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11th September 2019

Dear Parents / Carers,

Re : PE Pilot Scheme

We have taken many calls today regarding the information that went home yesterday about our proposed PE kit pilot. It appears to have provoked quite a strong response from some parents, and we just wanted to reassure everyone that it was considered with the best of intentions. So I wanted to take this opportunity just to clarify the rationale.

First and foremost we do not expect parents to purchase any new or additional sports kit; we were working on the assumption (naively as it would now appear) that all children have a pair of trainers and some form of jogging bottoms/sports leggings/tracksuit bottoms etc. that would be appropriate for school PE, as we felt confident children wear this sort of casual clothing from time to time when not at school. Trainers are also a recommended part of the PE kit policy, specifically for outdoor lessons.

We have initiated this pilot for several reasons; PE is a statutory subject, and efficient timetabling is crucial to ensure the lesson can be delivered in full. It has been noted that children are taking an excessive length of time to get changed from their uniform into their kit and vice versa and this is impacting on the lesson starting at the time it should.

Another sensitive issue that we felt it necessary to address relates to how children get changed for PE. We do not have designated changing areas for boys and girls, and some children are very self-conscious in getting changed in front of others.

By running the pilot and children being able to just come to school in their sports kit on their designated day, it addresses these two issues. Children are prepared already for the lesson, so there is no time wasting, and discretion and privacy are maintained. It also means we are not losing uniform items in the class with jumpers and tops going missing etc. and it reduces the likelihood of children missing lessons altogether due to not having appropriate kit in school.

In the main we felt parents would welcome this suggestion. It means the only additional PE kit children need to keep in school are plimsolls for indoor PE and a pair of shorts.

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We had to try and reinforce a code regarding colour, in line with other uniform requirements, otherwise the broader school uniform protocols would be breached altogether and inappropriate colours/patterns would start to creep in. The only concession we were prepared to make relates to the colour of the trainers.

If your child simply does not have a pair of trainers, I certainly do not expect any parent to be financially inconvenienced by now purchasing a pair.

With that in mind, I would confirm it is perfectly acceptable for children to come to school on PE day in their normal school shoes, and then quickly get changed into their plimsolls for PE if that would assist. But ultimately, we have chosen to introduce this protocol to save time and fulfil the PE curriculum.

Whilst I welcome parental feedback, I hope this at least explains why we are trialling the pilot but if the groundswell of parental opinion is such that there is an overwhelming number of parents who do not support the idea, we will have to have a re-think on the way forward. As a point of interest, all of Class 7 arrived at school today in appropriate PE kit, raring to go, so I am assuming their parents were happy with the suggestion.

I would welcome your support for the next few weeks.

Mr P. Speck
Head Teacher



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