

Friday 27th May, 2022

May Newsletter



Dear Parents and Carers,

With just one half-term left to go, the school is approaching its busy season where we try to finish with a flourish! The annual attempt to squeeze lots into the summer months, has only increased as we are trying to also include many of the rescheduled events from the disrupted autumn and spring, but we are determined to ensure every experience can be fitted in before we break for the summer.

Most pleasingly, we would hope to be inviting parents in en masse with Sports Day on June 17th, the PTA Summer Fair on July 15th, and the Year 6 Leaver's Performance/Graduation on July 20th, just to name a few. We also aim to invite parents in to review their children's books, although we appreciate that this is late in the year with your child only having six weeks left with their current class teacher. We would hope for a return to full run of normal Parent Teacher Conferences next year.

With this in mind, after half term, the teachers will begin to work upon organising the children into classes for the next academic year. This information will be shared with the school reports at the end of June in preparation for our transition afternoons at the start of July. As always, these decisions will be made based upon the teacher's judgement as to which class will best support the needs of the pupils. In cases where this is less straight forward, this will be discussed with the parents also.

Assessments Since the start of May, the school has entered the main period of statutory assessments particularly in Year 2 and Year 6. Whilst most of their tests are now over, the next month is important in collecting more evidence around skills like writing which can only be assessed with a portfolio of work. In addition, the month of June will see the Year 1 pupils completing their Phonic Screening and Year 4 pupils completing the first ever Multiplication Tables Check.

We are aware that tests such as these are contentious: some parents will feel that too much emphasis is placed on them, some will feel we do not do enough, some will feel they are not necessary at all. What I would say is that a huge amount of thought goes into how we prepare each of the year groups for them, to ensure this balance is right and age appropriate. Moreover, we complete interviews with the Year 6s afterwards to help inform this approach.

In regard to the younger pupils, they should not be hugely aware of the 'quizzes' that we ask them to do, other than it is not the most interesting week of the school year and it can be quite tiring. For our Year 6s, we do try to develop a greater sense of responsibility. With these pupils having less than forty school days until high school at the time of sitting them, we see great value in encouraging them to work hard towards a particular goal and help them understand what they can achieve when they put their mind to it.

Personally, this is the most important element of Year 6 SATs and is probably the most important lesson we teach our children before they leave us. However, the school is also aware that these assessments set targets for their high school: a child almost reaching the expected level at Year 6 will be expected to do the same or better in Year 11, those reaching a higher level, will be expected to match or better this. Likewise, Year 2 assessments will be used to set targets for children to achieve in Key Stage 2 and these help the school ensure that all pupils are progressing well. This is also why we work hard to ensure we get the balance right, to ensure our children are prepared for these tasks and able to show their true potential.

School Hours In 2020, the need for social distancing saw a change to the historical school hours. With these restrictions now seeming a thing of the past, the school aims to make some small changes back to a more consistent set of timings whilst trying to keep the things that have worked well in the last two years. We do intend to ask for parent feedback next month, but at present our plan is to return to the following **from September**:

Year 5/6 8:40 enter through the front/bike shed gates / 3:10 exiting the same gates

Year 3/4 8:40 entering through the Tesco gate / 3:10 exiting the same gate. We would like to continue with the lining up in the morning and allowing Year 4s to be collected from the grass area as we feel this is beneficial to their independence.

Year 1/2 Entering just after 8:40, ready to enter the classes at 8:45 (we would continue to allow Year 2s to enter the playground at 8:40 to be supervised by staff as this has also proved beneficial) / exiting from the classroom door at 3:15

Reception Entering through the infant playground at 8:45 / exiting onto the playground at 3:15 (this is just to reduce the time parents and children are using the driveway)

Goodbyes We are sad to say goodbye to Mrs Ayley and Mrs Dunn, two of our Teaching Assistants, who left the school at the end of last term. We thank them for their time with us and wish them both the best in future pursuits.



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