

September Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to school or for our new parents, welcome to the school.

I thought I would wait until the end of the first morning before writing a huge thank you for how well prepared the children were for their return. The start of a school year is always a change particularly for those moving-up a phase such as Reception to Year 1 and we appreciate that our restrictions can complicate these transitions even more.

However, this morning, I saw a huge amount of happy and confident pupils striding into school. Perhaps the novelty will wear off, once they get tired of the early starts and sit their first spelling test, but for a first day, we could not be any more pleased with how they have adapted to yet another change in school procedure—so thank you.

Covid changes for this year

As we have outlined in our risk assessment, the school will need to maintain a number of restrictions throughout the year. As much as possible, we have tried to keep these to a minimum as we all wish to return to our normal provision as quickly as it is safe to do so. I genuinely believe that the children have received the very best that we could have provided in the last 18 months but they have missed out in certain areas and we are determined for that not to happen this year as much as possible. Therefore, we will look to bring back a lot of the pupil committees that are so important in developing our young citizen, sports and after-school clubs and even little things like having, the children eat in the dinner hall—a very underestimated part of school development.

However, as fast as we wish to return to provide an outstanding educational experience for all of our pupils, we are trying to remain cautious. It is inevitable that we will have cases of COVID-19 in the school throughout the year; we have seen how contagious this is and whilst, the level of illness experienced by our families and, our children in particular, appears increasingly mild, any outbreak will result in pupils being off school—something that we are keen to minimise. So again, we thank you in advance for your understanding on this matter.

Staffing Updates

We are really pleased to say that we have retained almost all of staff this year with only Mrs Laybourn leaving to start her retirement. After almost 20 years service to the school, she will be a massive loss but we are excited for her as she starts a new chapter (and we will have her volunteering in no time!). We are also very excited for Mrs Bamber, who will be starting her maternity leave at the end of the month. Finally, we are pleased to welcome Mr Smalls to the school for this year and will be looking to develop our PE further particularly during breaktimes and lunch. In addition, Billy from Inspire Sports, will be taking over from Josh to help deliver PE lessons to the 1/2 and 5/6 Phases.

Safeguarding at the School

As we have explained before, whilst it is the learning that dominates much of the school day, ensuring that our pupils are safe at all times is every school's primary function. As such, each school must have designated staff who are legally responsible for following up on any concerns that staff may have about the children in their care.

All adults who enter the school building have a responsibility to pass on any concerns with a Safeguarding Team led by the Principal who follow up with pupils, parents and at times, external agencies to ensure that any concerns have support structures in place.

Therefore, the Safeguarding Team is as follows: Sam Broughton in Reception, Carolyn Saddleton in the Lower School and Nikki Graham, in the office, and James Grimsby, as the overall Designated Safeguarding Team.



Curriculum This year, there have been legal changes around what the children are taught within Relationship and Sex Education during their time at primary school. In terms of content, the school made this change about 3 years ago and therefore we do not see that there will be significant changes to our current curriculum. However, one major change is in a parent's ability to opt out of certain aspects of this learning. As a result, it is really important that we have the opportunity to consult with parents and take your views into account. This was planned for last summer but we will now be aiming to share this virtually in November through a series of TEAMS presentations with more details to follow shortly.

