



The Southwater Infant Academy

“Growing, Learning and Succeeding Together”

4th June 2020

Dear Parents, Carers and Friends of the Academy

What strange times, we didn't think we would be drafting our summer term newsletter whilst working on reopening some of the school during a worldwide pandemic!

Trustee News

Firstly, there have been some changes to the Trustee body structure, Katharine Davis has stepped down as Chair to focus on her busy job and family. We are pleased to say she will be remaining as a member of the trustee body so we can continue to benefit from her years of trustee experience. Andy Harker who was previously Vice Chair is now the Chair, again bringing many years of trustee experience as well as having had his own children attend the school. Andy will also continue to Chair our Finance committee. Clare Quinlisk will be taking the role of Vice Chair, and will also be continuing to Chair the Resources committee. Clare's daughter will be joining the academy in September, so you may well see her around as things return to normal.



Returning Plans

Whilst we do, as Trustees, usually try to be present at the academy, we are now supporting remotely to reduce the number of adults that children are mixing with during their school day. As most of you are aware, we have decided to focus on bringing our Reception children back first, as advised by the Government. At this stage, we feel it is better to have a single year group in, full time, to reduce the risk of spreading the virus. This means we can truly isolate each 'bubble' of children and the adults that will be working with them, and we can keep the groups to less than 15. At this time, we will also be closing on a Friday, with the exception of key worker children, to allow a deep clean of the academy and to provide our staff with planning and preparation time. Our focus at all times has been on the safety of our pupils and staff members, and we will continue to monitor and review as more information becomes available.

Things will be different for the children; they may not be with their usual class teacher, and will only be with some of their class mates. We are also aware that children may be feeling anxious, however all the teaching staff have been preparing to support them on their return. Should you feel it not the right time for your Reception child to return to school, this is absolutely fine and there will be no penalties for absence during this period. More information is available on our FAQ document, which is available on our website. If anything is not clear or your question is not covered, please do not hesitate to contact us: clerktogovs@southwaterinfants.co.uk. Parents need to be aware that, as an infant school, we will not be enforcing social distancing as we feel this could create more anxiety for our children. Instead, to mitigate and reduce the risk, we are encouraging frequent hand washing, regular cleaning of surfaces and having a weekly deep clean on a Friday.



Year 2 and New Joiners

During the latter half of the summer term, we would usually be focusing on our Year 2 children on transitioning up to The Junior Academy. These plans have had to change; however, we are in constant contact with the Juniors and will strive to get transition arrangements in place as soon as it is safe to do so. We would also normally be working with our new joiners to Reception, and again, we do have plans in place, however these are unlikely

to take place before September. Once we have confirmation that it is safe for us to do so, we will be inviting children in to meet their teachers and do some settling in sessions prior to them joining on a full-time basis. More communications will be following on things you can be doing at home in readiness for your child starting school in September, however we are well aware that many children have not had the opportunity to attend nurseries or pre-schools and we will adapt and work with you on ensuring they have a smooth start with us.

Mobile Classrooms

We mentioned in our last newsletter that we were working on replacing the old mobile classrooms that have now passed their useful service and are in desperate need of replacement. Despite some delays caused by the pandemic, we have had it confirmed via West Sussex County Council that these works are essential and will therefore be continuing to take place. Whilst we have been unable to get these finalised over the summer holidays as originally planned, we are delighted to be working towards opening the new classrooms after the October half term. This will mean there will be some disruption on site, however we are confident this is manageable and will be working with the contractors to ensure safety is the priority. The temporary disruption will be well worth it to have new, more economic and safe classrooms for our pupils.



Thank you!

Finally, we would like to pass our thanks to all our hard-working staff at the academy, who have been working tirelessly to provide both online support for our children at home and caring for our key worker children at school, including through the Easter and half term holidays. They have ensured that this difficult situation has been made as seamless as possible, as well as providing essential support to enable key workers to continue to do their valuable work. For children who are not able to return to the academy in June, our online support will continue, however response times may vary if teachers are working in the classrooms.

I hope everyone stays safe and is able to enjoy the lovely summer weather we have had recently. To get in touch with the trustees please contact our Clerk, Adele Jones clerktogovs@southwaterinfants.co.uk

Yours faithfully

Clare Quinlisk
Vice Chair of Trustees

