

Garden Fields J.M.I School

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Growing Hearts and Minds

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School Update: 7th January 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back and a Happy New Year to you all! It was rather nice to actually see the sun out this morning after a rather gloomy, wet Christmas period. Although it was at least warm!

I hope you managed to have at least some break over the last fortnight or so, but I am aware of course that many had family members affected by illness as well as family and social get togethers impacted by Covid. Let's all hope that in 2022 we will soon be through the worst of the Pandemic and see a return to greater normality.

Staff update

We have a few new members of staff joining us this term. We welcome Miss Shaw as our new Willow class teacher on a Monday and Tuesday, partnering Mrs Howitt. We also welcome Mrs Lawrence as our Key Stage 1 music teacher. Mrs Lawrence will provide music lessons in Year 1 and 2 in a similar way to Miss Wray does in KS2 - indeed the 2 will work together along with Miss Hayden to complete a team of 3 specialists teaching music across the school.

We also welcome Mrs Rowland as a new learning support assistant and welcome back Ms Marshall as a teaching assistant.

We also have an 'internal change' in school, with our Specific Learning Difficulties teacher Mrs Kemp Robertson becoming our new Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Coordinator (SENDCo). We are lucky to have someone with both her extensive skill set and also her knowledge of our children to lead in this area.

It also allows Ms Palmer to be able to concentrate on her deputy headship role - although she will still be our school Inclusion Leader (INCo) as part of her deputy role - which means that she will play a key strategic role in the direction of the school in terms of the support and welfare of children with a range of needs and vulnerabilities. We thank Ms Palmer for her passion, dedication and hard work that she has put in during her years in the SENDCo role, to ensure that our children with additional needs have the best support possible.



COVID procedures update

As you will know from recent announcements, there have been some changes to isolation periods this week.

Some key documents on the Gov.UK website have been updated and provide further guidance.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-of-children-attending-out-of-school-settings-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

Please note that the weather has turned colder and although we will be shutting doors, we will have windows open to provide ventilation, so do ensure that your children have additional jumpers/fleeces (plain and preferably in blue, grey, black) to keep them warm.

Reading Books

Please note that we are having a massive overhaul of reading books with the assistance of the Herts For Learning English advisory team. This is a massive undertaking and so banded reading books for all years except Reception will be 'out of action' until 17th January. This is necessary to ensure that the correct reading books match to the right colour. Many thanks again to the PTA who are contributing £5,000 towards the purchase of new reading books to help us to really enhance our reading stock. Please use the time to perhaps share library books, home story books and possibly annuals and other reading matter bought over Christmas. Sharing books in this way is such a key part of our children's development.

Batchwood Drive Roadworks

These works begin on Monday and are likely to be highly disruptive unfortunately and all I can suggest is earlier departure times, lift sharing and where possible walking.

Further information can be found in the attached letter or at:

<https://www.affinitywater.co.uk/alerts/mains-renewal>

Driving out of the main entrance

It has been brought to my attention that some drivers have crossed our Zebra crossing at the main entrance, waving at friends and not observing that children are crossing there. This isn't an official Zebra crossing but was painted on by us to help demarcate this as an area where children cross about 4 years ago – in order to help our children to cross safely and also to alert traffic that they cross there. We will be adding signage to this area later in the year to make this even clearer, however, in any event, no driver should ever cross a driveway/entrance or other 'gap' where pedestrians cross without looking and paying due care and attention. Please be careful!



Christ Church Windows



It's nice to end on a positive note – and one final reminder of Christmas! Mrs Dorman, one of our former office team, sent us this picture from Christ Church of some of the lovely 'stained glass' style pictures produced by our children to help them with their Christmas decoration of the church. They looked very effective!

Have a good weekend everybody.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Farrugia

