

Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021

Dear Parents and Carers

### Summer Term Update 1

Firstly, can I welcome you all back at the start of the summer term. It has been an exceptionally positive first few days and the pupils have settled quickly back into their routines. There is a productive feel around the classes.

There are a few updates to share with you at this time, with follow-ups likely in the coming days.

#### School Residentials

In consultation with the staff in Years 4, 5 and 6, I have taken the decision that we should proceed with our plans to take the pupils away on their respective school residentials in the week leading up to May half term.

**Year 4** – Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May - Overstrand

**Year 5** – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May - Overstrand

**Year 6** – Monday 24<sup>th</sup> to Friday 28<sup>th</sup> May – Isle of Wight

The teachers will be in touch shortly to give further information, which will include payment details (for some) and specific details about their respective trips.

**I must highlight the fact that the absolute 'go ahead' cannot be made until Monday 17<sup>th</sup> May – the preceding week – as this is when the government will give the green light for stage three of their roadmap which includes the resumption of overnight school trips. Whilst this is not ideal, it is beyond our control and both the school and the two centres we are using are reasonably optimistic.**

Thank you for your understanding and support. We really do hope these trips can go ahead because they will be a wonderful experience for the pupils given the disruption over the last two years. Should the worst happen and permission is not given, I will be in touch with plans for each group.

To maximise the chances of being able to go, we need to keep each of the respective 'bubbles' intact in the days leading up to departure and therefore please continue to do your part in reducing the possible risk of transition.

#### Staffing Update

You are already aware that we are currently recruiting a teacher to cover Mrs Cornell when she goes on maternity leave at the end of the current year. This is progressing very well and I will update you in the coming weeks.

I also need to share the news that Mrs Beresford, my Deputy Head, will be leaving Whitehill at the end of the year. She is taking on a Deputy Headship of a school in London, close to where she is moving. From September, Mrs Burniston, one of my senior teachers, will be seconded onto the leadership team to continue the great work started by Mrs Beresford on the curriculum and will be a perfect replacement.

Another member of staff moving on to pastures new and the next chapter of his career is Mr Miley. Rest assured he is staying local and there is a good chance that some of our current pupils will meet up with him again in the future.

### **Possible Parent Event**

We are planning to have a virtual wellbeing parent evening this term, around how to support and manage anxiety in children, hosted by a local clinical psychologist.

We have been made aware by parents of a steep increase in the anxiety levels of many of our children at home, undoubtedly exacerbated by Covid 19 and felt that this was therefore a topic that was worth exploring further.

So that we can plan the format of the virtual delivery, can you please indicate [via this Google form](#) if you would be interested in attending such an event? Further details to book will then follow.

### **Year 6 Events**

By the end of the year, we have every intention of running some of the traditional activities to mark the end of the Year 6s time at Whitehill. Clearly this is subject to government guidance.

Mrs Bailey has written the script for the Year 6 production and is looking forward to starting with the rehearsals. The change to previous years is that we are going to be performing it over two nights as opposed to the traditional one. It is likely these will be Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> July to increase the space in the hall and to make it slightly more comfortable. The traditional 'Leavers Presentation' will take place separately in school and I am looking at how we might stream this live for parents to join.

On the evening of Friday 9<sup>th</sup> July, plans are afoot for a Year 6 party which will take place in the school grounds.

Details of these events will be sent home in a timely manner.

### **Sports Day**

Our much-loved sports day did not happen last year but, again, we are planning for this to take place in the last week of term and I hope that we will be able to invite parents along to enjoy the afternoon.

### **School Reports**

Despite another year of disruption, pupils will still bring home their school reports on Friday 25<sup>th</sup> June. Following parental feedback, the format was changed last year and will remain the same for this year. Also included with the reports will be details of the class and teacher allocation for the following year.

Thank you for all your ongoing support. As we progress through the term, good communication is going to be essential. Please do keep an eye open for letters and updates relating to school events as well as my weekly blog and if you are not sure, please ask.

So much of what we want to achieve over the coming months for the pupils relies on transmission data remaining low. For that reason, despite the easing of lockdown measures, please continue to play your part when on the school site by socially distancing and leaving the grounds as soon as possible. The play equipment continues to be out of bounds to siblings at this time.

Best wishes,



Steve Mills  
Headteacher