



Our Ref: AJC/MS

26 April 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Re: Principal's Summer Term Newsletter

Welcome back to you and the children. I hope you had a lovely rest over the Easter holidays. It was a very positive start last week and it feels like we are starting to move towards a little bit of normality. Obviously, as a school, we are continuing to follow government guidance, as we were previously and nothing has changed, in terms of our Covid-related procedures.

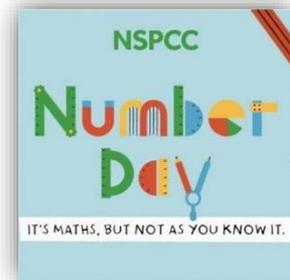
Can I also welcome the many new children and their families who have joined us over the last month or so, including a number of new starters last week.

We have had 58 new children join us since the start of September 2020 – half of these are new nursery children and half are children who have joined us throughout the rest of the school, which is very pleasing.

NSPCC Number Day:

We're counting down to Number Day 2021!

We are delighted to be supporting the NSPCC by taking part in their Number Day on **Friday 7 May 2021**.



Children deserve an equal start in life

The NSPCC believes that all children deserve a childhood free from harm but, sadly, that's not the case for many children. That's why the NSPCC is fighting for every childhood and working to help keep children safe from abuse.

The NSPCC needs our support. By raising money, we can help to fund their vital services like Childline – the helpline that's always there for children and young people whatever their problem or concern.

Making maths meaningful

Number Day is a great way to make maths fun and bring about a positive, 'can-do' attitude towards it.

On **Friday 7 May 2021**, we will be taking part in *Dress up for Digits* and children will be invited to wear their own clothes for the day.

Where possible, it would be great if the children could wear an item of clothing with a number on it (sports shirt, cap or even better, something that the children have made themselves!). To help raise money for the NSPCC, we are asking for a suggested donation of £1.00, and we'd love everyone in the school to take part in this special event.

We will be using fun curriculum-based maths challenges designed by the NSPCC and Oxford University Press as well as additional challenges put in place by the teachers.

After School Clubs:

Teachers are currently looking at offering after school clubs this term. Obviously, these will have to take place in the class bubbles, for the time being. We are looking to offer the children some exciting and fun activities to support their learning and offer them new experiences. Teachers will be sending letters separately, where activities are going ahead.



Photos:

One of the many things that has not been able to happen this year are the annual photos. We are currently working with Tempest Photography and hope to arrange individual and class photos this term.

Obviously, on this occasion, we won't be able to invite other family members into school. We'll keep you updated, when we have confirmation of dates and arrangements.

Homework:

As you will be aware, we are working extremely hard to help the pupils catch-up with missed learning due to the lockdown periods. Homework is an important part of supporting the continued development of knowledge and skills. We hope that our recent purchase of various software packages will help you and the children with this at home. As well as Bug Club and Spelling Shed, we have also now subscribed to Maths Shed. Class teachers will shortly be writing to you separately with an outline of homework expectations for individual classes.



Communication with the Academy:

Following the success of Microsoft Teams, we are currently in the process of installing an additional IT system which will help us communicate with you more easily and efficiently. One of the benefits will mean that we can send letters directly to your email address, rather than producing hard copies or placing them on the website. It will also improve our current messaging service. I will send further details about this over the next month or so.

Can I please emphasise the importance of making us aware of any updates to your phone numbers and email addresses. Any outdated or incorrect information will mean that you will not be able to benefit from the new system.

Parents Evening:

Linked to the above, we are hoping to hold our first 'virtual' parents evening this term, hopefully, towards the end of this half-term. Tollbar MAT have purchased a software package, which is very similar to Teams but designed specifically for the parents evening process. I will send you details of this separately over the next few weeks.

Attendance:

Our attendance continues to improve, following very high attendance since the lockdown ended. On the first day back after Easter, our attendance was 97% which is excellent.

Linked to this, I wanted to make you aware that our previous Educational Welfare Officer, Mrs Cox, has now left, as she is focusing on two other schools within the Trust. I am very pleased to say that our EWO is now Mr Nield, who already works within the Trust. Mr Nield will be supporting children and families across welfare areas such as attendance and punctuality.



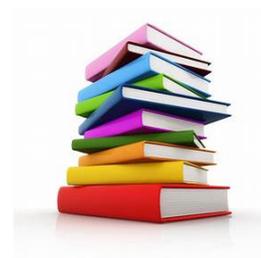
Safeguarding:

As mentioned in previous letters, I just wanted to re-iterate that if you have any questions or queries, relating to any matters of a safeguarding nature to contact Miss Plumtree (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or Mrs France (Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead) at the Academy.

Projects:

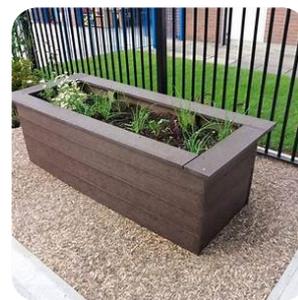
Further to a previous newsletter, I just wanted to give you an update, regarding the progress of a number of on-going projects we have underway:

- **New Library:** Good progress is being made. Book shelves, including some new units have been moved to the new library and books have started being placed on the shelves. We held a competition before Easter, asking the children to produce artwork of literary characters. These were fantastic and we are currently in the process of having these framed to go up on the walls. We are also re-designing some of the walls to give the area a real focus on children's books and characters.
- **Sensory Room:** Our new area to support some of our children with additional needs is quite an undertaking as it requires a completely new 're-fit' with new electric points and painting etc.



These are due to start next week and then we will move to equipping the room, which is very exciting and will really benefit a large number of our pupils with this proposed specialist provision.

- **Outside Quad Area:** We have now had an outdoor stage built, which is wonderful. Following this, will be the seating areas for children to watch performances on the stage. In addition, we have had a number of new planters built for the children to grow flowers, fruit and vegetables. Every class will be given their own planter to look after throughout the year. In addition, we are doing some structural work to make access around the quad area easier for all children. Later in the term, the pond area will be re-developed.



- **Wildlife Area:** A new gate is due to go in next week which will make access easier for the children. The groundsman has the plans to re-develop the pond area and its surrounds, as well as producing a nature walk through the whole area. We are in the process of investigating plans for an outdoor classroom in this area.
- **Field:** New fencing is due to be put in place this term. The groundsman will be working in certain areas of the field, which need a little 'levelling.' We have purchased two sets of football goals which we will put on the field once the work has been completed.
- **New Panelling:** Over Easter, many of the external walls within and around the school had some of the older wooden panelling replaced. This has really helped to brighten up certain areas and offer a much fresher look.

I would like to thank Tollbar MAT for their continued support in the above ventures as we seek to continually move Pilgrim Academy forward to give the children further opportunities to develop all areas of their education and general development.

Before the end of this half-term, we will publish photos to give you a visual aid to the new work. Once things have changed, I look forward to inviting you all in to have look round and see the developing projects for yourself.

As always, if you have any questions about any of these matters or any other issues, please contact myself or the relevant staff member at the Academy.

Yours faithfully



Mr A J Clark
Principal