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Dear Parent/Carer

Name the crocs competition

You will no doubt have noticed that the 'crocs' were installed over the half term closure. We are still waiting for the final fixtures and fittings to be fabricated and galvanised but once these are completed and fitted then the new bicycle and scooter racks will be ready for use.

In the meantime, we have launched our 'name the crocs competition' which is taking place this week. The children have been asked to suggest suitable names for the guardians of their transports and Mrs Barnes from the school office has placed a special 'name the crocs' suggestion box outside of the Headteacher's office in which children can submit their ideas – and we've had quite a few as you might imagine!

The School Council will meet on Friday afternoon to collate the list of potential names and then having fed these back to their respective class the whole school will then vote on their favourite four names early next week. When the final decisions are made our wood carver, Mr Andy O'Neill, will then carve the crocs new names into the tail section of the sculpture on a piece of wood left smooth for that purpose.

ICT update: The Government Home Access Programme

The Government wish to provide free computers and broadband access to 270, 000 low income households. The school has been asked to communicate this aim to parents.

Your family may be eligible for a free computer and broadband access if your children are entitled to free school meals. To find out if your children are entitled to free school meals please contact either Hannah Cooper or Julie Greenfield at BANES on **01225 394317** or should you prefer you can make initial enquiries with the school office.

If your child is eligible for free school meals and you are interested in pursuing the Home Access Programme then further information about can be found online at www.homeaccess.org.uk or by contacting the parent helpline **0333 200 1004**. The following information is taken from the Governments home access website.

Home Access provides grants to low income families to buy computer and/or internet packages so they can learn safely, have fun and achieve more at school. Following the successful pilot, the Home Access programme is now available nationally across England.

The Home Access packages provided have been designed with a family's needs in mind. They include one year's service and support, pre-set parental controls to filter inappropriate content, installed office productivity suite, firewall and an anti-virus package. They also include the award winning e-safety guide Know IT All for Parents, enhanced warranty and reinstatement service in the event of theft, and technical and educational guidance delivered with every package.

All computers come with a dedicated Home Access website set as the home page to help ensure families realise the benefits of Home Access.

School Meals

I am writing to advise you that during the half term closure the local authority took the highly unusual decision to change the school meals menu with a Term left to run on the current menu. The school was not consulted nor have we received an explanation for the impromptu change. To make matters worse, we have returned to school at the start of Term 4 without a copy of the new menu! I have made our dissatisfaction known to the local authority on behalf of all staff, parents and children. I will send you a copy of the new menu as soon as it arrives and a copy will be posted on our school website. I trust this information accounts for the variation in menu this week.

Text and Email Alerts

I intend sending a 'test' text message to parents on Friday of this week. If you do not receive a message, and you wish to be part of our text alert system of communications, this may be because the school holds incorrect or out of date contact information. Please ensure that you contact the school office with your latest contact details.

The school will begin using the service during our month long trial as a way to contact parents in an emergency, such as a school closure due to severe weather, in the case of a school club being cancelled or a school trip being delayed in returning to school. The school office will also use the text alert system to contact parents on occasions, for example to remind parents of outstanding school meal balances or the need to return important permission or appointment slips. Mr Spens will also use the service to keep parents up to date with events whilst Year 6 visits London. I trust that you will find the text alerts useful and will write to you soon to gather your thoughts as we decide whether or not to continue with the service when the trial period expires at the end of March. Email alerts will follow in April after establishing the success or otherwise of the text alert service.

Parent Consultation Returns

I have analysed the Parent Questionnaire returns and have attached a synopsis of my findings to this newsletter. A copy will also be posted upon the school website. The synopsis contains statistical returns and where possible, my response to specific issues raised. I trust that you will find the analysis to be of interest and informing. I would like to take this opportunity to thank those parents who took the time to complete and return the questionnaires. Your support is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Headteacher

St John's Church of England Primary School, Keynsham

Dates: Below are the dates of the events/activities that have been arranged for Terms 3 and 4. I include these at the start of a new year for your information. Details of class trips will be sent separately.

FEBRUARY 2010		
Monday	22	School re-opens for Term 4 - at 8.50am prompt
MARCH 2010		
Monday	1	Year 3 Trip - Caerleon
Tuesday	2	Year 4 Trip - Bristol Zoo
Thursday	4	Open Evening 1 - 3.30pm - 6.30pm (details to follow)
Tuesday	9	Open Evening 2 - 3.30pm - 6.30pm (details to follow)
Thursday	11	Year 6 visit to London (2 days)
Tuesday	30	Easter Service at St John's Church - at 10.00am (help from Parents/Grandparents warmly welcomed)
Wednesday	31	Last swimming session for Year 4 Easter Fair - 3.30pm School Hall
APRIL 2010		
Thursday	1	Last day of Term 4 - school closes for Easter holiday at 3.15pm
Monday	5	School closed - end of Term 4 (Easter closure)
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Friday	16	
Monday	19	School re-opens Term 5 - at 8.50am prompt
Wednesday	28	First swimming session for Year 3

INSET Days - reminder

You may recall that I wrote to you at the start of the year with details of our school INSET days for this academic year. For your information the remaining date is;

INSET DAY 5: Friday 28th May 2010 - School Closed

I have attached the 2009/10 and 2010/11 academic year dates for your information. Academic term dates can also be found at www.bathnes.gov.uk

