

30 August 2022

Dear Parents

Welcome back to a new term and academic year with very many exciting and challenging times ahead. I hope that you have all had a wonderful holiday and are looking forward to the children returning to school following a very hot and sunny summer holiday.

On returning, many of you will see some changes that have occurred over the summer months with some quite considerable development. Firstly, work has started to prepare the site for the building of the new sports hall with a target completion date for July 2023. Undoubtedly, there will be some disruption and inconvenience, and I ask you to be patient and understanding throughout the building process. We will be without a gym and a play trail for this academic year but we are endowed with plenty of outdoor space including the nature garden and Kerruish Hall which we will endeavour to utilise to the full. The car park area will be limited due to the field being unavailable for parking as part of it will be fenced off for the contractors. The movement of contractor's vehicles will be outside of the drop off and pick up times and so we would appreciate it if you could park in the village and well away from the school if you wish to access the school outside of these times. All contractors working on the site will be signed in and out by their site manager who is DBS checked and work within a fenced area which they will be unable to leave during the working day. The play area for the children at break times will be unaffected and the children will be safely distanced and fenced off from the site and its workers. The two Year 2 classrooms have been made into a larger classroom for the Year 1 children as well as a small office for Yvonne Harrop and Learning Enhancement. The Guilford Hall gym has been changed into two state of the art classrooms for the Year 6 children and you will be amazed at this wonderful development for our older children. I need to take this opportunity to say a big thank you to Julie Haywood who has spent a very large part of the summer holiday managing these projects and her high standards are on display with the beautiful finish to this project.

In addition to some physical changes in school you will notice some changes to the school timetables. Class assemblies and concerts will now be at the end of the day, 3.30-4pm often followed by the chance for parents to visit their child's classroom as a mini open event. This change preserves precious morning teaching and learning time, and enables us to welcome families into classrooms without rushing at the end of the day. Be reassured that Celebration assembly remains at 8.40am on Friday morning!

We have restructured the sports timetable. Games lessons will continue alongside a broader outdoor activities schedule to include more time in the nature garden and undertaking orienteering activities both on and off site. We continue to have a 'sport for all' approach and have created time for team practice during which the sports teachers can work with the different teams in preparation for matches.

Year group introduction meeting will be taking place on Monday 5th September at which point teachers will be able to share timetables with you and answer any questions.

Apart from welcoming Helena Leeper back after a long illness to restart her art club after half term and David Whitehouse our new tennis coach to start in the first week we have no teaching staff changes to inform you of and I'm sure you will join me in celebrating the fact that at St Faith's our staff retention is always very high and healthy, and this helps to provide a very safe, nurturing and consistent learning environment for the children. However, after sixteen years of loyal service to two Headmaster's and the school Julie Haywood will be leaving to work in the finance department at Wishford at the end of the Autumn Term. Her attention to detail and efficiency have been the hallmark of her success and we wish her well in her new post. My wife Helen Groves, Marketing Manager, is also to retire at the end of the Autumn Term after ten years to spend more time with family and enjoy the comforts of tennis and her friends. Helen also has a reputation for her efficiency, working long hours, being a great ambassador for prospective and new parents as well as being the face of late room every day and putting up with the Headmaster 24/7. We are in the process of recruiting for these two very important posts and still have a term to enjoy working with Helen and Julie but it will be a sad farewell at Christmas to them both, although there should now be a meal on the table when I get back from work at the end of my busy day.

Please be assured that we will continue to strive for perfection to benefit all children and keep them happy and safe but should you ever have a concern or a query please do not hesitate to access my open-door policy whatever time that might be.

Best wishes



Lawrence B R Groves
Headmaster

