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The end of the 2019/20 academic year

Dear Parents/ Carers,

13th July 2020

It is with somewhat of a heavy heart that we have come to the end of the academic year with so many of our children having had to continue to stay at home. It's hard to imagine a time when we would have to comprehend such a long period away from school. But we are thankful that as a school, we have been able to stay open throughout this time and accommodate all of the children of keyworkers, children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6. We are also incredibly thankful that our school community is safe and well.

Today we have posted or sent home **End of Year reports** for all children. In normal circumstances there would be an opportunity for you to come in and speak with your child's teacher. Please read the covering letter with the report and as always, get in touch if you have any questions or concerns.

The last month has been incredibly busy, completing statutory procedures and catching up with necessary multi-agency work. The government guidance for opening schools in September has been published and we await further guidance from the local authority this week. Therefore, this year I will write a detailed Newsletter in August, once I have received all the necessary information to inform my decision-making in planning to best meet the needs of our school, for September. However, I recognise that you will be keen to know as much as possible about the new academic year and so I can outline some information for you below.

First day back to school in September 2020

The first day back in September, for children in Years 1-6 will be Friday 4th September. **On this day only**, we will ask children in Catkin Class to arrive at 9am, Acorn Class at 9.15 and Chestnut Class at 9.30. Siblings can of course arrive at the same time (on any class' start time). This allows us time with each class to show them necessary handwashing routines. Further details on this will be provided in the August Newsletter.

Anxiety about returning to school

We understand that some children/ families may experience feelings of anxiety after such a long time away from school. Be assured that mental health and well-being is the focus of all of our actions and curriculum planning for the start of the academic year, in particular. I welcome a conversation with parents/ carers before your child/children's return, for any children feeling nervous about returning to school. We will then make a plan for a smooth transition back to school. If I haven't already spoken to you and you are keen to talk to me, please let me know by calling the school or emailing office@slindonprimary.co.uk

Staggered start times

For next year, we will stagger the start of the day to ease the number of families needing to stand together. We will introduce a 'soft start', where children in Chestnut Class can enter the school through The Glade door and settle at their class seat anytime from 8.40am. Children in Acorn Class can enter the school via the front door and settle in their class seat from 8.45am. Children in Catkin Class will enter their class via the playground door anytime from 8.50am. Only parents/carers of children in Catkin Class may accompany their children onto the playground.

End of the day routines are still being considered. Final details for the beginning and end of the school day will be in the August Newsletter

After school clubs

We hope to resume as much normality as possible in September. We are keen to have after school clubs but will need to consider how we may have to adapt our normal practices in line with government guidance. Further details of after school clubs will be in the August Newsletter.

Recruitment

This half term we recruited a number of new members of staff who will be joining us in September. Mrs Emma Merrett will be joining Mrs Mayne as a Teaching Assistant, alongside teachers Mrs Souadi and Mrs Willis, in Catkin Class. Mr Joe Coyle will be working in Acorn Class as a Teaching Assistant. Mr Coyle will be working across the school and supporting us in the teaching of PE and outdoor learning opportunities. Mrs Eileen Opie will be joining us for 1.5 days per week as our Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO).

We are pleased that Rob Mayne will continue working with us from September, every Friday morning with Miss Heater and the children in Acorn Class. Rob worked with us the year before last through the SkillsForce charity and the Prince William Award.

Lastly we say goodbye to our most wonderful Year 6 children this week. They, like many, are unable to have had their usual celebrations and assemblies. But they are grateful, as are we, that they have been able to spend the last five weeks at school with us. The children have plans for their last day which of course will involve the time-honoured tradition of ringing the bell before they leave. All of our Year 6 children will be an asset to their new schools and we all wish them every success. We love them very much and expect them to come back and see us! We also send our best to the families of our Year 6 leavers- we will miss you as much as them!

This Friday (17th July 2020) is the last day of school for the children. The staff have an INSET day on Monday 20th July and after this I will be away from the school and emails for two weeks. I will send out an August Newsletter, via email, around the middle of August. Thank you for all your support and patience this year, for helping us by reading and keeping up-to-date with the information that we send out and for all of your kind words during this challenging time.

We are looking forward to an exciting new year and until then, stay safe and well and enjoy the summer holidays.

Best wishes,

Lucy Cooper
(Headteacher)