

14th September 2009

Dear Parents

I hope you have all had a good summer. As usual at the beginning of this term it is necessary for me to write quite a lengthy letter that contains a lot of important information.

Examination Results

I am sure that you will be pleased to hear that Farmor's had another good year in the public examinations. At A level the pass rate was 98%; 50% of passes were at A and B grades. 75% of Year 11 students gained 5 or more passes at grade C and above; 68% of students passed five exams at grade C or above including Maths and English. I am sure you would like to join me in congratulating all the students on their achievements.

New Staff

At the end of last term we said goodbye to Mr Jay who taught Biology at Farmor's for ten years and to Mrs Johnson who taught Music for eighteen years. Both worked part time and both have retired from teaching. Miss Cieciora has taken a sabbatical year and will be returning to Farmor's next September.

This term we welcome the following to the staff of Farmor's School:

Kathryn Brewster	English – For 1 year
Ros Camp	English – For 1 year
Mhairi McEwan	Geography (Until December to cover Miss Lindsay's maternity Leave).

Open Evening

This year our Open Evening is on Thursday 1st October. There will be two presentations in the school hall, one at 5.30pm and one at 6.30pm for parents of pupils who wish to join Farmor's School in September 2010. The school will be open between 5.00pm – 7.30pm. I hope that you will take this opportunity to come and see the work of the school during this evening. Please extend this invitation to any friends or neighbours who you think would be interested in seeing the school.

INSET Days – Change of date

It has been necessary to change two of our INSET days because Year 10 need to be in school on 28th and 29th June for public examinations: we did not know this at the time we published the calendar for this year. The INSET days will now take place on the 1st and 2nd July instead of 28th and 29th June. I apologise if this causes any inconvenience to parents.

School Fund

Every year we ask for a voluntary contribution from parents to help us to provide facilities for students which cannot be afforded from the money we receive from the Local Authority. This year we are asking for £5.00 from each family but if you wish to give more that will be much appreciated. We have set up a charity which will enable us to claim gift aid for any contributions we receive. If you feel able to contribute please complete the form which is attached to this letter and send it in with your contribution. Please make cheques to: The Elizabeth Farmor Trust.

Uniform

The students have returned to school looking very smart and I would like to thank all parents for this. I would like to remind parents that we have clear rules for the wearing of jewellery. Students are allowed to wear a watch and one pair of earrings, either sleepers or studs (one in each ear). **Other rings and studs are not permitted.** MP3 players are not allowed in school nor should we see mobile phones. Hoodies and fashion scarves are not part of school uniform and should not be worn in school.

If pupils wish to purchase uniform it will be on sale before school, at break and at lunchtime from the office in the Business block.

We are also starting to build up a nearly new uniform shop which we will develop over the next couple of months. If any parents have good quality nearly new uniform (including PE kit) that they would like to donate, please drop it in to the shop. It would help us enormously if the uniform was washed so that it is ready for sale.

Photographs

We are now obliged to seek parental permission to use photographs for any publicity in connection with the school. To save unnecessary work could I ask parents to let us know, in writing, if you **do not wish** us to use you child's photograph for publicity.

Holidays

Can I ask parents to avoid taking their children on holiday in term time. It does cause disruption to learning and can be very damaging especially to Key Stage 4 and 5 students. We will not authorise any holiday taken in school time unless there are very exceptional circumstances. If it is necessary for your child to be absent from school for holidays they should complete a holiday form, which is available from Mrs Jesson in the Pastoral Office, well in advance of their absence.

HPV Vaccine

During this year girls in years 8, 10, 11, 12 and 13 are eligible for the vaccine. The vaccine is given in three parts. Years 11, 12 and 13 will start their course of injections in September and Years 8 and 10 in March 2010.

Timing of the School Day

Just a reminder that school finishes at 3.45pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays and at 3.00pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. At the end of the day the school is extremely busy. We have introduced a new system for leaving the site to make it as safe as possible for the students as they leave school at the end of the day. If parents are picking their children up from school we ask that they come into the school car park.

It would be appreciated if all car drivers would be patient while the buses are loaded. The buses will depart before anyone can leave the car park. Can I ask drivers not to park on the roundabout, as this encourages students to walk between the buses and cross the road. Last week we almost had an accident when a student was looking for his bus and ran out in front of a car.

Fair Processing Notice

Farmor's School processes personal data about its pupils and is a "data controller" in respect of this for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. It processes this data to:

- support its pupils' teaching and learning;
- monitor and report on their progress;
- provide appropriate pastoral care, and
- assess how well the school as a whole is performing.

This data includes contact details, national curriculum assessment results, attendance information, characteristics such as ethnic group, special educational needs and any relevant medical information.

This data may only be used or passed on for specific purposes allowed by law. From time to time the school is required to pass on some of this data to local authorities, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), and to agencies that are prescribed by law, such as the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), Ofsted, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), the Department of Health (DH), Primary Care Trusts (PCT), Contact Point (mentioned below) [and organisations that require access to data in the Learner Registration System as part of the MIAP (Managing Information Across Partners) programme and Connexions (see below)]. All these are data controllers in respect of the data they receive, and are subject to the same legal constraints in how they deal with the data.

The governing body of a maintained school in England is also required by law to supply basic information to Contact Point. Contact Point is a directory that will help people who work with children and young people to quickly find out who else is working with the same child, making it easier to deliver more coordinated support. This only includes the name and address of the child, contact details for their parents or carers (with parental responsibility) and the contact details of the school.

Pupils, as data subjects, have certain rights under the Data Protection Act, including a general right to be given access to personal data held about them by any data controller. The presumption is that by the age of 12 a child has sufficient maturity to understand their rights and to make an access request themselves if they wish. A parent would normally be expected to make a request on a child's behalf if the child is younger.

If you wish to access your personal data, or that of your child, then please contact the relevant organisation in writing. Details of these organisations can be found on the following website www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/dataprotection or for those pupils/parents where this is not practical, a hard copy can be obtained from the school.

For pupils of 13 years and over the school is legally required to pass on certain information to Connexions services providers on request. Connexions is the government's support service for all young people aged 13 to 19 in England. This information includes the name and address of the pupil and parent, and any further information relevant to the Connexions service's role. However parents, or the pupils themselves if aged 16 or over, can ask that no information beyond name and address (for pupil and parent) be passed on to Connexions. If as a parent, or as a pupil aged 16 or over, you wish to opt-out and do not want Connexions to receive from the school information beyond name and address, then please contact the school.

Your attention is drawn to (Layer 2) of this Fair Processing Notice, which gives supplementary information about the processing of pupil data by the organisations mentioned above, and gives greater details of how the pupil data is processed and the rights of parents and pupils This can be obtained by visiting www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/dataprotection or by requesting a hard copy from the school using the details above.

Home to School Transport

Please read the guidance issued by the Local Authority regarding behaviour on the school buses. These expectations also apply to students who travel on the buses from Swindon and Cricklade.

PTA Events

Farmor's School PTA members work really hard to raise funds for the school. They also have a lot of fun in the process! This term there are two events:

The **AGM** is to be held on Monday 12th October in the School Business Centre at 7.00pm. If any parent would like to join the PTA I know they would be pleased to hear from you. Don't worry if you can't make the AGM - contact with them can be made via the school office.

The PTA Ball is on Saturday 31st October in the Memorial Hall in Lechlade.

The following documents are attached to this letter:

Data Checking Sheet (Y7-Y13) - please make any necessary amendments or additions and return the form to the school office. If you are happy to receive letters from the school and the PTA via e-mail, please make sure you give us your e-mail address.

Code of Conduct for pupils who use home to school transport.

Sanctions for unacceptable behaviour on home to school transport.

Gift aid form for school fund contributions

Thank you for taking the time to read what has been a fairly long letter.

With best wishes,

Yours sincerely

Anne Stokes
Headteacher

Reply slip

I/We have received Mrs Stokes' letter of 14th September and enclose/do not enclose a donation of for the school fund.

Signed

Pupil

Tutor Group

CODE OF CONDUCT FOR PUPILS WHO USE HOME TO SCHOOL TRANSPORT

We want you and all other passengers to stay safe and travel in comfort. You must agree to the following code of conduct before we issue your bus pass. Your school and parents (or carers) will be alerted if you do not keep to this code and we will withdraw your transport assistance if breaches are reported to us.

1. Your bus pass

- Carry your bus pass with you whenever you travel to and from school.
- Be ready to show your pass to the bus driver, if it cannot be produced then the driver may refuse transport.
- Only use your pass to travel on the route that has been approved.
- Do not use anyone else's pass or allow another person to use yours. This is a criminal offence and a bus operator may choose to take action against you.

If you lose your pass, contact the county council's Integrated Transport Unit who will arrange a replacement. A fee will be payable for a replacement pass. Telephone the ITU on 01452 425387.

2. Your pick-up point

- You are responsible for getting to your bus's pick up point.
- Arrive at the pick-up point before your bus is due. The bus will run to a timetable and will not wait if you are late.
- If a bus is late, be prepared to wait at the pick up point for 20 minutes but no longer. Agree with your parents what to do if the bus does not arrive (e.g. return home or go to a friend's house to organise alternative transport).

3. Keeping safe when getting on and off the bus

- Queue sensibly, well away from the edge of the road.
- Allow passengers leaving the bus to get off before you try getting on.
- Get on and off the bus in an orderly way so you do not hurt yourself or other passengers.
- If you need to cross the road once you have left the bus, make sure the bus has been driven away so you can see other vehicles and their drivers can see you.

4. On the bus

- Stay in your seat once you are on the bus and always use the seatbelt if one is provided.
- Do **not** speak to or distract the driver unless there is an emergency.
- Do **not** stand in front of the driver on the stairwell.
- Do **not** use emergency exits or doors unless the driver instructs you to, or if there is a genuine emergency.
- Do **not** eat, drink or smoke on the bus.
- Foul, abusive language and bullying will not be tolerated.

- Do **not** carry real or replica weapons.
- Do **not** throw items or damage the inside or outside of the bus. If damage is caused the police will be contacted.
- If the bus breaks down or is involved in an accident, follow the driver's instructions. Do not leave the area unless given specific approval by the driver.

You need to be aware that many bus operators monitor the behaviour of passengers using CCTV. CCTV footage will be used as evidence if drivers or passengers are hurt or the bus damaged.

For more information on evacuation of school buses, please read the County council leaflet – Safe Exit.

If you breach any of the points within this Code of Conduct, the County Council has the right to withdraw transport assistance at any time. For further information please refer to the “Sanctions for Unacceptable Behaviour” procedure.

HOME TO SCHOOL/COLLEGE TRANSPORT

Sanctions for Unacceptable Behaviour

From time to time it is necessary to impose sanctions on children and young people who fail to conform to an acceptable standard of behaviour on County Council provided transport from home to school/college.

We believe that a parent or legal guardian must take responsibility for their children's behaviour on the way to and from school. It is their duty to ensure that their children understand why it is essential to behave properly in the transport provided. Young people over the age of 18 are responsible for their own behaviour and should adhere to the code of conduct. Children and young people must understand themselves, that poor behaviour, especially that which puts at risk the safety of any other child, driver or road user will lead to a ban on use of the transport provided, and the responsibility of transporting their child to school will transfer to them without any financial support from the County Council.

In return, we will ensure that contracts are monitored to ensure compliance with the law and the contract offered. We will investigate any complaint received from any other party, and be seen to act against anyone who contravenes the policies and agreements entered into. We recognise that the decision as to whether or not to carry a child or young person, is for the Operator, although we will encourage that Operator not to take such a step before discussing any proposed action with the County Council and the Head Teacher of the school involved.

As part of its commitment to providing a safe environment for the transport of children and young people to and from school, we have determined a procedure for dealing with cases of poor behaviour reported to us, and have adopted the following list of sanctions that may be applied in certain circumstances. This is not an exhaustive list, nor is it a definitive statement that in every case the sanction indicated will be applied regardless of other circumstances. Each case will be considered on its individual merits, but if it is proposed to vary from the examples given, consultation will take place with the school and operator concerned.

The sanction will be applied jointly by the Transport Entitlement Team Leader, Children and Young People's Directorate and the Home to School Transport Co-ordinator, Environment Department. Any Appeal will be considered jointly by the Access and Support Services Manager, (CYPD) and the Transport and Procurement Manager, (Environment Department), whose decision will be final.

TARIFF

1 Day Ban

- Not wearing seat belt.
- Shouting and swearing.
- Disobeying an instruction from the driver or any teacher on duty.
- Eating and drinking on the bus.
- Leaving rubbish on the bus. *
- Sticking chewing gum on seats. *

* The culprit may also be required to clean up any mess that may be caused.

1 Week Ban

- Any repeat of an offence referred to above that resulted in a 1 day ban.
- Mis-use of bell.
- Shouting and swearing at driver, or in the case of commercial routes, any other fare paying passenger.
- Smoking.
- Lack of consideration to other fare paying passengers on commercial routes.

1 Month Ban

- Any repeat of an offence referred to above that resulted in a 1 week ban.
- Mis-use of emergency exit.
- Mis-use of main entrance door.
- Fighting.
- Bullying.
- Specific and unnecessary distraction of driver.
- Running around vehicle.
- Throwing of objects inside or outside vehicle.

1 Term Ban

- Second offence referred to above that resulted in a 1 month ban.
- More serious examples of offences that would normally attract a 1 month ban.
- Damage to vehicle, graffiti, vandalism etc. *
- Assault on Driver or other fare paying passenger on commercial routes. **
- Possession of drugs and offensive weapons, including replicas. **

* The operator may also require compensation for any damage caused, and such an offence may also lead to the matter being reported to the Police.

** This is a criminal offence and will lead to the matter being reported to the Police
Permanent Ban

- Third offence referred to above that resulted in a 1 term ban.
- More serious offences that would normally attract a 1 term ban.

Notification

Operators will report any unacceptable behaviour to the County Council who will investigate the incident, including the recovery of any CCTV footage, and enforce the appropriate ban outlined above as necessary. Parents will be notified of this action by letter, or where an instant ban is justified, by telephone and later confirmed in writing. It is the responsibility of the parent or guardian to transport the child to school whilst the ban is in place.