

26 March 2021

Dear Parents

May I take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support and loyalty through what has been a very difficult period. I fully appreciate that you have all found the lockdown and home learning a challenge, and many of you will have experienced other hardships involving family and businesses. Having said that, the staff have also risen to the occasion and worked hard to deliver a consistent, robust and quality home learning experience to benefit the children as a whole. The children have also displayed great resilience, versatility and adaptability with their online learning. However, their delight at being able to interact with one another and socialise on their return was clearly visible and it didn't take long for them to settle and familiarise themselves with the staff, their friends and school once again.

Over the holidays the school will run tutorials, holiday care, and the nursery wrap around care will continue throughout. In fact, whilst some of you will manage to rest and relax the school will continue to be fully operational and alive with pupils, just how we like it!

Some of you might be aware that we interviewed staff for a Year 1 and Year 4 post to start in September. Not only did we have a large number of applicants but sheer quality too, and even the shortlisting was a challenge. The Reception cohort coming through in September is large enough to command two classes in that year group and with Lisa Mellin and Helen Coombs continuing in 1CM, Fiona Richardson will be joining us as the new Year 1 teacher. Fiona joins us from one of the local independent schools and comes with a wealth of experience and curriculum knowledge in this age group having taught Year 1 for six years and prior to that Year 3. She is an assistant leader at the Eastry Girl Guides where she has supervised residentials and camps. She is also on the committee of the Sandwich Netball Club where she is also an active playing member and umpire. She is looking forward with relish to joining our team and school community. Sadly, Jonathan Dunn is leaving us in July to start his own School Improvement and Coaching business and Duncan Andrews will be promoted to DSL, Head of IT and Deputy Head of Pastoral Care. We have therefore appointed Amy Cavanagh as our new Year 4 teacher. Amy is married and has a two-year-old son Finton, and also comes to us with a wealth of teaching experience across the age groups in both secondary and primary schools. More recently she has been the Primary Coordinator for PE across Kent, responsible for overseeing and the delivery of sport across the county. Both teachers displayed excellent teaching skills on interview and we are very privileged to have staff of this calibre join us. Hilary Rosenz can't stay away and will be returning for the Summer Term to support Beverly Latham in 2L. Hilary has worked at St Faith's for over thirty years and retired last July just short of working here for 100 terms, so she just might achieve this!

Hopefully, we will be able to return to school with changes that will allow us a certain degree of normality once again. Early morning and after school care, sports fixtures, orchestras, choirs and clubs will all recommence, unless the government changes its stance between now and the beginning of term.

Hopefully Sports Day, Speech Day and some form of residential might be allowed to take place after the 21st June but we will announce that nearer the time.

It has been a long year for most Heads but one I believe we are all proud to survive and come out stronger. The experience that the staff and I have gained will be invaluable to help develop our teaching further and more importantly in how we care for the welfare of our children.

Have a lovely Easter holiday and enjoy the thrills and spills of your children before we go into the juggernaut of the Summer Term with all the wonderful activities and events it has to offer, as well as sunshine!

Best wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L B R Groves', written in a cursive style.

Lawrence B R Groves
Headmaster