

## NEWSLETTER – JULY

### WHAT A STRANGE TERM IT HAS BEEN!

It took a while for the latest government guidance to be published, but since it arrived, we have been studying it in depth and making outline plans for September. Meanwhile we have been teaching children in school and setting tasks for home; feeding pupils in school and delivering lunches; planning for next year and doing all of the things we need to do as the school year draws to a close – it has been a very busy time.

I appreciate parents have also had the difficult job of having children at home full time and managing this with work commitments or caring for vulnerable family members. Some have had personal and financial issues and it has generally been a tough time for many. However, if we can come through times like these supporting each other and as a community, then we can achieve anything.

Here is what we know so far:

### **SUMMER HOLIDAYS**

Despite some speculation and opinion in the media about whether the summer holidays should be cut short or even go ahead, they will take place this year as planned. I would like to say that we are very glad of this at school, as our staff have been working since schools closed to most pupils – both in school and online and including the Easter holidays and definitely deserve their break. The same goes for you, our families, most of who have been working hard on home learning and need time for a rest and some fun. The funding the government has announced for summer activities is going to charities and organisations who usually run summer activities – we will let you know if any of these contact us with details for our families to get involved. The last day for Reception is Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July to allow us to set up our EYFS as a unit. Year 6 finish on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> and the rest of children at 12 noon on Friday 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **SEPTEMBER**

The government expects children in all yeargroups to be back in September full time and the idea of a 'protected group' will increase from 15 to a full class of children. Whilst this is good news and we are really missing all our children, we think there needs to be some transition at the start of the Autumn term to help the children settle back into school. As some areas of the country have already been told they must have a local lockdown, any plans we make may change right up until September, depending on the local and national covid cases.

We have decided to build the classes up through the first week back, much like we do each year for Reception children, with some children returning from Monday, then others each day, building up to full classes by the end of the first week. This will keep numbers lower to start with, which will allow staff to dedicate time to a new group as they are added each day. We will send out your child/ren's start day during the holidays – this is to allow us to make changes to plans if there is a second wave or a local outbreak that we need to take account of. We aim to start siblings together and to ensure pupils in our key worker groups have a start matched to parents work pattern.

I hope parents will feel they can support this transition during the first week back. There will be further information either at the end of term or during the holidays about our plans for September, as we will need to look carefully at arrival times and entrances, with all of our children back! In the meantime, I would be interested in any feedback or suggestions. Obviously whatever we plan will be in line with government guidance and our own health and safety assessments.

## ***SUMMER FOOD FUND (benefits related free school meals)***

As you know, school has chosen to support our families with lunches delivered throughout the covid-crisis and although this may have become slightly monotonous for some children, it has allowed us to keep touch with families, which we have really valued. The summer food vouchers are a separate scheme, which provides a £90 voucher for parents entitled to benefits related free school meals to buy lunches for their child during the school holiday. There is one voucher per child and school have now issued these through the government online system. Eligible families will receive an e-code which they then convert to a voucher from their choice of supermarket. Mrs Mackenzie has been very determined to check email addresses work and hopefully the next stage will go without a hitch. If you do not receive your e-code by Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> July please contact school urgently for help. Where parents become eligible for free school meals during the summer break, we will do our best to issue codes for the remaining holiday, but obviously as school will be closed we cannot guarantee this.

## ***LEARNING AT HOME and SCHOOL***

Many children have been working hard at home and parents/carers working hard to support them. Well done! I really hope that those families who have not managed to share any work on class dojo or tapestry have been completing the learning tasks too.

Once staff have had their transition meetings for next year, your child's new teacher will contact you with suggestions of key things to practice over the summer and other information. We are sadly losing Mrs Adamson to one of our federation schools – I know she will be missed by children, although staff don't need to be too sad as we will still see her at federation meetings. We would also like to congratulate Mrs Wardle, who is now a qualified teacher with a new school to go to and Miss Mahmood who has completed her Newly Qualified Teacher year with flying colours. In September we welcome Mr Boddy, who some parents may know if they have older children at Titus Salt School. Teachers for next academic year will be:

Nursery and Reception: Miss Rhodes (also EYFS lead)

Year 1: Miss Thomis (KS1 Lead)

Year 2: Mr Boddy

Year 3: Mrs Townend

Year 4: Miss Sloper

Year 5: Miss Coles (KS2 Lead/Assistant Headteacher)

Year 6: Miss Mahmood

This half term we have had full bubbles for our space and staffing in Reception and Year 1 and unfortunately no room to take extra children under current guidance. These youngest children have embraced all of the changes and are quickly making up for lost time with lots of fun learning. Our Year 6 who have returned have shown great maturity and maintained social distancing measures carefully. We still have our key worker provision running across two bubbles and have been able to take some additional children into small groups. Our wonderful woods and gorgeous grounds have really come into their own during this period – we are so lucky to have this space.

## ***PUPIL REPORTS***

You will still receive an annual report this year, but it will be slightly different to usual. There will be no judgement of where your child is in relation to age-related expectations, as this would be very difficult to judge. Teachers will comment on attitudes and effort and there will be an additional box for home learning. We will let parents know when reports are ready and how we will get them to you. This may be by email where possible, to avoid large numbers of parents on the school site.

## ***LOST PROPERTY***

Although we tried to send everything home with pupils in March, there are still items remaining in school. All named items will be passed up to the next class, ready for September. Unfortunately, if items are unnamed, we are unable to return them to their owner, unless they are very distinctive – such as a coat or wellies. All items in good condition will be washed and stored as spares for September. Please contact school if you think we may have something named you would like sooner or something unnamed but easy to spot.

## **UNIFORM FOR SEPTEMBER**

If your family is entitled to a uniform voucher, you will have hopefully already collected it. In September we will be returning to our uniform policy fully. This is available on the website and I would like to make it clear to all parents that the governors expect this policy to be followed. School shoes should be worn and these should be flat, black and sturdy enough for playtimes but not trainers. Please remember that skirts and trousers should be grey – no other colour is allowed. The only difference to this is PE jogging trousers, which should be plain black joggers – not leggings – and have no branding or stripes. It will be so lovely to see the children back in their Glenaire green jumpers and dressed smartly. If your child has had an exciting hairstyle over the summer – tramlines or patterns – please allow this to grow out before September, as this is also part of our uniform expectation.

## **SAFETY AND SUPPORT**

This message was given on the last newsletter, but it doesn't hurt to repeat it. Please contact school for advice if you have any concerns about a child or a vulnerable adult and we will support you with who to contact to report this. In this current crisis, many of us are facing new challenges and pressures which we may not have the skills to deal with. It is never a weakness to ask for help – it is a strength. We know from our colleagues in the police and social care that incidents of domestic abuse have increased during the lockdown and that more people are struggling financially or with their mental health. Please do not suffer in silence. No one will judge if you ask for help – we will work with you to find the help that will make the difference, because we care about our children and we care about their families.

## **STAY SAFE**

As the lockdown eases, it is important that everyone continues to stick to the changing guidelines so that cases do not rise again. Please stay safe and follow the government advice.

School may not be fully open, and closing soon for the summer, but we are still here and will keep you updated about plans and changes as they are decided, ready for September.

Best wishes,



Jo Wilkinson  
Headteacher