

Slindon Church of England Primary School

Newsletter Summer 1– April 2018



Here comes the sun!



What a beautiful welcome back to school the weather has given us, for the first week of the Summer term. It has felt like a long winter so it was wonderful to feel the sun on our faces as we played on the freshly cut grass on the field this week. It is a reminder of how lucky we are here at Slindon Church of England Primary School and reinforces our vision of making the most of our beautiful surroundings and taking every opportunity to learn outside of the classroom.

You will have noticed the transformation of our nature garden in the weeks leading up to and over the Easter holidays. There are some fantastic photos of the journey to making it a wonderful place for the children to enjoy in the 'News' section of the website. The children themselves did a fantastic job of clearing some of the overgrown areas and we thank Mark and Rebecca Ford for working with us to deliver an exciting design brief resulting in the beautiful willow structures. I thank all the parents and staff who have volunteered in our two 'grounds working parties' this year and particular thanks to John Tizzard who really initiated these exciting changes when he cleared the area right back at the beginning of the year. It was like the unveiling of the secret garden and what a transformation he started!

In the same theme, I am delighted that we will once again be starting 'forest school' this term. More information about this inside the newsletter but our vision moving forward is to access not only our on-site forest school area, but to use the woodland next door every week throughout the year. We want to be more than a forest school, to use our unique and beautiful surroundings to the best advantage, inspiring our love for learning.

Finally, one of a number of changes to inform you of in this newsletter is an invitation to 'stay and play' on a Friday afternoon after school. As we cross our fingers that this weather continues, you are welcome to stay and supervise your children as they play on the field and make the most of the grounds as you chat and relax on the benches. I look forward to seeing you there!

Lucy Cooper

(Headteacher)

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

This term I would like the opportunity to share with you our vision for the school as we move into the final term of the first year under new leadership. We feel that our school is unique and we are building our ethos based around the following 4 principles:

1. Our 'Enabling' Environment

Our small school is situated in beautiful surroundings of a National Trust village. We want to make the most of learning outside of the classroom not only for the many benefits for our learning, but also for our mental health which of course supports our learning inside of the classroom. When showing visitors around the school they always use the word 'calm' to describe our school, which is testament to the learning environment that has been created and evident in the behaviour for learning throughout the school.

2. Positive Relationships

Our small size enables us to know and look after each other well, resulting in the positive relationships throughout the school. How the older children look after and support the younger children at break and lunchtimes is not something that is seen in every school.

3. The unique child

We recognise that all children are unique. Our small size and positive relationships enable us to really get to know each child. We want to offer every opportunity to enable children to excel in areas they feel they have particular strength or talent in and support them in being resilient, confident and capable learners

in all that they do.

4. Learning and Development

We recognise that children embrace learning in different ways and at different rates. But we also recognise that our job is to support that learning, understanding where children are in their learning and facilitating progress. We feel that the best way to approach learning is to teach differently, moving away from the traditional model of teaching. We have spent time in class over the last two terms encouraging children to become active learners, persevering and giving 100% during lesson time.

I would like to arrange a meeting during the Summer Term to show you what this looks like in practice but I have been concerned with the low numbers of attendance to the meetings we have arranged so far this year– the KS1 and KS2 SATS Meetings and the Parent Information Meeting last term.

I would particularly appreciate your feedback with regard to the timing of meetings we hold. The Parent Information Meeting was offered for 3 separate sessions and I always try to keep these meetings as quick and informative as possible.

So for this reason, today we have sent home a paper copy of the Parent View Questionnaire. I would greatly appreciate your feedback so that we can move forward working in partnership with you.

For us to realise our vision for the school, we need your support and engagement.

NEWS FROM THE GOVERNING BOARD

Membership of the Governing Board

I am delighted to let you know that in the recent Parent Governor Election James Bonney was the successful candidate. The Governing Body has since met and considered in addition a vacancy that had arisen following the resignation of Glen Hampshire who had been a Governor at our school for many years both as a Parent Governor and also as a Co-opted Governor. They decided to approach Alec Horley to see if he was willing to serve as a Governor of the school in the capacity of a Co-opted Governor and he has accepted. There will therefore , together with Amy Kingston, be 3 parents sitting on the Governing Body of the school. This is excellent as parental involvement and engagement in the school's mission and our efforts on behalf of all of our pupils is vital and we always wish to work closely with our parents and carers.

In addition to the appointments, above during this year, Sarah Caffyn has been appointed as a Co-opted Governor, Emer Cloke has become a Foundation Governor of the school, following the retirement in this role of Ros Thornley, and Phil Johnson has been appointed as our Local Authority Governor. Rebecca Ford is also now an Associate Governor and it is wonderful to have a governor that lives in the village to enable us to strengthen our links with the local community. We thank all who have and are currently prepared to give their time and experience to assist in the governance of our school.

STAFFING NEWS

Last term we appointed a new permanent class teacher for Acorn Class. Miss Rachel Attwood will be joining us in September and we are delighted to have found such an outstanding teacher to join our wonderful team. Rachel will be in her fourth year of teaching and is looking forward to meeting the children during the transition arrangements at the end of the summer term. We are grateful to Amanda Bonney for stepping in to teach Acorns since Spring term 2. I am thrilled at how the children in Acorns have responded to the changes and in awe of the magic Mrs Bonney is spreading– do have a look at the writing on display in Acorn class– phenomenal!

You will have seen Jon Martin around the school since his permanent appointment as Premises Manager last term. I cannot convey enough the positive difference Jon makes to the school. I feel blessed to work amongst such a dedicated and hard-working staff throughout the school.

Stay and Play

This term we would like to change our routine at the end of the day. We would like to ask that children are collected from the playground from Monday 23rd April. This allows parents and carers to spend more time together at the end of the day and build a sense of community, enabling parents to further get to know each other. In addition to this we invite you to stay and play on a Friday after school until around 4.30pm. Feel free to use the benches to sit and chat with friends. We just ask that the children are supervised by yourselves and that normal playground rules apply to the children.

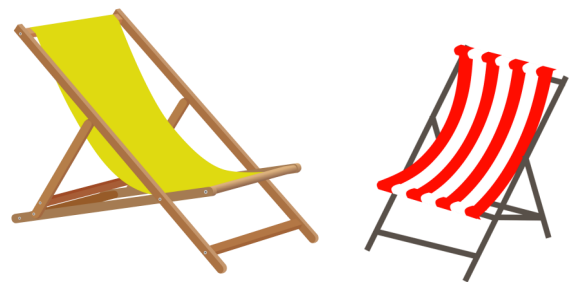
Wellies!



As we begin our new journey of accessing the forest and the school grounds throughout the year we'd like to ask for your support by donating outgrown Wellington boots. We are planning to use money from our Primary PE and Sports Premium to purchase outdoor clothing for all of the children in the school—waterproof trousers and jackets.

Please send in any Wellies that your child has grown out of, so that we can have a pair in school for the children to use throughout the year. Please send any you have in a plastic bag labelled 'donation'.

In the meantime, we will inform you in advance when your child will be participating in Forest School this term so that you are able to ensure that they come fully equipped with Wellies and long trousers.



Attendance

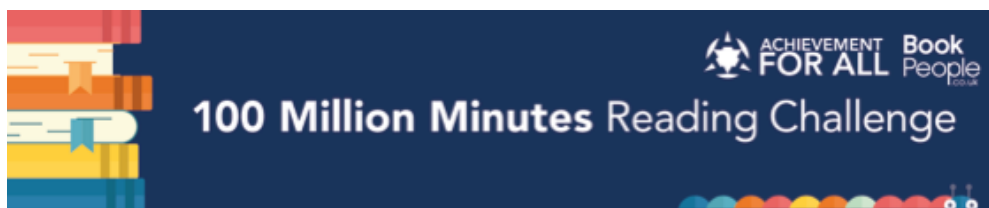
This term I will be asking to meet with the parents/carers of any children where attendance is significantly below the national average to see how we can work together to improve attendance.

I cannot authorise holidays during term time but I appreciate parents and carers meeting with me to discuss where there are exceptional circumstances.

I am confident that our attendance will continue to rise but where necessary, I will need to liaise with the Pupil Entitlement team. Many schools do this as a matter of course and families can face Fixed Penalty Notices (fines) and prosecution for persistent absence from school.

For more information, please visit

<https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/education-children-and-families/schools-and-colleges/school-attendance-and-behaviour/school-attendance-and-behaviour/school-attendance-and-behaviour/school-attendance-and-behaviour>



Last term we completed our 100 Million minutes reading challenge and were thrilled to have been able to contribute a collective 10,000 minutes! Thank you to those of you who contributed by sending in a log of how many minutes were read at home. We received just 4 photos of the children reading at home—not quite enough for the display we had in mind but it has prompted us to think about how we communicate how often and how varied a range of books are being shared at both home and school. Next half term we will re-launch a reading journal to support this communication. Further information will be shared in the Summer 2 newsletter.



17-23 March

Sports Relief week photos are now on the website under the 'News' section. It was fantastic to have a week 'off timetable' and embrace being active for such a great cause. All of our learning was linked to health, sports, getting fit and developing our skills. If you have any money raised that you would like to add to our school collection, then please send it

into school **next week**. We will send it off collectively and let you know how much money we raised. We thank all the fantastic experts who came in and helped make the week such a success!

I (Miss Cooper) was so inspired that I have signed up for the Arundel 10K on Sunday 26th August! I have never run a 10K before but I was so inspired by Charlie Manhire in Catkins Class and his Daddy's run, that I wanted to challenge myself to do something similar. I will be raising money for a charity and will let you know more details in the Summer 2 Newsletter.

DATES TO REMEMBER THIS TERM...

WB 23.04.18- After school clubs begin.
(There are no clubs during the last week of each half term).

01.05.18

Catkins Class to Westgate Leisure Centre for Huff and Puff programme

03.05.18

PFA Meeting in the Glade from 3pm

14-17.05.18

KS2 SATS take place

WB 21.05.18

KS1 SATS take place

PFA NEWS

Along with this newsletter, a letter will be sent home today outlining the funding crisis that schools are facing– particularly in West Sussex and particularly for small schools like ourselves.

For us, having a Parent and Friend Association (PFA) is crucial in raising money for the school and allowing us to have what is increasingly becoming essentials for the school.

Recently, money raised by the PFA was spent on a new 'CleverTouch' Interactive screen for Chestnut Class. Mrs Tully was struggling to teach whole class sessions due to the outdated Smartboard and projector that she was having to use. She is thrilled with the difference that the new technology has made to her everyday teaching.

To allow us to continue to raise money for the school, we desperately need more help on the PFA.

We would like to hold a Summer Fayre towards the end of the term but can only do this if we have a commitment of help from friends and parents.

The ideas are in place but we cannot go ahead unless we know that we have the support, both in the run up and on the day.

If you are interested in helping our Summer Fayre vision become a reality, we are holding a meeting on Thursday 3rd May at 3pm in the Glade. If you cannot attend but would like to commit to helping, please email me before the PFA meeting directly at head@slindonprimary.co.uk

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Headteacher: Miss Lucy Cooper

Our website address has changed to:

www.slindonprimary.co.uk

Please also note that our email addresses changed at the beginning of the year. If you are still using the old email addresses, they have been automatically forwarded to the new ones but this will not continue for much longer. The office email is:

office@slindonprimary.co.uk