



Upper Arley C of E Primary School

Final Newsletter 16th July 2020

Website: www.upperarleyprimary.co.uk

Tel: 01299 861260

Dear Parents

Looking back, moving forward...

My goodness me, what an eventful year we have had together! No one could have imagined that the year would be ending quite like this!

The children have been amazing, it has been so good to have them back in school. They have adapted and respected the recent Covid situation, embracing change and difference in their strides. They have been empathetic and understanding of what this may have meant to each other and those who have still not returned to school. As they make their way towards the end of the summer term, they reminisce and talk about what and who they have missed and what they are looking forward to in September, and how things may be different yet again. I know that this poses many questions for parents too. I hope to address these within this newsletter and thank you for your patience in waiting for this information.

I would like to say a huge thank you to all parents of children at Upper Arley for engaging with and supporting the school throughout the year and especially during the recent national situation. Your support and positive comments have been a source of encouragement, sometimes perfectly timed amongst the plethora of government guidance.

I would also like to thank the incredible staff here at Upper Arley for their dedication and tremendous effort to provide a service to education that I am proud to be associated with and lead. Particularly to those staff members who came into school every day during the lockdown period to keep the school clean and ticking over for the time when children could return fully. For the teachers creativity and innovation to provide bespoke learning opportunities and teachers assistants who stepped up to support children from home as well as in school. Without these special people, Upper Arley Primary school would be a very different place. I am proud to have been given the opportunity to lead them.

I would also like to thank the Governors, who, in the background, have supported the school particularly through the last few months, ensuring the school is a safe place for children and staff to work.

I am sorry that the children didn't get to do some of the events we had planned for—the Dance festival, performing in the Cathedral, the Big Sing and class trips out to Birmingham. We will be busy planning events for them in the Autumn term and hope that government guidance will allow us to come together.

Finally, I would like to thank the year 6 children for their sense of humour and fun! They have returned to school and embraced the last few months with positivity. They have developed so quickly into young people who are now ready for their transition to high school. We will miss their sense of fun but wish them the very best of luck as they move onto the next stage of their education journey. I look forward to hearing how they are getting along and hope that they keep in touch with us here.

Please do read the rest of this letter. There is further guidance on how we intend to return in September and plans for the term ahead.

I wish you all a safe and happy summer holiday and look forward to welcoming you again in September.

Mrs Tracie Langfield,

Head Teacher

WRAP AROUND CARE AND ACTIVITY CLUBS

From this September, Upper Arley school will be able to provide **Wrap Around Childcare from 7.30am to 6pm Monday to Friday**. This service will be provided within the school building and will be run by school staff. We believe this provides consistency for the children who attend Upper Arley Primary School. If you are interested in a place or would like to make further enquiries, please contact the office or Mrs Langfield and complete the booking form. Alongside the Wrap Around Care, we will also be offering activity clubs after school. These will be a range of activities such as crafts, science, drama and sports for children to sign up for each half term. We were hoping to have confirmed these groups before the summer but Covid 19 has delayed this. We will therefore update you at the beginning of September and plan to commence these activity groups the week beginning 14th September.

SAFETY OUTSIDE SCHOOL

During the holidays children tend to be given more freedom to play out of their gardens and homes. Please remind your children of ways to keep safe and ensure they know what they should do if something should happen or go wrong. Please ensure your child's safety at all times.

SCHOOL UNIFORM IN SEPTEMBER

Please ensure that your child wears correct full uniform in September when returning to school. Research shows that children have a greater sense of belonging when they wear a uniform, something they may need support with on their return initially. It also prevents that indecision in the morning of what to wear!

WATER BOTTLES

Please ensure that your child has **water** in a water bottle in school every day. If they do not, they will be provided with a cup to drink from. It is important that they keep their brains and bodies hydrated with water. And their teeth healthy from sugary drinks. Fruit juices or squash is not allowed as we currently have staff and children with allergies.

HEALTHY LUNCHES AND BREAK TIME SNACKS

We continue to promote healthy lunch boxes and snacks in school. Thank you to those parents who are supporting us with this. Can we remind parents that we do not permit chocolate and sweets. Please note these are not allowed in school under any circumstances and will be taken from the child and handed to parents at the end of the day. There is always fresh fruit available at break time for children in Early Years and KS1. We think it is important that children bring a healthy snack to eat at break time. This can be fruit, fruit bars, breakfast bars or anything that does not contain high levels of sugar, salt or fat. Please ensure that these are nut free. Please support our safe and healthy eating ethos in school.

We will be campaigning against using plastic in school. Please support us by reducing the use of plastic and wrappers in your child's lunch box where possible.



We are very excited to announce that **Happy Hares** nursery will be accepting children from the term after their 3rd birthday as from this coming September. The nursery will be situated within the school building and be run by our school staff. If you would like a place or more information, please contact the office or Mrs Langfield. We thank the Arley Trustees for supporting this new venture and look forward to a long and happy relationship within the village community. You can check if your child is eligible for any of the free childcare entitlements, worth on average £5,000 a year to parents of 3 and 4 year olds, on the [Childcare Choices](#) website. Nurseries and childminders are wonderful places for children to learn and have fun with friends, which supports their development and their overall wellbeing. Attending childcare can be an exciting and joyful experience for children and can also help provide a routine as they develop their social skills. Early years education is an important stage for children where they can flourish and get the best start in life.

HOMELEARNING Thank you for supporting your child with their Homelearning activities. The children have been proud to share what they have been learning about at home and are becoming more confident in demonstrating their basic skills in reading, writing and maths as a result of the work you are doing with them.

Consolidation and **rehearsal** are vital aspects of learning and memory, helping your child to carry out these short tasks really does help embed new information. Teachers will set repetitive/routine tasks to support the children throughout the summer break. Please talk to your child's class teacher if you have any questions. These will be available on the online learning platform Edmodo or Seesaw that your child has accessed during the lockdown.

RETURNING TO SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER

During the last 4 months, school staff have been required to adapt to ever changing guidance from the Department for Education and Government. This guidance continues to be issued to schools in preparation for September onwards.

Currently, plans for the school to be fully operational as we know it are still some distance away. However, we do know that **all** children will be expected to attend school as from September 3rd. **Attendance will be mandatory** and will continue to be monitored by the Local Authority. Children will be taught in larger bubbles (essentially their class) and will not be able to mix with others. This will mean that children will continue to have staggered play and lunch times and enter school through the doors off the driveway, thus avoiding any mixing of groups on the playground in the mornings.

School will continue to adapt its practise to ensure that the risk of spreading any infection is minimised as much as possible by the following ways:

- Regular and routine handwashing
- Groups (classes) remain apart
- Individualised, named equipment
- Seating in class arranged facing forwards and apart where space allows
- Staff maintain social distance of 2 metres where possible
- Equipment and surfaces are washed regularly and in-between use
- Minimal movement around school
- No whole school gatherings (assembly or events)
- Quarantine books and resources

The latest [guidance](#) for parents can be found here.

STAFFING

There have been considerable staff changes over this academic year. I am pleased to say that we have been able to make a significant number of permanent appointments in the last few months, which has enabled the school to stabilise and set a course of direction to follow. Senior Local Authority and Diocese leaders and Governors have been fully involved in these processes and support these changes within the school.

Additional to these existing staff members, we have recently appointed an Early Years Practitioner and Wrap Around Care supervisor for Happy Hares provision, along with another Teaching Assistant with sports coaching qualifications to support physical development and activity for the children whilst in school. We welcome these people to our staff team and wish them a great start in September.

It is at this time of year that parents and children want to know which class and who their child's class teacher will be. Please see below for this break down.

Falcons - Year 5 and 6 - Miss Mason

Swifts - Year 3 and 4 - Mrs Langfield

Owls - Year 1, 2 and Reception - Miss Bridges and Mrs Stokes

Happy Hares (Pre school) - Miss Jeffrey

Supporting throughout the school will be

Mrs Stanley

Miss Lewis

Miss Stokes

Miss Cheadle

Mr Derrer

We say goodbye and thank you to staff who are moving on, Mrs Mayall and Mrs Lloyd, wishing them well in their future positions.

NEWS FROM THE GOVERNORS

Dear All,

How strange to be writing to you all feeling so detached physically from the school and yet so mentally and strategically involved with the progress through lockdown, to where we are today looking at the end of term only a few hours away. Governor meetings have all been online and monitoring has depended on close questioning and supporting the staff and Mrs Langfield to do the best for the children as they coped with the unprecedented circumstances. I would like to thank all the staff on behalf of the Governors and the families we seek to serve.

The school will not rest over the holidays. You will be welcomed back to a tailored curriculum and safe access for children who have managed very well through this disruption to their lives. I would like to thank you, the families, for your patience, understanding and the marvellous way you have taught the children, prepared them to return and shielded them from the worst fears while letting them have an idea of the serious nature of what is unfolding and how to cope.

I would like to thank the staff who have left the school in the last year to other career opportunities, and welcome those new staff members who have joined our team and have already shown their dedication and worth through a most difficult introduction to life at Upper Arley.

A new facility of a nursery and before and after school care will be in place by September and for that we have to thank the Turner Trust. Their immediate and unflinching financial and practical support has made this project possible. *Happy Hares* will be welcoming our youngest children to begin their learning journey through play in the safety of the school environment. Pupils at the school will be able to access activities and care before and after school to help working families by providing a longer day.

The school plans will be continually developed in line with Department for Education advice and in consultation with our supportive advisors over the summer and into the new academic year to ensure an adaptive curriculum, safe buildings and access to protect against infection alongside all the usual considerations.

Throughout all this situation the school has never lost sight of the learning, safety and happiness of the children.

Your supportive and complimentary emails have been appreciated and shared with the staff.

I look forward to serving the school in a new academic year 2020 - 2021 without any further international (or local) dramas please.

Regards

Freda Griffith

Chair of Governors

Upper Arley Church of England Primary School

FOREST SCHOOL

Over the quieter than usual summer months the Forest School site has undergone a change. For weeks there were only a few two legged visitors which meant before long creatures realised the potential to build homes and take up residence in our forest school habitats. During lockdown, children diligently fed the birds and ensured the site was looked after. More recently, the year 6 children and Jack have worked hard to re-establish the pond back to its beautiful state, full of water, with plants to attract wildlife. In just a few short weeks, it is now teeming with life and we are pleased to report that two different types of newts have been spotted this week. Sandra is so excited. What a fabulous legacy to leave behind Year 6, you have done an amazing job for wildlife and the school.

If you can help with resources for use in the forest school, they are always on the look out for tarpaulins, wood for burning and natural planks for seating. The pond is very large and would happily absorb any spare plants or reeds you may be able to spare. If you can help out at all, please let us know.

Children will continue to access Forest School sessions in the Autumn term. We will send more information regarding equipment required nearer the time.

PHOTO of POND and YEAR 6

Diary dates Autumn 2020

NOTE TED DAY CHANGE

JULY

Friday 17th
Monday 20th

End of term— break up for school holidays
Teacher Education Day (children not in school)

SEPTEMBER

Tuesday 1st
Wednesday 2nd
Thursday 3rd

Teacher Education Day (children not in school)
Teacher Education Day (children not in school)
Children return to school

OCTOBER

Thursday 22nd
Friday 23rd

Half term starts
Teacher Education Day (children not in school)

NOVEMBER

Monday 2nd

Children return to school

DECEMBER

Friday 18th

End of term

JANUARY

Monday 4th

Teacher Education Day (children not in school)