

Transition Arrangements April 2016

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we enter the final term, I would like to share the transition arrangements for the new school year in September. Making sure that children are confident about moving to their new classes requires careful and detailed planning, which has already begun. At the start of a new school year, children have to cope with a physical move to a new part of the school and get to know different adults and children. This can cause anxiety and have a negative impact on how well they settle in. However, if children and parents are well-prepared this transition will be smooth.

On Wednesday 15th June, the children will be told which class they will be moving to. They will receive a letter from their new class teacher telling them a bit about themselves and what it will be like in the new class. This will be followed by **two transition days** in their new class: Monday 27th June and Monday 4th July. This is a change from last year and the extra time will help the children get to know their new teachers and become more familiar with the classroom and general areas. This should mean that when they return to school in September they feel confident about beginning the new year.

After school on Monday 4th July, parents and carers can come into school for our **Open Evening**, 3.30pm to 6.00pm. This is a chance to come and see children's work in their current classes **and** visit their new class and meet their new teacher.

As you are aware, in September we will have our first 3-Form entry year group in Reception of 90 children. The building project has been planned by Northampton County Council to ensure that we are ready by this time.

Therefore, our two-class year group model is changing to three classes. Our preferred plan will be to 'grow' a year at a time. However, as there is a shortage of school places in Northamptonshire and we have waiting lists in every year group, it is possible that the Local Authority may require us to add additional classes sooner than this. This could mean that we have uneven numbers in some year groups and in this event we will spread the children evenly over three classes; hopefully reducing the numbers in our currently large classes at the same time. **This is a factor in the decision to mix all year groups to form new classes each year.**

Mixing year groups contributes to children's personal, social and emotional development. They learn to cope with change and develop resilience when meeting new situations. It also increases the breadth of their social interactions as they learn and play with a larger group of children, developing relationships and communication skills.

This reorganisation of the classes ensures an equal balance of girls and boys, able and less able, and children with additional needs, including learning and behaviour. However, all classes in a

year group will follow the same curriculum and the teachers plan together to ensure that children have the same learning experience. Children will also be grouped together as a year group for some activities and areas of the curriculum.

We do think very carefully about how children are grouped and we always endeavour to place them in a supportive friendship group. However, this does not necessarily mean that a 'best' friend is the right child for them to be in class with – sometimes, the best friendships belong on the playground and not in lessons! However, the children will be asked to suggest a few friends that they would like to be with and we plan to make sure that everyone has at least one friend in the new class. When the children are told about their new classes, the letter will have the names of the children in their new class.

We hope that the transition will be a smooth one. The first two weeks of a new school year are very important. Teachers will be finding out all about the children - what they are like, what they are good at, what they need help with, how they learn best! Please do not book any holidays during this time as the children will be learning about their new routines, classroom rules and making friends. Children who miss this part of the term are sometimes not as confident as their peers and take longer to settle.

I hope that you have found this information helpful and that you will also be able to support your child with their school 'journey'.

Thank you for your continued support,

Debbie Bastin
Headteacher