



Archbishop Courtenay
Church of England
Primary School

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Headteacher: Mrs S Heather
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Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome Back to Term 1.

It was wonderful to welcome all the children back to school this week and to walk around the school and see them already so hard at work in their classrooms. We would like to also welcome all of our new staff and children who have started across the school this week – welcome to our school! The teachers are reporting a lot of happy children who are glad to be back in the classroom – and on Friday morning our attendance figures were 91%. Well done everyone, this is an excellent start, but it would be fantastic if we managed over 95% next week – will you please help us do this?

On the subject of attendance, this term is going to be extremely important for the children and teachers as we apply our 'recovery curriculum' to quickly catch the children up with their learning and move them forwards. Over the coming weeks, teachers will be doing mini assessments and quizzes with their classes on areas across the Maths and English curriculum, in order to identify gaps and weaknesses and address them with focussed teaching and intervention. Most of these quizzes will be informal, and the children will often not even realise that their knowledge is being tested. In fact, from Monday a good majority of the infant children in Year 1 & 2 will be tested on their phonics sound knowledge, ready for their first phonics lesson in their new group– we do not waste any time as wasted time is lost learning time. That is why we are so keen to ensure attendance levels rise next week within school as we want no child to be missing out on their education.

We are however disappointed in the number of requests that have already come in for September and October holidays within the school term. From 1st September 2013, Headteachers have been unable to agree leave of absence during term-time unless they are satisfied that there are exceptional circumstances. No holidays will therefore be authorised in term time for the reasons that I have outlined above: we need all children in school to assess and teach so that they catch up quickly or are pushed on in their learning. In term holidays are subject to a penalty notice: The power of the local authority issuing a Penalty Notice provides an alternative to the prosecution of parents under Section 444 of the Education Act 1996 and enables parents to discharge the potential liability for conviction for that offence by paying a penalty of £60 per parent, per child, if paid within 21 days or £120 per parent, per child, if paid within 28 days. Please also be aware that if you go abroad and government guidance changes (as it rapidly is at present) during your holiday, you may be required to self-quarantine on your return. That means an additional 14 days lost schooling for your child on top of the holiday.

If children are ill with the normal sniffles and colds, they are fine to attend school still – if we feel that they are unwell or if they become more unwell during the day, we will contact you and may send your child home. However, if your child has any of the symptoms of Covid-19 – a temperature, a persistent cough or a loss of taste and/or smell they should not attend school until a test has been arranged and the result received. For Covid related absences, their attendance record will not be affected.

Drop off and pick up went fairly smoothly this week, however we want to work with you so we will monitor and makes changes when necessary – thank you so much for your support and kind words. We are all in this together! Just a few reminders: park and walk where possible to avoid clogging up the roads around school and also only one adult to be on site please when dropping off and picking up to reduce the numbers of people in circulation. In order to make things run in the best way possible, we will be



reviewing the systems in place and we will make changes if we need to do so, so do check Facebook, your inboxes and text messages regularly for updates that we send out.

We are very excited about the term ahead, now that we have your children back in school. The staff have worked tirelessly over the summer to make sure the site is safe and the lessons are planned so that everyone can achieve their very best. We hope that the year is not disrupted as last year was, and we look forward to a successful year of learning ahead.

Best wishes



Sue Heather
Headteacher