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Headteacher Mrs Julia Humphrey

4th September 2020

Dear Parents

Welcome back from the summer break. We trust that you have enjoyed the sunshine and found some time to take a day trip (or two!) The staff and I are all pleased to be back in school and we look forward to next week when we shall get to meet all our new children, welcome back our current children and hear everyone's news. I am certainly looking forward to getting to know everyone.

As this is the first newsletter of the year it is fairly lengthy but hopefully the information will get the year off to a good start. We plan to send a letter out every Friday for the first month and then every 2 weeks.

Welcome

This September we welcome a number of new children and their families to our school.

In EYFS we welcome: Toby, Aurella, Jake, Isla, Violet, Jayden, Izabella, Esme, Joseph, Florence, Harry, Alfred, Frederick and Olive.

We also extend a very warm welcome to Mrs LePort as our new EYFS classteacher.

Year 3 – Jake Howe and Year 5 – Megan Howe

Meet the Team

In the school entrance we shall be creating a staff team board, complete with our wonderful faces, to help you to know who is responsible for different aspects of the work we undertake.

A few key responsibilities for you to be aware of are –

Designated Lead for Safeguarding (DSL) – Mrs L Howard. Alternate DSL – Mrs J Humphrey. If you have any concerns around the safety, safeguarding and wellbeing of any children and their families please speak to or email either of us.

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Co-ordinator (SENDCo) – Ms N Avenal. We have the benefit of Ms Avenal's experience and expertise over the coming term, ahead of our conversion to an academy. This has been made possible from additional government funding we have had made available to us. She will be on site each week working with staff, children and parents. I will be assisting Ms Avenal with the day to day management of this role, continuing so, with the support of St Benets from the start of the Spring term. Ms Avenal completed an audit of SEN in July and has completed some initial training with staff during the past two days.

All staff hold responsibilities for specific aspects of the school's provision and subject leadership. In particular our

Maths lead – Mr C. Dekker and English lead – Mrs L. Howard.

Academy update

Plans for our conversion to an academy have continued over the summer break and during this time, I have begun building links with staff in the St Benets MAT. Our school improvement and development plans have been written to take account of this and also in the short term, to address our return to school following the interruption we saw during 2019-20.

School Improvement and Development Plans

A summary version of our school improvement plans are attached to this letter and also on display on the parent board. I have included a number of opportunities this term for parents to engage with school improvement, participate in forums and support their child's learning. These are likely to be virtual sessions. More details (and dates) will follow in the next letter but we hope to offer :

- Phonics for EYFS and KS1
- Reading Café
- Maths Café
- Parent forum

On the school website (by mid-September) you will also find copies of the plan for the spending of the Sports Premium Grant and the Pupil Premium Grant.

The first few weeks

We seem to have caused some confusion about the staggered start and end times for each day, with different times stated on the July and August letters. We apologise for this and hope to now confirm our plans for the first two weeks, after which it would be prudent for us to review how manageable this has been for all parties.

The school day will start and end at different times for different age groups.

8.45 – 3.00	KS1	8.55 – 3.10	KS2
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Parents are to enter through the small gate and exit via the double gates.

For families which have children in both key stages / across the school, we shall allow the older child to leave at the same time as the younger as this will save you from waiting, if you wish.

Start and finish times for Reception class (EYFS) have been clarified in a separate letter from Mrs Leport.

Risk Assessment

A copy of the latest risk assessment can be found on the school website. This will be reviewed and amended weekly to reflect any local (LA) or national changes in guidance and also, as a result of decisions made at school level. We shall send a weekly parent newsletter each Friday, initially, to keep you informed of any changes to our procedures.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate what we have already sent to you around good attendance and protocols.

Schools have been informed that attendance will be mandatory in September, as the government expects all pupils to return to school. This means that the attendance policy and subsequent actions will be applied, we will be recording attendance and following up on any absences.

If your children have been staying at home due to the current shielding guidance, the government amended this guidance on 1 August meaning they will be able to come back to school in September.

However, if you've received clinical or public health advice that your children should still remain at home, please let us know so that we can make personal contact with you to discuss our options.

In the last week, the government published guidance for parents alongside launching its [#backtoschoolsafely campaign](#)

to reassure parents and students that schools and colleges are ready for their return in September. The guidance link is here -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-in-the-autumn-term>

The first few weeks

Over the next week your child should bring home -

- The Home School Agreement for Behaviour and another for Learning. We ask that you read through these both, discuss them with your child and sign to say you agree to support us with both aspects.
- Our return to school passport – which asks you about the way your child thrived during the period between March and July, if and where you feel they need additional support.
- Class newsletters and timetables will be emailed as well as up-loaded on the school website. If you wish to receive a hard copy please contact Mrs Green in the office.

Check List

Due to COVID we are keeping what the children bring to school to a minimum.

- Indoor shoes will no longer be required.
- Lunch / Snack boxes need to be of a hard plastic type, suitable for a dishwasher, no fabric please.
- Plastic water bottles to be in school and taken home every day.
- Book bags will not be required in the first instance, books will be sent home in a plastic wallet
- PE Kits to be worn to school on PE days – dates to be confirmed next week.
- Children in KS1 and EYFS will require wellies, any previously left in school will be sorted and checked for size before being sent home, hopefully on Monday.
- Please no Backpack/Ruck Sacks or bags of any type, the children will not need to bring anything into school.
- Pencils/Stationery etc will be supplied individually to the pupils, hence NO pencil cases etc.
- If you feel that your child might need a change of clothes particularly those in EYFS and KS1, please provide these in a named plastic bag to be left in school.
- We ask that no nuts to be brought into school.

Curriculum plans

Regarding our approach to enabling every child to re-establish good learning behaviours, our plans for the curriculum during September and October are -

- We shall use a range of teaching approaches, discussions and assessment for learning (with a few short 'tests') to identify each child's starting points and their strengths. This will be used to establish a baseline from which future plans are created. The first two weeks will focus mostly on reading, writing and maths skills alongside well being, PSHCE and RE.
- Where we know that individuals will benefit from additional support with the basic skills of reading, writing and maths, to allow them to get 'back on track' we shall skillfully deploy staff to ensure that this is allowed for in an enabling and encouraging way. We will be

using positive language with all children, not referring to words such as 'recovery' and catch up'.

- We aim to return to teaching all national curriculum subjects by half term at the latest.

Should we need to close a bubble or return to any form of remote learning, we shall ensure that the curriculum plans written for the term, are easily transferable so that we minimize disruption to the sequence of learning over time.

Our current plans to support your children's wellbeing during this time are:

- pupil wellbeing will be promoted through PSHCE sessions, stories and activities, collective worship.
- pupils who are vulnerable or who have difficulty re-engaging in school through discussions with class teachers and parents. We will be able to draw on support from outside agencies too, where required.

Breakfast and after-school clubs

The breakfast and after school club will be running as before. Please speak with Mrs Green to book sessions.

At the morning drop off for breakfast club, we ask that all older children are dropped off by the main gate and make their own way across the playground. Parents with younger children may use the bell to alert Mrs Green or Mrs Raven who will come and collect your child and walk them to the hall.

At the end of the after school club session, arrangements will be as previous, come to the main door, us the buzzer and an adult will bring your child to you.

To minimise transfer between groups of children, all children attending breakfast club will wash their hands on arrival and have their lunch/snack box / water bottle wiped over. As they move into their classes for the day, this will be repeated likewise at the end of the day if they attend after school club, the same procedure of hand washing and wiping of belongings will be repeated.

We are in discussion with external club providers i.e, Premier Sport and will inform you of our plans in the next newsletter.

School uniform

Just to remind you that we hold stock of school uniform. Please speak with Mrs Green or Mrs Raven who can assist you with any purchases.

Free school meals and universal free school meals

We appreciate that the titles of these two are quite confusing.

Universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) provides funding for all government funded schools to offer free school meals to pupils in EYFS, Year 1, and Year 2 only. Any child in EYFS, Y1 and Y2 requesting a school prepared lunch will have the cost met by the government.

Free school meals is a 'means checked' support which has to be applied for and can be accessed by all children including those in EYFs, Year 1 and 2. It attracts additional funding for the school to use in supporting learning and provision for your child in addition to free school meals. The government website holds all the information but in summary, your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

- Income Support
- income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- the guaranteed element of Pension Credit

- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on - paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit - if you apply on or after 1 April 2018 your household income must be less than £7,400 a year (after tax and not including any benefits you get)

A copy of the school menu can be found on the website.

Parking

When visiting the school please consider the safety of the children and respect our neighbours. No double parking or parking on the pavements please. We have an agreement with the Village Hall where parents can use the car park for drop off and pick-up purposes, therefore we ask you to use this car park at all times.

General Attendance Information

Attached to this letter, please find the statutory Local Authority letter about attendance and punctuality which we are asked to share with you at the start of every school year. This forms Appendix 1 in the Attendance Policy which can be found on the school website.

School trips and visitors

Under the current COVID restrictions, we are unable to invite any visitors into school unless they are absolutely necessary to the work we are undertaking. This unfortunately also includes parents. We shall be working hard to find ways to maintain good communication and also opportunities to participate in the life of the school as notes above eg zoom style parent meetings. We shall also hold back for now from taking the children out to other sites and venues for trips or sporting events.

With kind regards

Mrs J Humphrey

Appendix 1: Example warning letter FPN for schools

Garboldisham Church Primary

Date:

Dear Parent/Carer,

Attendance at school and legal intervention

[Research](#) commissioned by the Department for Education shows missing school for even a day can mean a child is less likely to achieve good grades, which can have a damaging effect on their life chances. At [INSERT NAME OF SCHOOL] our aim is to work with parents to ensure that all our pupils receive the most from their education and reach their full potential.

This letter is to remind all parents/carers that the law that requires them to ensure that their child attends school regularly. The Government remains very clear that no child should miss school apart from in exceptional circumstances and schools must continue to take steps to reduce absence to support children's attainment.

The Local Authority operates a system where any pupil will meet the criteria for legal intervention through the issue of a Fixed Penalty Notice where they have:

1. 10 consecutive sessions¹ of unauthorised absence where some or all of the absence may be attributed to an unauthorised holiday in term-time (for absences from 1 September 2017); or
2. 15% unauthorised absence over a period of 6 school weeks for reasons other than unauthorised term time holiday.

Any pupil at Garboldisham Church Primary, who meets either of the criteria, will be referred to the Local Authority for action to be considered.

If a Fixed Penalty Notice is issued it is a fine of £60 per parent per child which must be paid in one payment within 21 days. If a Notice is unpaid within 21 days, the fine will double to £120 per parent per child if paid within 28 days. If a fixed penalty notice fine is not paid in full within the timescale set out above, the Local Authority is required to start legal proceedings against the parent(s) in the local Magistrates' Court for the offence of failing to ensure their child has attended school regularly.

I hope we can count on your support in this matter, please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely