

Happy Monday!

It's great to have the children back in school and I hope you had a restful weekend – despite the autumnal weather!

A few updates for you:

### **Breakfast and After School Club**

Thank you so much for booking in and paying in advance for your places – and also thank you for being understanding of the limited spaces we have. We are currently not full to capacity for this week so if you want to book in for any day, just go to the MCAS app to book and pay.

### **A warm coat, and sensible shoes, fit for the rain**

Just a reminder that throughout Autumn and Winter the children will be accessing the playground when it's raining (obviously not if its torrential), so please ensure that they come dressed in an appropriate coat and uniform. You might want to consider trousers/tights as the days get colder, and certainly shoes that will withstand some puddle splashing. You'll understand I'm sure how restrictive classroom life is at the moment, and not being able to get the children out for some fresh air and a run around would be really impactful on classroom learning.

### **Coats in classrooms**

We are currently operating our classrooms with windows open for increased ventilation. This is in line with our risk assessed approach to being COVID secure. Obviously when the weather becomes far too cold to operate with windows open we will close the windows. For now, we are inviting the children to wear their coats in class if they feel chilly.

### **Road re-surfacing**

You might have noticed that Marksbury Road is being resurfaced over the course of this week. You might want to leave some additional time to travel to school if you need to park somewhere and walk the remainder of the journey.

### **Parents Evening Appointments**

We have parents consultations booked in to our diary for Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> and Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> November. These will take place via a video call, as all being well, your children will have their wonderful iPads by then so you will be able to join a call that the teacher will dial you in to at a given time. There will be more to follow on this nearer the time, but for now you have the dates to put in your diaries. Please remember that although you're not getting to see teachers now (we want them to maximise the time they're in the classroom teaching children), they are happy to respond to emails and call you at a convenient time to keep open the lines of communication. Please route all communication via the office so that it doesn't slip through the filters on our system.

### **Horizons Parents and Student Agreement**

I can't tell you how excited we are to be a pilot school for the Oasis Horizons Project, and hopefully the children at Marksbury Rd (all of them) will have their iPad and case before half term. There will be a parent agreement form to sign which will be sent to you electronically before the launch in school, but I will write to you at the time these will

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be sent out so that you know how to access them. Children in our older years will also be required to sign an agreement but we will take care of that at the academy.

### **Website updates**

With the above point in mind, and our efforts to go paperless we will be making a move to shifting all of our communications for each year group to an online platform. We are busy preparing Year Group pages which will contain letters, homework, weekly learning updates, study guides for the term, year group reminders, and any work which will need to be set in the unfortunate event of a lockdown for specific classes or year groups. Once the children have been given their iPad the focus of this work will be via remote access, though not all work will be completed on a screen. I will write to you with a link for these pages on Friday and I will be sharing the pages with the children too so that they can become familiar with how to access their own content and links in the future.

### **Black History Month**

As you know, October is Black History Month. We will be using October to launch and share our revamped curriculum with the children and parents. As an academy we are passionate about celebrating and championing diversity, not just for one month, but through all that we do, all of the time. For us, raising awareness of diversity and championing disadvantage happens every day. Our curriculum intentionally exploits opportunities to celebrate the lives of BAME people and characters through literature choice and curriculum intent. This is evident in our approach to History, Geography, Science and English in particular. Throughout the month, the children will be hearing about BAME characters in their reading, both in fiction and non-fiction texts through their read aloud entitlement, but these texts will go on to form our literary offer all year around. This is an exciting step in our curriculum development and one that the Leadership Team feel passionately about. We look forward to sharing this with you throughout October.

It's lovely seeing you on the gate every morning and every evening. The children are having the best time at school, despite these uncertain and unfamiliar times. Every day when I'm in and out of classrooms I am reminded of what a great offer our children get here.

Thanks you as always for your ongoing support,

Clare