

Slindon Church of England Primary School

September 2021



Dear Parents/ Carers

Welcome to a new and exciting academic year at Slindon Church of England Primary School! I can't tell you how good the normality feels, to see all of our children again and to see our playground full of families at the beginning and end of each day. I find it hard to comprehend that we have known some of our Parents and Carers for a whole year but only ever seen half of your faces! It is a genuine pleasure to see you all and to welcome many new families. We look forward to welcoming all of our Reception children and their families this week.

This newsletter is rather lengthy but please take time to read it all. After such a challenging and disrupted year last year, there seems much to tell you as we return to routines that were in place, after what seems like a long time ago. Whilst we have removed the class 'bubbles', many of our Covid measures remain, such as hand-washing, additional cleaning and ventilation. Please don't send your child to school if they show symptoms and continue to communicate with us if you have any questions or concerns.

The children are excited to be able to hold lots of roles of responsibility again this year. We are setting up school council, a group for helping to maintain our school grounds (horticultural heroes!), an animal welfare committee who will ensure that Ivy and all the other animals in our grounds are well looked after, and perhaps even some ambassadors for equality. Each group will introduce and write more about themselves in the next newsletter. We are also asking for your help this year– more information on pages 4 and 5. It's going to be such a positive and exciting year; the perfect time to get involved!

Lucy Cooper

(Headteacher)



Our school routine



We have three classes at Slindon Church of England Primary School. Catkin Class is for children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, though this year our Reception children are registered separately and have their own dedicated teacher. The Reception Children, or Squirrels, have an additional space but are very much still part of Catkin Class and will continue to utilise all of the Catkin Class area. Acorn Class is for children in Years 3 and 4 and Chestnut Class is Years 5 and 6. Children in Early Years (Reception) and Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) are in Catkin Class, and children in Key Stage 2 (Years 3-6) are in Acorn and Chestnut Class. We have an additional space in our school called The Glade, which we use for small group work and meetings. This is where we used to hold Collective Worship but we no longer all fit in!

Our morning routine

The morning routine begins when the playground gate opens at 8.45am. Staff are supervising on the playground from this time and we ask that you stay with your children until the bell is rung at 8.55am when the children line up and are led into their class.

If you need to pass on some information quickly to your child's teacher, please do, but be mindful that our focus is on getting the children into school safely and settled in the mornings. We ask that lengthier conversations are saved until the end of the day.

Morning break is at 10.20am. Children in Years 1-6 play together on the main playground or the field, Children in Reception play in their own outdoor area until the Summer Term.

During the morning, on most days, the class timetables across the school focus on English and Maths related activities, including Phonics for the younger children.

Lunch time

Lunch break is from 12.00pm until 1.00pm and each class eats their lunch in their classroom with their friends. School dinners are served by our wonderful Katie, and delivered to the children's seats by our Teaching Assistants (we have kept this system that we adapted due to Covid, as it makes for a smooth and calm lunchtime). Catkin Class eat from 12-12.30pm and then go out to play when they are ready. Acorn and Chestnut Classes go out to play first and then eat lunch from 12.30-1.00pm.

All of the children in Catkin Class are entitled to a free school meal at lunchtime. Children in Years 3-6 may be entitled to a free school meal (more information about this on page 6) or this can be ordered and paid for by Parents/ Carers. Further information about ordering school meals for your child/ children can be found on our website in the 'Parent' tab under 'Chartwells School Lunches'.

We encourage packed lunch boxes to be healthy and would prefer that children do not have chocolate at school. We have a no nut policy and many varieties of chocolate contain nut traces. We therefore also ask that no nuts are brought into school. We ask that sweets are saved until the end of the day.

Our afternoon routine

Learning in the afternoon begins with either Collective Worship or class assembly at 1.00pm. After this, on most days, children participate in learning across all other areas of the curriculum.

End of the day routine

Children in Catkin Class finish school at 3.10pm. Children in Acorn and Chestnut Class finish at 3.15pm. Please do come through the gate a few minutes before the end of the day. If you would like to speak with your child's teacher, please wait until all children have safely been seen to their parents.



PE (Physical Education)

All of our classes have PE on a Tuesday and so we ask that all children come to school in weather appropriate PE kits. This is another routine that we have decided to keep, having adopted it due to Covid, as it saves a great deal of time and space. From September until the October half-term, we have PE outdoors on our playground and field. After the October half-term holiday until the February half-term holiday we have PE in Coronation Hall. After the February half-term holiday until the end of the academic year, we return to having PE on our playground and field again. Please keep an eye out on the weather forecast on Tuesdays; on colder days the children will need navy jogging bottoms and on warmer days their PE shorts. They should wear their PE shirt and school jumper and of course all items should be named clearly.

Collective Worship

Every Monday and Friday we come together for Collective Worship as a whole school, in Coronation Hall from 1.00-1.30pm. Each Monday, Miss Cooper leads the theme of collective worship for the week which is continued during class assemblies on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday, we celebrate the week's achievements. One of the Class assemblies throughout the week will focus on current affairs or a theme relevant to each particular class.

Forest School

Forest School will begin once all the permission forms have been returned, before the end of September. We will let you know a week before we are ready to go and for most classes, we will need parent helpers to enable Forest School to go ahead. In order for us to continue to access the forest in the grounds next door to us, we need help from our Parents/Carers to accompany us. We need to complete a risk assessment for each visit, one week before we go, and therefore we need to know which adults are accompanying us one week in advance. We also need volunteers to stay with us for the whole time we are there, to ensure that we adhere to the required adult:child ratios. We also prefer to do an enhanced DBS for all adults who regularly help us at school.

We are planning to continue to take Catkin Class children into the Forest on a Thursday morning. Acorn Class plan to access the Forest on a Thursday afternoon and Chestnut Class on a Friday afternoon. Children will need to be wearing long sleeved tops and full trousers.

Swimming

Before the Coronavirus Pandemic we took the whole school swimming to Felpham Leisure Centre. The unpredictability of the virus and changes required led us to decide not to continue with that routine for this year. Instead, we are liaising with Slindon College who have very kindly said we may access their pool during the Summer Term. Further information to be sent during the Spring Term.

After School Clubs

After the October half term holiday, after school clubs will run from the first week of the half term. No clubs run in the last week of the half term, to allow staff to meet together and discuss children's progress over the half term, or during the week of Parent/Carer consultations. In September, teachers require a little more time to settle the children in to the academic year and so clubs this half-term will run from the week beginning Monday 20th September. Club letters will be sent home this week, please return permission slips promptly for a place in your child's preferred after school club.

After school clubs are for children in Years 1-6. All clubs will finish at 4pm.

FUNDRAISING



This is my fifth year at Slindon Church of England Primary School and never have I embarked on such a drive to raise money for our school. But this year I unapologetically do so and would like to share with you why that is. But of course I know that many families have been affected in so many ways by the Coronavirus Pandemic, including experiencing financial hardship. So please know that there is never any expectation for you to help us personally, we will continue to support families in any way we can.

Funding for small schools is challenging at all times, for many reasons. We have lost opportunities to raise money due to the pandemic and we have grown considerably over the past year. Our funding is based on the pupil numbers in the October 2020 census, we now have twenty more children but no additional funding— that's nearly a whole class! So our budget is incredibly tight until the end of the financial year.

Research has shown that it is the youngest children that have been most affected by the disruption to learning caused by the pandemic, as they do not have the firm foundations to their learning that the older children do. This is why we chose to invest in a dedicated teacher for Reception, which also allows Mrs Willis and Mrs Souadi to focus on supporting the Year 1 and 2 children.

This means that our budget is stretched this year and we need your support to raise money to help us buy extra resources that we would love to have for the children. As part of our wider fundraising plan, we continue to raise money for an outdoor classroom, to facilitate for Learning Outside the Classroom which is at the core of our curriculum.

Before the end of this half term each class will have made a 'Class Wish list'; I will write more about this when they are ready. Many schools have been doing this for a long time and whilst I have always felt a little uncomfortable about it, if there was ever a time to do it, I feel that this is the year. Again, there is no expectation for our families to purchase from the wish lists if you are unable to, but perhaps you can help by joining our PFA (Parent and Friends Association) and offer time, planning or organizational support throughout the year. More details about re-launching our PFA are on page 5.



We have vacancies within our friendly and dedicated Governing Body, who together, provide strategic leadership and accountability in our school. Our Governing Body has three key functions:

1. To oversee the financial performance of the school and make sure its money is well spent.
2. To hold the Headteacher to account for the educational performance of the school and its pupils.
3. To ensure clarity of vision, ethos and strategic direction.

Being a school governor is a challenging but hugely rewarding role. It will give you the chance to make a real difference to our children, give something back to your local community and use and develop your skills in a board-level environment.

We have six meetings in the calendar for this year, with the first being on Thursday 14th October 2021. If you are interested in joining us, please let us know via the office by popping in, emailing office@slindonprimary.co.uk or speaking to Miss Cooper on the playground. We will put you in touch with Phil Johnson, our Chair of Governors, for an informal chat and to learn more about this fantastic opportunity! We are keen to hear from you as soon as possible!

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Parents and Friends Association (PFA) Relaunch

This year we want to relaunch our PFA to continue the great work that was achieved by members of our school community before the Coronavirus Pandemic. Can you help us be part of the group that makes such a positive difference to our children? If

so, we'd really like to hear from you! We need a group of Parents/ Carers and Friends to plan, organise and give support to events throughout the year to raise funds for our school. Plans for this year could include:

- * Pumpkin Competition
- * Christmas Fayre
- * Easter Bonnet Competition
- * May Festival
- * Film Nights
- * 'The Great British Fete Off'
- * Leavers Celebrations

Please contact the school office by popping in, calling or emailing to express your interest so that we can arrange the first PFA meeting of the year!





Parking

We would gratefully appreciate it if Parents and Carers would try to avoid parking in Meadsway and instead, park along Reynolds Lane where there is usually space (do ask if you are unsure of which is which). At times, access in and out of our neighbours homes has been compromised. The Coronation Hall Committee kindly allow us to park sensibly in Coronation Hall at drop off and pick up times. As a community who support our school, in return we always want to show respect and consideration for our neighbours in this beautiful village.

Please also never park somewhere that would limit the visibility of other drivers and pedestrians and continue to drive slowly and patiently around our school to keep us all safe.



Eligibility for Free School Meals

In the next week, a form will be sent home to all families to complete if you think you might be eligible for Free School Meals. Whilst all children receive Infant Free School Meals in Reception, Year 1 and 2, please don't wait until your child is in Year 3 to complete this form, as this affects our school funding.

Your child may be able to get free school meals if you get any of the following:

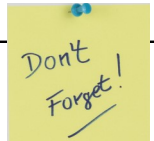
- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual 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)

Ivy, our school dog, has made us proud over the last couple of weeks as she continues to get used to new routines again, as well as recover from her spay. We are grateful that you continue to ignore her, I know it's very difficult! Ivy is very young and needs to learn to be calm at all times around the school. Being a school dog is very different to being a family dog, and her training will continue over the next couple of years. Though Ivy is big, she is very much still a puppy as Labradors don't mature until between two and four years old. Our children will write more about how Ivy is doing, in our next newsletter.

Important Dates to Remember for the Autumn Term 2

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.

- Thursday 16th September 2021– Jeans for Genes Day– Wear Jeans for a donation of £1
- Thursday 23rd September 2021– Chestnut Class visit to Arundel WWT Wetland Centre (see separate letter to be sent out).
- Week beginning Monday 18th October 2021– Parent/ Carer Consultations (see separate information to be sent out).
- Monday 25th– Friday 29th October 2021– Half Term Holiday



A few gentle reminders.....

- Make sure your child's name is on all their items of clothing. We can only return lost items to you if they are named. Please also check your child has brought their own items home each day.
- Bookbags of children in Catkin Class should be brought into school every Tuesday and Friday.
- Bookbags for children in Acorn and Chestnut Class should be brought into school each day.
- Please ensure your child completes their daily home learning expectations.

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



**SLINDON
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Slindon Church of England Primary School Facebook Page



We enjoy sharing what's going on in school for our families and for potential families who are looking at our 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.

