



## Swanton Morley VC Primary School

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September 2022 – Newsletter 1

### Welcome

A very warm welcome back to you all, whether you are returning after the holidays or joining our school community at the start of this new academic year. We hope that you enjoyed a restful summer break and were able to make the most of the warm weather! It was great to welcome the children back again last week and they certainly seemed to have settled into their new classes and routines really well.

As you will have seen, all the classes are now coming in through the same gate which makes supervision and access more straight forward and we have moved the bike/scooter racks much closer to the main gate to make it easier for the children. This seems to be working very well.

### Communication

If you have any questions, queries or concerns (however seemingly small) about your child's start to the new term, then please do not hesitate to contact us. In the first instance, I would encourage you to make direct contact with your child's class teacher either on the school gate at the end of the day or via email. All teacher's school email addresses were sent out last week for your reference. Most concerns can be resolved in this way but if this is not the case then please catch me on the gate, phone or email me directly [head@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk](mailto:head@swantonmorley.norfolk.sch.uk) so we can then discuss the issues further or arrange a separate meeting if necessary.

*Please note that in line with our school well-being guidelines staff are not expected to read or respond to emails in the evenings, at the weekends or during holiday periods.*

During the Covid-19 pandemic the necessary restrictions which were put in place, sadly prevented parents from coming into school, seeing their children in action and enjoying all the great things that take place in school. This began to change by the end of the last academic year as we were once again able to invite parents into school for events such as sports days, sponsored walk, Easter service, Trim Trail grand opening and the Yr6 production. But we also understand that we have got some way to go for you to really get to know

what the school looks and feels like on a day-to-day basis for your child. Therefore, the aim is to do more of the activities listed above and to also extend this out to offering Maths and Reading Cafes where you can join your child in the classroom for some lesson-based activities as well as coming in for class assemblies again. We will also be making 'parent surgeries' available at school using the expertise of different members of staff eg SENCO, Speech and Language Specialist. In this way we hope to continue to strengthen relationships between home and school.

We continue to operate our online communication platforms, such as Tapestry and Class Dojo which will provide you with a variety of important details for your child's class. The school website will also continue to be updated with all the relevant information that you require.

## Classes

Due to many classes now being made up of mixed-ages, there has been some understandable confusion with children (and parents) over their current year group, class and/or class teacher. We are now very much encouraging children to use their class name to avoid any uncertainty. Therefore, here is a reminder:

Class Name	Age Groups in Class	Teacher(s)
Acorn	Reception Only	Mrs Barnes & Mrs O'Dell
Oak	Year 1 and Year 2	Miss Vincent
Beech	Year 2 and Year 3	Mrs Kerrison & Mrs Aston
Birch	Year 3 and Year 4	Ms Madeley
Willow	Year 4 and Year 5	Mrs Haynes
Alder	Year 6 Only	Mr Vokes

## Uniform

We sent out the updated school uniform policy at the end of last term and it is great to see children looking so smart as they have returned to school in their new uniforms. We are very keen to maintain these standards and I would like to especially draw your attention to the kit required for PE. The policy states:

For indoor PE lessons children should wear their PE t-shirt, dark coloured shorts, trainers (or bare feet, at the discretion of the adult leading the session). Outdoor PE kit consists of the above items plus: a plain navy blue or black sweatshirt or tracksuit top, navy blue or black coloured tracksuit or jogging bottoms and sturdy trainers. Any PE kit must be sensible, safe and fit for purpose. It is not acceptable to wear clothes with prominent logos or advertising.

As always, please come and talk to us in confidence if you are having any difficulties with paying for uniform. The FOSM also have a large bank of spare uniform which can be provided at very minimal or no cost.

Please can we also remind you to send your child into school with a raincoat each day so that we are able to keep children outside for as long as possible at break times and lunchtimes and they are not sitting in class with wet clothes. As the weather starts to change this term, your child will also need a pair of wellies (as per the uniform policy) to access the field and we would ask that you leave them in school so that they are always accessible. Once again, if you have any difficulties with purchasing these items then please let us know.

## **Healthy Eating**

We actively encourage healthy eating across the school as part of our curriculum teaching about healthy lifestyles. Therefore, please can you ensure that children only bring water to school (unless there is specified medical advice) and that the children do not have chocolate, sweets or sugary drinks in their packed lunches. In terms of break time snacks, fruit is provided for all children in YrR, Yr1 & Yr2 so these children will not need to bring in their own fruit/snack. For those children in Yr3, Yr4, Yr5 & Yr6 we would ask that they bring in their own healthy snack.

## **PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies)**

We are currently undergoing staff training for the Norfolk PATHS Programme for Schools. This is an excellent programme which is used by many Norfolk schools (as well as in 35 countries around the world!). It is a whole school approach that aims to improve children's social and emotional competence, promote self-esteem/resilience and develop positive behaviour across the school. We have been provided with a range of quality resources to deliver this programme and there will also be training offered to parents. This will be in order to ensure a strong partnership between home and school in the strategies that we will be employing.

In light of this new programme, we will be shortly updating our behaviour policy and then sending this out to you.

## **realPE**

We have recently bought into 'real PE' which is a new, more child centered approach to how we will be teaching PE across the school. As part of our INSET we had some whole staff training on this approach which proved to be extremely useful. We have now received all the resources required to teach

this new curriculum and have already started to deliver it! Please ask your child about this.

### **School Council**

We will be electing a school council at the start of this term with two representatives from each class. This will give the children much more of a voice in what we can do to make further improvements to our school. Ms Madeley will be in charge of chairing/refereeing this lofty group of individuals!

### **Attendance**

Please see the two standard letters regarding attendance which accompany this newsletter. There is a very big government and Local Authority 'push' on attendance this year which means that we have been instructed to monitor this very carefully indeed.

### **Bank Holiday**

Following the death of Queen Elizabeth II last week, it has now been announced that her state funeral will take place on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, and this will be a bank holiday in the UK. Therefore, the school will be closed on this day and reopen on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September as normal.

### **Finally...**

We really appreciate your continued support and any constructive feedback regarding things like improving communication, the school website or the updates to our behaviour policy, would be very welcome.

I strongly feel that a new academic year brings many fresh and exciting opportunities to develop and improve our school as we work together more closely with you, and we are very much looking forward to where the journey takes us!

Kind Regards

*Matt Richards*

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