

24<sup>th</sup> June 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you are enjoying the week and the improvement in the weather! As we are experiencing a heat wave we have been ensuring the children in school are wearing hats, have sun-cream on and are in the shade or indoors at the hottest times of the day. They are also having access to water throughout the day and bottles are topped up accordingly!

We now have 112 children in school made up of 28 children in our two Key Worker classes and 84 Reception children, just over 40% of our school population. We are using 8 classrooms full time now and so we are asking that our year 2 children have their visit in the school hall and enter the site via Hansler Grove. Year one visiting children should now enter the site through the Bridge Gardens entrance to go to Maple classroom. Visits are taking place between 3.15pm and 4pm on the allocated day. Thank you for your understanding.

### **Visits**

Our first after- school visits from the children in year one and two have gone very well. It has been a delight to see the children and you as parents back on the school site, to see how much they have grown, the lost teeth (!) and how happy they are to see each other. Thank you very much for all the positive feedback for our organisation of the visits. We really appreciate it.

When you bring the children for the visit please can you bring an A4 self- portrait (first visit) and the reading books they have had at home. For their second visit they will be set a piece of work during their first visit and we would like them to bring this in to show us.

### **September**

The Government have announced that all children will be able to return to school in September. I was very pleased to hear during Gavin Williamson's briefing and question time on Friday that this will be based on a model of 30 in each class "bubble" rather than the existing 15. We will be thrilled to have all the children in school. Once we have received more detailed guidance I will be able to inform you of the arrangements. I would imagine that these *might* include a continuation of keeping "bubbles" separate, continued hygiene measures and having separate timetables and separate areas for play, lunch, staggered drop off and pick up etc as we are doing now.

### **"Catch up" Programme**

As you will know the Government has announced that there will be a catch- up programme and funding available to schools to make this happen. The guidance concerning this is due "within the next two weeks" so at the moment we have no information about it at all. We have not been informed how much this funding will be for our school. As soon as I have the information, and have formulated a plan, I will inform you. There does, at least, seem to be a recognition that a "catch up" process will not be as simple as a summer holiday few weeks but it will take longer to "fill the gaps" in learning as a result of schools being closed.

At The Orchard, our first priority for *all* the children will be to assess them on their return to school. This will not entail doing formal tests in the way that we all remember from our own school days. We will be observing how they complete tasks and what they can do independently. We will carry out this vital assessment through their normal classroom activities. We will assess phonics and reading individually. We also value the amazing work you have done to sustain their learning at

home. For year one children please do leave any work samples, clearly named and in one folder with us on their last visit to school in July. Thank you!

We will also be adapting the curriculum content in recognition of the areas they have not been taught or exposed to during the lockdown restrictions.

We will also be ensuring our programme for Personal, Social and Health education maintains a high focus as the children have been out of school, away from friends and family members during such uncertain times. We understand that they have all experienced "loss" in one form or another. Some of our children will benefit from individual or small group work from our ELSA, (Emotional Literacy support assistant), Mrs Denton and this provision will also be available in the Autumn Term.

All the staff would like to join me in offering our sincerest condolences to those of you who have suffered bereavement during this Pandemic.

Further details will follow in relation to any individual catch up as soon as I receive the DfE guidance.

In addition, The Orchard are providing Summer holiday materials for all the children. The PTA have kindly agreed to fund maths text books for our year one and two children which follow the teaching scheme and Teaching for Mastery approach we use at The Orchard. They have been designed specifically for children who have not been in school since the end of March this year and cover a range of concepts taught earlier in the year as well as areas they may not have covered later. These books will be given to the children on their last visit to school or we will arrange delivery or collection for those children who do not attend the sessions. We will also be supplying a new online resource from the Centre for Language in Primary Education. This will be available to all year groups and supports reading, writing and creative, problem solving activities. I hope that you will find these resources helpful.

### **Year 2 photos, films and end of year arrangements**

Thank you to all of you who have emailed photos of the children in their uniforms and videos of them singing the leavers song. We are very excited about compiling these for you as an Orchard memento. The deadline is **July 2<sup>nd</sup>**. The email addresses are as follows:

[beechphoto@orchard.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:beechphoto@orchard.surrey.sch.uk)

[oakphoto@orchard.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:oakphoto@orchard.surrey.sch.uk)

[sycamorephoto@orchard.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:sycamorephoto@orchard.surrey.sch.uk)

For the video this will be a whole year compilation so please email to

[Y2video@orchard.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:Y2video@orchard.surrey.sch.uk)

Please do not use the other year 2 email address for this purpose.

A detailed letter concerning the end of year tea parties will follow but the children will have an opportunity to sing their song as a class for you and there will be a display of all their portraits together as a year group along the glass wall of the year two building. The children will also be able to bring all their work home following this event.

Thank you once again for all your support for the children at home despite all the pressures on you.

Thank you so much for all the positive feedback we have received which has been really uplifting for the staff.

With very best wishes,

Carol Rusby