



The Southwater Infant Academy

“Growing, Learning and Succeeding Together”

11th September 2020

Dear Families,

A very warm welcome back to all our families at Southwater Infants, and a big welcome to all our new families. The children in all year groups have come into the academy full of enthusiasm and excitement, and the confidence shown by our new reception children on their very first day was wonderful to see. This is especially fantastic considering how long it has been since some children were able to attend school, and how different things are now when the children come in. The enthusiasm shown by the children demonstrates how well all our families have prepared their children for school, so we are very grateful for all you have done to support us with this.

Over the past few weeks the teachers have been planning some fantastic learning for the coming term, and we will be sharing more about this with you as the term goes on. For any families concerned about what children may have missed during lockdown, please do not worry. All teachers are talking to children and assessing where particular gaps may be, and we will ensure that these are addressed quickly so that children continue to make good progress going forwards.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind you that the leadership team at the academy are always happy to hear from any of our families about what is going well and how we could do better. Mrs Dilling and myself are happy to have a quick chat at the gate or to arrange a convenient time to meet, and we strongly believe that learning at the academy is a team effort. We rely very much on the support of all our families, and we aim to do the best we can for every one of our children. If we are doing something well or you feel there is something we could do better, please come and let us know. We try to be as approachable as we can!

We very much look forward to working with you all over the coming year, and we hope you enjoy sharing in your child's learning as they move through their new year group.

Covid-19

Hopefully all our families are aware of the guidance from the government about keeping safe and stopping the spread of the pandemic. There have been many changes over the past few months and it is easy to get confused about what we should and shouldn't be doing! For our families with children attending the academy, we need to remind you not to send your child to the academy if they are showing symptoms of Covid-19. These are:

- A new, persistent cough
- A high temperature
- A loss or change in sense of smell or taste

Please call the academy to inform us if your child has started to show one or more of these symptoms. We advise that you arrange a test as soon as possible for your child if this occurs so that your child can return to the academy if the result is negative and they are well enough.

Please also note that if one family member develops symptoms, the whole family **must isolate for 14 days**. If a member of your family starts to show one or more of these symptoms, please do not send your child to the academy and call or email to let us know that they are isolating. This is very important in helping to stop the spread of Covid-19.

Should a child develop symptoms while at the academy, we will call you and ask you to come and collect as soon as you can. While waiting, your child will wait in a separate room with an academy staff member. We

will advise that you arrange a test as soon as possible. It is important that you also arrange to pick up any children you have at other schools or nurseries, as all family members will need to isolate for 14 days.

Please know that we are very conscious that autumn and winter are key times for children to develop colds, sore throats and all sorts of bugs. Children with colds can still attend the academy if they are well enough - it is the specific symptoms listed above that are key indicators of a potential infection of Covid-19. We will not be isolating or sending home children unless they show one or more of these symptoms, or we believe they are not well enough to remain at school. We take advice from Public Health England at all times.

'Into year Group' Meetings for Parents

Obviously, under current guidance, we are unable to hold our usual meetings for families to share key information about what to expect over the coming year. The year groups teams are instead preparing presentations that will be shared with you online, and will ensure that you are provided with key information about teaching and learning at the academy. We will let you know when these presentations are available and where to find them.

Office

A reminder that the office is open from 8:30am – 4:30pm. At the moment we are experiencing lots of phone and email messages and will respond as soon as we possibly can, please bear with us and be assured we will get back to you.

Open Mornings

As with our Year Group meetings, we will be unable to hold open mornings as we have in the past. We do recognise how important it is for families to see the school and get a feel for how we teach and support the children however, so we will provide a virtual tour of the infant academy over the coming weeks to show families around and explain what we do. Should you, or anyone you know, wish to know more in the meantime, we still have our [video for new starters](#) on the website. This just gives a snapshot of the academy and the staff here, and there is lots of other information on the website that prospective parents can look through.

Harvest, Christmas

Some of our families have asked about Harvest and Christmas events. At this point in time we do not anticipate being able to hold Harvest Assemblies or Christmas Performances for families to come in and watch. We know this will be disappointing for many of our families, however the safety of the children, staff and families is our key priority. We are hoping to be able to prepare videos of Harvest and Christmas performances to share with families, but we will let you know more about this later in the term once the children have settled and we can check what the guidance at the time allows.

Parent Consultations

We have put Parent Consultations onto our datelist so that our families are aware of when we are planning to hold these. We are hoping to be able to arrange socially distanced, face to face, meetings at the academy, however this is obviously dependent on what the guidance at the time allows us to do. We will keep you informed about the plans regarding this, but it is worth noting that we would only be able to allow adults to attend the meetings, and we would not be able to offer our usual crèche facility. Virtual meetings would of course be offered to any families unable to attend a meeting in person.

Outdoor Clothing

Please ensure your child brings a waterproof coat to the academy every day, as they will go outside each day even if it is raining or snowing. As the weather becomes colder, this coat also needs to be warm. All items of clothing, including coats and wellies need to be clearly named so lost items can be returned to you, and not added to the lost property mountain in the office!

PE Clothes

Please also ensure that your child comes into the academy in their PE kit on the days that they have PE. Families with children in Year 1 and 2 should have been informed of these days on Tapestry. We also ask that

children please do not wear earrings on PE days, or if newly pierced these are taped already as staff are unable to take these out or put tape over them at the moment. Thank you for your support with this.

Filming and Photographs

In order to keep our children and families safe at the academy, we have a clear safeguarding policy regarding photographs and videos of children. Permission is given for you to photograph or film an event or occasion e.g. assemblies, shows, sports mornings etc on the understanding that these images are not uploaded onto any social networking sites, including Facebook, Instagram, YouTube or Twitter. We do not have permission from all parents for their child's images to be used and therefore we must have your agreement to follow this policy. We also ask that parents and carers do not film their child in or around the academy, and take care when photographing 'First Day' pictures of their child for the same reasons. Please ensure any relatives or friends who bring or collect your child or who attend performances are also aware of this policy.

Bikes and Scooters

Being an Eco School, and with the current push for families to avoid using cars to come to school wherever possible, we do recognise the importance of children scooting or cycling to school. At the moment it is not practical for children to use the bike and scooter shelters to store their bikes and scooters, so we are happy to trial an alternative solution. Children can bring their bike or scooter into the main academy gates in the morning and leave it at the side of the Children and Family centre. This will ensure that bikes and scooters are inside the gates, but children don't have to try and wheel them all the way to the shelters whilst also trying to carry all their bags and bottles. Obviously all bikes and scooters would still be left at your own risk, and children would need to collect these before leaving out the gates at the end of the day. It is also probably worth noting that they would not be stored under cover so would get wet in the event of rain. Hopefully this will help our families to encourage children to walk or scoot to school.

Drop Off and Pick Up

Thank you to all our families for supporting us so brilliantly with drop off and pick up times. Families are sticking to allocated times carefully, and we very much appreciate parents leaving as soon as they have dropped off to keep the gate and layby area as clear as possible. Drop off and pick up is becoming smoother and quicker each day! In order to socially distance, some of our families are standing across the other side of the layby next to Worthing Road while waiting for children. As we are reluctant to let the children cross over the layby alone, due to cars exiting where the children could be crossing, could we ask that parents or carers step forwards to collect their child if possible when they come to the front of the line. Staff will bring the children across to you if you are not able to come forwards, but it helps us keep things moving quicker if you can come to us. Thank you to all the parents already doing this.

Could we please ask our parents and carers to take extra care when leaving the layby outside the academy. Pedestrians and children on bikes can appear from either side quite suddenly, and with a zebra crossing right next to the exit, there is a lot to keep an eye on!

Can we also please remind parents to be respectful to our neighbours when coming to and from the academy. Please don't park across residents driveways, in private parking spaces or on gardens. We have also had a report of children climbing on fences belonging to neighbours in Timbermill, so we would like to ask our parents and carers to please ensure children are supervised at all times.

Travel Tracker

Huge congratulations go to Cassie in Amber class for winning the Travel Tracker 'Design a badge' competition! She was one of 7 winners, out of 100,000 entrants across the UK so she has done incredibly well and we are very proud. As a result, the academy will be able to use Travel Tracker free for the year and receive a goody bag and of course Cassie herself will be awarded a trophy and will wear her own badge design with pride! Here is her winning design, look out for it on your May travel tracker badge. To ensure your child earns a badge please walk, scoot, cycle or park and stride whenever possible.



Safety Alert

During Fairtrade Fortnight in February this year, we sold some duck whistles from our Fairtrade Shop. We have been informed by one of our parents of a safety issue with one of these whistles that could be quite dangerous, and might affect the other whistles bought by families. Whilst playing with the duck whistle, the parent thinks that the child inhaled in rather than blowing out, and the piece of wood inside the whistle that makes the duck noise came out and was sucked in by her. Luckily the parents were able to dislodge and remove the piece of wood, but we are obviously concerned that this piece of wood may not be properly secured inside other whistles that have been bought. If you have one of these whistles at home, we strongly recommend that children are not left to play with it unattended, and that young children especially either do not use it or are monitored carefully whilst doing so. If you have any questions, or are unsure about whether you have one of these whistles, please get in touch with the academy office.

Safeguarding

We have been informed from the media and West Sussex of some serious safeguarding issues with the TikTok and some other social media platforms. Concerning videos have been shared online, and we have been told that some of these are being disguised as different videos to particularly appeal to children. Children of infant age should not be accessing these platforms or Apps due to their young age, however we are aware that sometimes older siblings or adults may use these sites. Can we please remind all our families of the importance of supervision when allowing infant children to use mobile devices or access the internet. We recommend that strong internet filters and parental controls are used on devices where possible, and that adults keep an eye on children at all times to ensure they are not accessing or viewing content that could be harmful or distressing. If you would like support with filters, settings or parental control or would like to talk to us about online safety or any other safeguarding concerns, please do get in touch.

Yours sincerely

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Events List Autumn Term

September		
Tuesday	15	Individual photographs
Friday	18	Amber Class start Forest School EYFS children are now full time
Friday	25	European Day of Languages - to be celebrated in classes, so no breakfast this year. Sorry!
October		
Thursday	8	Science Day
Monday	12	Flu vaccines
Friday	23	Amber Class last Forest School session
HALF TERM Monday 26th to Friday 30th October		
November		
Monday	2	INSET day
Tuesday	3	Children return to school
Friday	6	Lemon Class start Forest School
Tuesday	10	Parent Consultations
Thursday	12	Parent Consultations
December		
Friday	11	Christmas Jumper Day Lemon Class last Forest School session
Friday	18	Last day of term