



Waterbeach Community Primary School

Learning - Laughter - Friendship

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Dear Parents and Carers,

WELCOME BACK!

I hope that you have all had a wonderful summer. Our children come back to school on Monday, and we are really looking forward to seeing them with their smiles and tales of their summer adventures. The teachers have been busy getting classrooms ready and we are hoping that the Autumn term will see the school returning to something like normal.

This letter is to update you about a few new developments and to inform you about our COVID arrangements for the new academic year. I have attached two documents with this letter and hope that they will give you further information. Please do take the time to read them.

STAFFING UPDATE

We welcome Miss Nottage who will be teaching our Dolphins class in year 3. Mrs Atkinson. Mrs America and Ms McLeod who will join us as new teaching assistants. I am sure that they will soon settle in and meet many of you in their day to day routines.

Sadly, Miss Couchman is still unwell and unable to return to teach the Year 1 Rhino class next week. We are very lucky because Mrs Fowler, who worked in Foundation Stage in the Summer term, has agreed to work in Rhino's class to cover for Miss Couchman. She will be teaching the Rhinos until October half term at least.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH TEACHERS - CLARIFICATION

After several discussions with teaching staff last term, it has become apparent that the use of email has become a major form of communication with parents, especially over the last 18 months. This is totally understandable and appropriate. Teachers report that most parents have been both supportive and positive, even when there have been problems. Emails and telephone calls have enabled us all to work together to help the children across the whole school. It has also been wonderful to hear about the things that the children have been doing at home.

Unfortunately, there have also been some unreasonable and harassing communications from parents. Teachers have had emails sent late at night, understandably for busy parents, but the expectation that they had read and answered such communications before they started to teach the next day is not reasonable. Some teachers have received daily, long lengthy emails that take a considerable length of time to read and reply to. No teacher wants to let their children down, but they also have a life beyond school. Our staff have families and commitments which they are entitled to honour after the working day. I respectfully ask you to please remember that we have a policy of replying to emails within three working days. There may be times when teachers do not have the time to reply to emails immediately. Most classes now have thirty children – or more. Email traffic can become extremely stressful. I have asked staff to forward emails of a stressful nature to the senior leaders in future. I have also made it very clear that they should prioritise emails and reply to them when they have time to do so and certainly not late at night or during lessons. Their main role is to teach the children and be appropriately prepared to do so.

This does not mean that parents should not email teachers, I am just politely asking for consideration and patience. Thank you.

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COVID ARRANGEMENTS

I attended a briefing by Jon Lewis, the Service Director for Education in Peterborough and Cambridgeshire, on Wednesday evening, to receive the latest expectations for schools in the Autumn term. Basically, school will now return to normal in many aspects of our provision. The school Risk Assessment will still be used but with many of the safety measures now being retracted. We also have a Contingency Plan which is one of the attachments to this letter. This document clearly shows the different stages and actions that school will need to take in the event of an outbreak in the community or in the school. This means that if there are a number of cases in the community or in school, we will have to reintroduce some of the measures that we followed during the Summer term.

So, what will school be like for the children?

- They will not be working in year group bubbles.
- Whole school assemblies will return.
- Bookbags etc. may be brought to and from school.
- Soft furnishings will now be able to be used.
- Lunch times will return to the main hall.
- They will have play times and lunchtimes with other year groups.

How does this effect parents coming on site?

- Parents may choose whether to wear face coverings outside but will be requested to wear face coverings if they are in the school building.
- Parents will be expected to follow hygiene measures if inside the school building.
- As before the pandemic, parents are asked to enter school and pass messages to teachers only through the main office.
- Appointments can now be attended face to face, when necessary, but may be arranged online at the teacher's discretion.
- Autumn term parents evening will still be carried out online.
- We will not be arranging any performances or parents' gatherings in the near future.
- Volunteers may return to help in school.

The measures above are all temporary and will be reviewed at regular intervals. If necessary, county guidance will be sought but the main priority for us is to have the children in school where they can continue with their learning. We will be expecting all children to attend school as usual.

However, children should still not be brought to school if they are displaying symptoms of COVID. (High temperature, persistent dry cough and loss of taste or smell). They will be sent home immediately if they display the symptoms in school. We will ask that your child then takes a PCR test. I have attached a flow chart for your information. This has been created by County leaders and aims to help you to understand the actions that you are expected to take. Please do ask if you have any further questions.

REMINDER ABOUT SCHOOL TIMINGS

A letter was sent to all parents, in June, about the timings of the school day. Please see below for a reminder about these.

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KS1/ EYFS –

MORNING – 8.55-12.00 doors open for children at 8.45 but the register starts at 8.55

LUNCH – 12.00-12.45 (Children in Reception classes will start lunch at 11.45 in order for them to have a little longer to eat their lunch.)

AFTERNOON – 12.45 – 3.00

KS 2-

MORNING – 8.55-12.30 doors open at 8.45 but the register starts at 8.55

LUNCH – 12.30-1.15

AFTERNOON – 1.15 – 3.00

AND FINALLY....

I would like to say a huge “thank you” to everyone for the support that you gave me during my Land’s End to John o Groats cycle ride in July. It was a difficult challenge but also an amazing experience. It was smashing to receive your messages of support, gifts and cards. I managed to cycle a total of 1009 miles, through deluges of rain for the first two days and then sunshine throughout the north of England and Scotland. So far, the children and I have raised over £4000 which will go towards outdoor equipment with a portion being used to help to build our memorial garden to Mrs Rabbett. The fund raising is not yet complete with some sponsorship money still pending. Thank you to everyone who also raised money in support of the children’s individual challenges. I have been amazed by the mileage that some of them set themselves and achieved – truly wonderful!

So, as we start our new year, I welcome everyone who is new to Waterbeach Community Primary School and look forward to seeing you all about at some point.

Your sincerely

Miss Green

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