as we try to play out if at all possible. Whilst the weather is so extreme I have relaxed the uniform colour requirements for hats, scarves and gloves. Parents might also choose to send the children to school in boots whilst we are salting the playground. Wellingtons should be changed; other boots can be worn all day.

MORNINGS

At the end of last term I mentioned that the school had undertaken a review of the arrival arrangements at The Pelican. The conclusion we have reached is that spreading the arrival pattern should ease the current congestion. The school has therefore decided to reduce the cost of Early Start per pupil from £4.50 to £2.00 per session, regardless of when you arrive. This significant reduction will be subsidised by the school, as staffing costs need to be met. This reduction will initially be for a trial period only, which is for the whole of the first half of this term; after which we will review the situation and if there has been no discernable effect on traffic then we will need to return to the previous charging rate. The new rate has been applied from the beginning of this term. Parents may appreciate a reminder that employer childcare vouchers can be used for Early Start and Late Stay.

There are rigorous externally imposed staffing regulations which apply to Early Start (and Late Stay). We must have 1 Teaching Assistant (TA) to every 8 pupils. When a ninth pupil arrives we need another TA in the room. **In order to staff the scheme appropriately we must ask that you pre-book Early Start. Parents are generally very diligent about this but it will now be essential as we anticipate that there will be an increased demand for Early Start, all of which we expect to be able to accommodate with the correct notice. I MUST THEREFORE ASK THAT PARENTS PRE-BOOK A WEEK IN ADVANCE, WHICH IS BY CLOSE OF SCHOOL EVERY FRIDAY AFTERNOON.** Where there is a genuine emergency we will always help out, but please can you be

certain that this is the case if you need to arrive without pre-booking. For next week (Monday, 11-Friday, 15 January) we will accept bookings the day before but the new booking system begins with effect from Friday, 15 January.

Finally a regular plea, but one which is, nevertheless, heartfelt. **PLEASE DO NOT BLOCK OUR NEIGHBOURS' DRIVEWAYS WHEN PARKING.** They too have pressing morning schedules to keep to and being blocked in is extremely irritating.

P Oates,
Headmistress