

**TOGETHER WE CARE, TOGETHER WE SUCCEED.... January 2024**

Welcome back and Happy new year! It has been lovely to see everyone back at school after the Christmas and New Year break.

We have welcomed in a New Year starting back for the Spring term, and several new families have joined our Gig Mill family, the children have quickly settled back into their routines and new learning. The children have all started their new topics, Y2 and Y3 have all started swimming and every class has been discussing making a new year's resolution!

2024 will bring some other changes, but I would like to share a positive one with you – last academic year we held meetings with staff and parents consulting about formalising our partnership agreement with Hales Valley Trust to join the Academy Trust. Like Gig-Mill, Hales Valley Academy Trust places children and young people at the heart of they do. Their vision "success for all" aligns with that of Gig Mill – "Together we care, together we succeed." The governing body request has now been processed by the Regional Schools Commissioner and the Local Authority and the Trust are undertaking the due diligence processes. We are all working together towards a transfer date of 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024. Exciting times ahead!

***Mrs Hannaway***

For further information regarding this, the original consultation letter explains much of this in detail, and is available on our school website.

**Schools Meals service**

Please see detailed information that is on the reverse of this newsletter.

Many of you may also be aware that Dudley Catering service will cease trading at the end of the March 2024. We have been working together with other Hales Valley Schools to select a new provider which will be Caterlink, which has been finalised this week, and will begin from 19<sup>th</sup> February 2024. The Gig Mill catering staff who know your children will remain working in the kitchen. In order for this changeover to go smoothly, Gig Mill will asking all parents to register on parentmail next week - this will be to facilitate online payments for new catering arrangements initially. A change many of you I know will welcome, and information about parent mail will be sent out over the coming days.

**Good news**

Just as we broke up for the Christmas holiday, we had some good news! We have been chosen to work with Severn Rivers Trust on an environmental project which will make some wildlife-friendly changes to our school grounds over the coming months and will also fund some new cycle storage for families wishing to cycle together to school. We will update you on these developments when we know any more news.

**Spring & summer term dates for your diary:**

Half term – Monday 12<sup>th</sup> February – Friday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2024

Term ends: Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2024

Summer term starts- Monday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2024

May Day Bank Holiday- Monday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2024

KS2 SATs week (Y6) Monday 13<sup>th</sup>- Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024

May half-term- Monday 27<sup>th</sup> May- Friday 31<sup>st</sup> May

INSET day- Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> June

Summer term ends- Friday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2024



Dear Parent/Carer,

We are delighted to announce that as of 19th February 2024 our new catering provider will be Caterlink.

We are passionate about providing a healthy and nutritious meal to all of our pupils. Gig Mill Primary School and Hales Valley Trust have carefully selected Caterlink as our new provider as we believe they will deliver our key objectives now and into the future.

Our new Spring Dinner Menu that will come into effect from Monday 19th February (upon return from February Half Term). An allergy form (only applicable if your child has a confirmed allergy) **will need completing by 21<sup>st</sup> January** to inform Caterlink that your child has a food allergy or intolerance or food-related medical condition (please note - If your child has a food allergy and a completed intolerance form has not been returned, Caterlink will not be able to provide a school meal until receipt of the form).

As of 19th February, the price of a school meal will be £2.65 per child per meal. If your child is in Reception, Year 1 or Year 2 the universal Free School meal still applies, or if your child is already in receipt of Free School Meals this fee will not be applicable.

Your child may be eligible for a free school meal, or pupil premium funding you can check your eligibility either online as follows:

<https://www.dudley.gov.uk/resident/your-council/benefits/free-school-meals/>

or speak to a member of staff in the school office who in confidence will be happy to help. You can submit your application either online or by completing an application form (see attached).

Eligibility: if you are in receipt of any of the following payments your child may be entitled to receive free school meals –

- Universal Credit (you must have less than £616.67 a month net earned income (after tax - and not including any welfare benefits)
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseekers Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of State Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit Run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit

**Information for you!** 

DO YOU KNOW ABOUT... **FREE** 

**UNIVERSAL INFANT SCHOOL MEALS?**

  

**EVERY** child in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can have a cooked school lunch

**FRESHLY MADE** **HEALTHY**

**NUTRITIOUS**

at absolutely no cost to you! - funded by the Government

Please contact your school for more information! 

*Inspiring young minds*