

Dear Parents

7<sup>th</sup> September 2018

The staff and I were pleased to welcome your children back to school this week, after what I hope has been a relaxing and enjoyable Summer break for you all. We hope that the academic year ahead will be a happy and successful one for your children.

### **New Staff**

This week we welcomed new staff to Shepherd Primary School:



- Mrs Luts, Reception
- Miss Zanotto, Year 2
- Miss Douglas, Year 3
- Mr Vickers, Year 5
- Mrs Bates, covering time when teachers are out of class
- Mrs Arnold, Year 4 Higher Level Teaching Assistant
- Mrs Berry, Year 4 Assistant Teacher

### **Congratulations Mrs McGrath!**

Very many congratulations to Miss Blake who got married during the summer holidays! Her new name is Mrs McGrath.



### **Shepherd Babies!**

I am so excited to announce that Mrs Jull is expecting her first baby, due early in the Spring term and that Mrs McGrath is expecting her second child, a brother or sister to Dominic, due towards the end of this term. We are absolutely thrilled for both of them!

### **Attendance**

The school's attendance data is regularly scrutinised by the Local Authority and Ofsted and is one of the factors by which they measure the success of the school. Last academic year the school's overall attendance was 95.8%, below the expected level – this was because of the large number of families taking unauthorised holiday during term time. Term time holidays will not be authorised. Children attending Shepherd Primary School should attend school regularly - we see this as being at least 97% of the time.

The academic progress of a child, whatever his/her level of academic ability, will be adversely affected if they miss school. Obviously if a child is unwell then they should not come to school, but if they have other time off school, then this will have a detrimental effect on their progress. Children can also sometimes be quite unsettled upon their return to school after any time off. For these reasons, taking holidays or days off in school time is not permitted.

Please be aware that if your child has 15 or more missed sessions, which are unauthorised absences, you are at risk of being in breach of 'The Education (Penalty Notices) 2007 Regulations' which then gives the Local Authority the power to issue a Penalty Notice (fine) to parents. Last academic year, 14 parents were fined for taking their children on holiday during term time.

I appreciate your support in respecting and adhering to the school's policy on attendance.

### **Parents' Meetings with the Class Teachers**

Thank you to all those parents who have attended Meet the Teacher meetings this week. Powerpoint presentations from these meetings will be posted on the school website, for those parents unable to attend the meetings.



## **Curriculum Newsletters**

Curriculum Newsletters for each class were shared with parents at Meet the Teacher meetings. If you were unable to attend the meeting, a copy of the Newsletter will be sent home with your child. Copies will also be available on the school website.

## **School start times**

Please note that school starts at 8.50am for Key Stage 1 and 2 children and 8.55am for Early Years children. Please ensure that your child is in the playground at this time, allowing sufficient time for your journey to school, so that a prompt start can be made. Children should not arrive at school before 8.30am. Early Years and Key Stage 1 children must always be accompanied by a parent/carer, but Key Stage 2 children may wait unaccompanied on the playground – please note that school staff will not always be present on the playground before school. If it is a rainy day, then class teachers will endeavour to open the doors at 8.40am.



## **Child Drop Off and Collection Policy**

Accompanying this letter is our new Child Drop Off and Collection Policy – please take a few moments to read it through. If you are wanting to give permission for your child to walk home alone after school or clubs, you will need to complete the slip and return it to the school office.



## **Nut-Free**

A reminder that we are a nut-free school, as we have a number of children that have serious allergies to nuts. Please make sure that your child's packed lunch does not contain any nuts, or items with nuts in.

## **Parking**

Accompanying this letter is the PSPO (Public Space Protection Order) flyer that Three Rivers sent out during the summer term, outlining the parking restrictions around the school. Please also remember that parents should not park in the school car park or drive into the car park at the beginning or end of the school day to drop off or pick up children.



## **Sickness**

If your child is unwell please always inform the school office by 9am. We do ask that, if a child has been physically sick or had diarrhoea, he/she be kept at home for a period of 48 hours, to prevent the spreading of infections.



Mrs Haxton, our school secretary, will contact the parents of any children who have not attended school and for whom we have not been notified of their absence, soon after 9am. Therefore, please let the office staff know of any absence before 9 am to save Mrs Haxton from having to make a call.

## **Water bottles**

Please ensure your child has a clearly named water bottle in school each day – water bottles must only be filled with water.

## **Payment for school trips**

During the course of the year your child's class teacher will be organising various class trips for the children, relating to areas of learning being covered in class. Trips are very beneficial and enjoyable occasions. These trips are dependent on voluntary contributions being paid by parents in order to fund them. (The school does not seek to make a 'profit' from the trips.) However, I appreciate that, on certain occasions, some parents may find difficulty in paying the full amount for a trip. If this is the case, then please feel free to discuss the matter with me, in confidence, prior to the trip taking place.

## **Year 6 secondary transfer**

A reminder to Year 6 parents that the online secondary transfer application process is now open, and will remain open until 31<sup>st</sup> October 2018. Please apply online at:

<https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/actweb/education/Admissions/startpage.cfm>

## **GDPR Privacy Notices**

The new Parent and Pupil Privacy Notices are available on our website, in the Non Curriculum Policies page.

## **Parental Concerns**

Our Leadership Team consists of the following people:

- Headteacher: Mrs Foad
- Deputy Head: Miss Whiteman
- Inclusion Manager: Mrs Freuchen
- Early Years Leader: Mrs Luts
- Key Stage 1 Leader: Mr Charter
- Lower Key Stage 2 Leader: Mrs Bryson
- Upper Key Stage 2 Leader: Mr Turton

As I hope you are aware, we very much encourage an open door policy at the school. If you have any queries or concerns during the course of the year then we encourage parents to talk to their child's class teacher in the first instance, or your child's Key Stage Leader. If your concerns still remain, then please do make an appointment to talk to me. It is usually more convenient to meet with the teachers after school, rather than just before school. I will be on the playground at the beginning of the day and I look forward to seeing many of you then.

Finally, the staff and I very much look forward to working in partnership with you this year. We hope that your child makes good academic progress, develops his/her social skills and, most importantly, enjoys their time at school.

Yours sincerely

Mrs Claire Foad  
Headteacher