



Slindon Church of England Primary School

June 2021

Dear Parents/ Carers

This is the last newsletter of a year that in some ways has seemed to have gone so unbelievably quickly and other ways in which it has seemed like a decade, in managing all the changes that we've all had to adhere to!

Over the last few days we have received information from Public Health England and communication yesterday from Paul Wagstaff, Director of Education and Skills. This communication (the letter from Paul Wagstaff is sent out with this newsletter), along with the Governments' delay in the final easing of Covid restrictions, has led us to make the difficult decision to cancel any plans that we had previously made that offered parents/ carers the opportunity to come into school during the school day. Please believe me when I say that it is with an incredibly heavy heart that we are unable to invite you into school but we will record and photograph events such as Sports Day and the variety performance Chestnut Class are preparing for the Year 6 Leavers celebration.

We will have a 'Move up Day' of sorts on Wednesday 7th July. Whilst we need to ensure that our current class bubbles do not mix, children in Years 2 and 4 will take part in some (socially distanced) team games whilst they get to know their new teachers (Miss Heater for Year 2 children and Mrs Tully for Year 4 children), during the afternoon. All other year groups will remain with their same teacher next year. Staff are also planning a special day for each class before the end of term, in recognition of how amazing the children have been throughout such a challenging year.

Finally, I would like to thank you all, for the support and understanding you have shown us this year. Thank you for working with us and accepting that how we have been required to do things this year is vastly different to how we'd like to, or ever did before the pandemic. I hope we can go back to thoroughly welcoming you all back into our fantastic school again next year.

Lucy Cooper

(Headteacher)

Changes to staffing

Mrs Hazel Flower

On Monday (14th June 2021) we welcomed Mrs Hazel Flower to our staff team, as School Business Manager. Hazel will be in the office with Mrs Cooper and when things return to normal, she very much looks forward to getting to know all of our Parents and Carers. This week she will be getting to know the staff and children as she settles into her new role. I know you will join me in welcoming her to our fabulous school.



Mrs Emmajane Merrett

Last year we appointed Mrs Merrett as Teaching Assistant in Catkin Class. I am pleased to say that Emmajane was recently successfully appointed as teacher for our new Reception children, for the next academic year. She will remain as a Teaching Assistant for the remainder of the year and begin her new role in September. More information about the plans for Catkin Class next year is on page 3.



Mrs Vanessa Merrett

Though you may not have seen a great deal of Vanessa, we have been lucky enough to have had her with us for the past two years, as Premises Officer for our school. Recently, Vanessa was successfully appointed as Caretaker and now takes over some of Mr Reeve's duties, with Mrs Flower taking over some of his other duties. You may now see Vanessa around the school during the morning drop off. We are particularly grateful to Vanessa for her diligence and conscientiousness in continuing to ensure high standards of cleanliness necessary, due to Coronavirus.



Mr Joe Coyle

It is with a mixture of sadness and happiness that we will be saying goodbye to Joe Coyle at the end of this half term. Joe joined us as a Teaching Assistant in September, wanting to gain more experience in a school before deciding whether to begin a career in teaching. Of course it wasn't long before the staff and children showed Joe what a rewarding career Teaching is (even during a world-wide pandemic)! Joe was quickly snapped up and begins his training in September. He will be hugely missed but I am thrilled that he has chosen this path and we wish him nothing but the very best! I am sure he will come back and see us.



Miss Lucy Raveney

Miss Raveney has been in Catkin Class since the end of March and will leave us on the 18th July 2021. We had not planned on having any students this year, but school placements were severely disrupted for student teachers due to Coronavirus and we felt we wanted to help. Whilst Lucy is not theoretically a member of staff, we will miss having her here. We are pleased that Lucy was successfully appointed as a Key Stage 1 teacher, at an interview yesterday.



Plans for the new 2021/22 academic year

In September, we will be welcoming 12 new Reception children to our school. As I said in the last newsletter, this is the largest Reception intake our school has ever had!

Upon hearing this fabulous news, I wanted to consider how best we can support our youngest children, as we know that all children have been impacted by the Coronavirus pandemic for more than a year.

As you know, we successfully appointed Mrs Emmajane Merrett as a dedicated teacher for Reception children next year. Mrs Merrett is a qualified teacher who has worked in schools before ours, but has spent the majority of her career in Early Years provision. She will continue to work alongside Mrs Souadi and Mrs Willis and both her self and the Reception children will continue to be part of Catkin Class, but Mrs Merrett will be their dedicated teacher and they will have an **additional** space within the school which we are busy preparing (see photograph above). We have decided that our group of Reception children will be known as 'Squirrels' this year, which seems fitting when I think of how much the real squirrels bring a smile to our faces as they scamper around our grounds, just as I know our youngest children will.

This structure will also give more time and space for Mrs Souadi and Mrs Willis to focus on the Year 1 and Year 2 children who, for most, have missed so much time away from school over the past year. Acorn and Chestnut Class will both have 23 children next year (based on current numbers) and these small class sizes will also allow for the time, space and quality teaching to meet the children's needs after the disruption that they too may have suffered due to the pandemic.



Fundraising for an Outdoor Classroom

As a school, alongside various wonderful members of our PFA (Parents and Friends Association), we have been raising money for an Outdoor Classroom. Over the years, the scale of our project has increased and last year, with input from professionals arranged through our fantastic governors, we have established a vision for what might be possible, with further fundraising.

We are keen to have an 'Outdoor Classroom' built with the money we have raised and we hope that Mrs Flower will help us source and apply for additional funding. Along with continued fundraising in the next academic year, we hope to be able to make our dreams a reality! In the first newsletter in September, I will be encouraging existing and new Parents/ Carers to join our PFA and help us to achieve this.





Sibling photographs

We were unaware that the policy of the School Photography Company that we used this term, did not include sibling photos– due to Covid. I took the opportunity to take some myself, though these will not be of the same quality! If you are happy to receive sibling photographs via email, please email the school office and we will reply with photographs as an attachment.

Reminders

In the last newsletter we asked that all children have a named sunhat that they keep on their peg at school. We have found that some children prefer to bring a hat to school each day, this is not a problem as long as each child has a hat in school every day. We also ask that you apply long lasting sun cream at home. If your child needs 'topping up', staff can supervise the younger children applying it themselves. In these cases, your child will need a named bottle of sun cream that remains at school for the Summer term. We put these measures in place to ensure that children can enjoy playtimes and outdoor activities safely without the risk of getting sunburnt.



As I write this, Ivy's current take on life is evidenced below– it is indeed a dog's life! Ivy turned one in May and we are all so pleased with how she settled into life as a school dog during her first year. As a young puppy, she was just so excited about life and everything in it! Whilst she is a lovely calm dog now, she is still a puppy, with Labradors not expected to reach full maturity until between the ages of two and four.

The children at school have been fantastic with Ivy, in helping to train her and in understanding the rules around how we teach her to be a good school dog. She listens to them and from an early age she would sit when the children came near her– knowing this was the right behaviour to offer.

Ivy continues to attend training which will go on for many years, addressing not just obedience but more specialist training. We are grateful to our school community for continuing to love and support Ivy. Whilst it's difficult to ignore her, your patience is appreciated and we'd like to thank you for ensuring siblings on the playground, at the end of the day, also give Ivy the space that the children do so well in school.

I am preparing a page on our website with more information about our fantastic school dog and her role and development at school. I will let you know when this goes live.



Important Dates to Remember for the Summer Term

Remember you can keep an eye on the calendar on our school website by just googling it from your mobile phone– you don't need to log in to do this. Texts are sometimes sent out as a helpful reminder.

- Wednesday 30th June 2021– EYFS (new Reception Starters) Welcome Event 3.30-4.30pm (format to be decided and communicated to families)
- Wednesday 7th July 2021– 'Move up afternoon'
- Wednesday 7th July 2021– End of Year Reports go home
- Tuesday 13th July 2021- Sports Day (in class bubbles, to be photographed and recorded).
- Monday 12th– Thursday 15th July 2021– Parent/ Carer Consultations (further information to follow).
- Friday 16th July 2021– Chestnut Class Leavers Celebrations (to be photographed/ recorded).
- Tuesday 20th July 2021– Reserve Sports Day (if weather postpones original date)
- Friday 23rd July 2021– Last day of term

Slindon Church of England Primary School Facebook Page



We are using the facebook page this year to give parents/carers another way of seeing what's happening in school. The page won't be used to answer questions or communicate events so please continue to look at the newsletters, our calendar on the school website or call the school office if you have any queries.

Not sure what's going on at school?

Keep an eye on our school website, including the school calendar where you can find all the information you need.

www.slindonprimary.co.uk

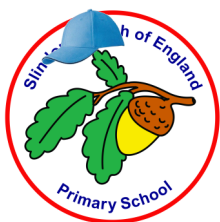


Please note that we are now strictly a 'no nut' school. Please ensure that the food you send into school for your child has no traces of nut products.

A letter will be sent out separately with further details about our nut free policy.



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CHURCH OF
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Please remember to contact the school immediately if your child or a member of your household develops Coronavirus symptoms. We can help direct you or advise on the appropriate procedures. We also have a number of testing kits here at school, should you not be able to access a test quickly.

