

Dear Parents and Carers,

Apparently the sunshine will be with us later this week to mark the beginning of the summer term after what has been a particularly drab holiday period. I am sure that families will have struggled to get out and about and that is a pity because the children have a lot of energy that they want to run off and the wet weather does put a dampener on activities. Things will look up now that we are all back at school! That is good news however as the children are looking forward to playing outside with their friends and making the most of all of that the summer term can bring. We are all looking forward to the challenges ahead and there is as always, a full programme in the offing.

I know that a number of parents and carers will be getting news about Reception Class Admissions for this September today or tomorrow. I am hopeful that all of our siblings will have been successful in gaining a place but I am aware that there may be some initial worry and disappointment. Should any parent / carer receive disappointing news please contact the school as soon as possible and have the child's name placed on the waiting list. Usually, we have one or two places that may not be taken up and we would then look to the waiting list to make up our allocation of 30 pupils as soon as we can. It is a worrying time for some as the Admissions Policy has to be strictly applied and although siblings are first in every category if there are more applications in the first few categories it does mean less space for those applicants in later categories and this can mean that occasionally, siblings can miss out, which is not what we want at all.

Our real and immediate focus is upon Miss Carrahar and her Y6 pupils as they work towards the national tests that commence on Monday May 14th. I must reiterate how hard and diligently this cohort of pupils has worked and how proud I am of them in so many ways. I know that their levels of concentration and energy will be as focused as ever over the next few weeks in order that they can fulfil their undoubted potential. It will need a disciplined approach however and a bit of old fashioned early to bed, sleep, eat and drink well with enough fresh air and a little less "screen time" please! Parents and carers can rest assured that staff will be putting all our efforts into supporting our children and making sure that we are all well prepared and able to assist in any way that we can. We all know too well that the week itself flies past and is actually not bad at all with lots of new materials and booklets costing hundreds of thousands of pounds all for Y6 children in every class across England and Wales! Once done we have all sorts to look forward too and I have complete faith in this group of children and staff to take this opportunity to shine.

I must take this opportunity now to speak a little more about staffing matters and you will be aware from the last newsletter that Mrs Woodmass and Miss Price will be leaving us shortly and that Mrs Nickels is being fully supported by the school in her request for ill health retirement. We will miss them all a great deal and thank them again for their service. There will be a new Classroom Assistant appointed shortly and a review of hours and support generally is timed to take place after budget discussions later this week. The budget situation is tight as it is in schools across the country and

we will have to look carefully at how we can best support the pupils who require that additional input as best we can. It is not ideal and I am afraid that like the NHS, schools are being squeezed. We can only hope for some injection of funding to help schools to cope but we are not holding our breath.

Sadly, they are not the only members of staff who will be leaving us this term, with Mrs Pickering taking the opportunity to step back a little from the demands of full time teaching. As a consummate early years professional and with only the interests of the children and their well-being at heart, Mrs Pickering has given so much over a great number of years and I know that you will all join with me to thank her for being such an integral part of our team and to wish her well for the future.

We will be looking to appoint a new Key Stage One teacher later in the term and the position will be advertised soon.

On a happier note our own Miss Elaine Carrahar has been shortlisted for the South Tyneside Teacher of the year award and a number of staff are to attend the ceremony at Temple Park Leisure Centre this Friday. We are all hoping that she takes first prize for what would be a very well deserved accolade.

Looking ahead then there are a number of dates that you will want to make a note of:

- Week Beginning April 16th: Catch Up Themed Week across the school - each class following their own topic across the week
- Monday May 7th - May Day Bank Holiday - school will be closed
- Week Beginning Monday May 14th: Y6 SATS week
- Wednesday May 16th: FGB meeting: Budget Setting 2018/19
- Friday May 25th - Themed Day
- Half Term Week: Monday May 28 - Friday June 1st (Note also that the school is closed for staff in service training on Monday June 4th) return to school for pupils is Tuesday June 5th at the usual time
- Wednesday June 13th - New Reception Induction Afternoon 1
- Wednesday June 20th - New Reception Induction Afternoon 2
- Thursday June 21st - Modern Foreign Languages Themed Day
- Monday 25th to Wednesday 27th June: Y6 Trip to Berwick / Edinburgh
- Thursday June 28th - Reception Induction Afternoon 3

- Tuesday July 3rd - Y6 Trip to York for Shakespearean Production
- Wednesday July 4th: FGB Meeting 4pm
- July 4th is also Admissions Appeals Day
- Thursday July 5th - Y6 Leavers Mass at St James, Hebburn 10 am
- Week Beginning Monday July 9th - Open Evenings Week (Individual Appointments nearer the date. Y6 may be held during the last week)
- Tuesday July 10th - Y6 trip to Lightwater Valley
- Thursday 12th and Friday 13th July - Y6 Transition Days (Pupils make their own way to their secondary schools each day)
- Tuesday July 17th - SAPA Sports and Fun Day from 09.15
- Wednesday July 18th - Reserve Sports Day (weather)
- Thursday July 19th - End of term Mass and Leaver's Assembly - times to be confirmed
- Friday July 20th - Reserve Leaver's Assembly slot
- Friday July 20th - School breaks up for the Summer Holidays.

We will have another two possible Masses for the school and Parish Community across the term with dates to be confirmed soon. There will be other class announcements regarding end of term trips and visits so please look out for these from individual class teachers. Our Religious Education overview will also be sent to you soon along with updates on our after school clubs.

The school website is in the process of being upgraded and we have a number of posts in the pipeline from last term that we would like to get on for you all to see. I am assured that the site will be live again soon as the task is in hand.

I do hope that we have an enjoyable and happy term together and I look forward to seeing you all as the term progresses.

Best Wishes.

Yours Sincerely,

[K J Smithson](#)

Head Teacher.