

MAPLE PRIMARY SCHOOL, ST. ALBANS

18th April, 2017

Dear Parents,

We were pleased to welcome your children back to school today after the Easter break. The Summer Term is always a special time at school, with many activities taking place and, hopefully, some excellent weather for the children to enjoy their playtimes on the field.

STAFFING

Mr. Davis, our Sports Apprentice, left the school near the end of last term.

There are no other staff changes at the start of this term.

Congratulations to Miss Elliott, our Year 4 Class Teacher, who got married during the Easter Holiday. She is now known as Mrs. Jackson.

KEY DATES FOR THE TERM

As usual, a list of Key Dates for the term is being sent out with this letter. Further details about the events listed will be given out in due course, as appropriate. Termly newsletters from the class teachers will be sent home at the end of this week on Friday.

DATES FOR THE 2017 / 2018 AND 2018 / 2019 ACADEMIC YEARS

Also attached to this letter is a list of term dates for the next two academic years (2017 / 2018 and 2018 / 2019).

I appreciate that many of you want to book holiday dates well in advance. By giving you these dates now, I expect that all future family holidays will be planned to coincide with the school holiday dates. Please understand that, due to the disruption to the children's learning, I will not be able to authorise any holidays or days off in term time, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If you believe your circumstances are exceptional, then please discuss your request with me prior to making a booking. Thank you for your understanding and cooperation in this matter.

OPEN EVENING - WEDNESDAY 26TH APRIL

Next week we will be holding our annual Open Evening on Wednesday 26th April from 5.30 to 7.30 p.m. As usual you will be able to visit all the classrooms with your children to see work that has been produced during the year or which is currently ongoing. The displays in the hall will relate to work produced during the 'Countries' Special Events Week that took place during the final week of last term.

Representatives from the school's Governing Body will be attending, and will be present in the hall and touring the classrooms, to listen to any questions or points of

view that you may have. They will wear names badges to enable you to identify them, if necessary.

Some children will be giving musical performances in the hall during the course of the evening (either individually or in an ensemble). If your child has reached a competent standard on a musical instrument and would like to perform, then please encourage him/her to sign up for one of the 10 minute slots available.

Representatives of the Parent Teachers' Association (PTA) will also be serving drinks and snacks.

This is a special celebratory evening and I very much hope that you will be able to attend with your children.

HOMEWORK POLICY

The school's Homework Policy has recently been updated, following discussion with, and the approval of, the governors on the Curriculum and Standards Committee. The policy can be viewed on our website in the Parents / Policies section. The policy includes details of our homework expectations, including the type of homework that will be set and the approximate amount of time children are expected to spend on homework.

The class teachers will include specific details about homework for their year group in their start of term newsletters.

Please note that homework is compulsory in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6), and for those requiring additional support a weekly lunchtime club will be held. If homework is not handed in on the allocated day, the pupils concerned will be expected to complete the work under supervision during their lunch-breaks.

The school has taken the decision not to set formal homework during the school holidays, apart from homework for the Yr 6 pupils, those children having 1 to 1 tuition; and an optional learning activity for all pupils in the Summer Holiday.

MEETINGS BETWEEN PARENTS / CARERS AND SCHOOL STAFF - STATEMENT

Your attention is drawn to a written statement relating to meetings between parents / carers and school staff. A copy of this has been put on our website, also in the Parents / Policies section. Please read this prior to any future meeting you may have with a member of the school staff.

OFSTED PARENTVIEW WEBSITE

Ofsted, the school's inspectorate, has established a website to enable parents to record their opinions about their child's school. This is used by the school as one of many measures to ensure that we are providing the best possible levels of teaching and care; and results can also be viewed by prospective families when choosing a school. You

are welcome and encouraged to log on to this site to give your opinions about Maple in a short and anonymous survey.

The website link is: <http://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk> Thank you.

BALL GAMES ON THE FIELD

When we are able to use the field, the children will be able to play football / touch rugby on the field on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays this term. Children are welcome to bring in other PE equipment from home to play games with on the field on Wednesdays.

HOT WEATHER

It is quite likely that we will get some hot weather over the next few months. If that is the case please ensure that your children come to school with caps to wear and, if appropriate, some sun-cream to apply. We are fortunate to have various shaded areas on the playground and field and, if there is a heat-wave, the children will be allowed outside to use these but will be discouraged from playing in the direct sunlight. We will also encourage them to drink plenty of water.

A FEW REMINDERS

May I remind you that at 3.15 p.m. or as soon as the pupils are dismissed, they should be supervised by their parents/carers. No children should play football on the Top Playground. The children are not allowed on the field or the climbing apparatus before or after school. For safety reasons the children are not permitted to ride bikes/scooters on the playground and these should be left in the racks at the front of the school. Older pupils who are walking home by themselves are not allowed to play unsupervised after school in the playground.

Please do not park in the school car park when dropping off or collecting children, as there is not enough space for parents to do this. Adults and children should never walk across the car park, which is particularly busy at the beginning and end of the school day, due to taxis for our unit pupils arriving and departing.

In the mornings the playground is supervised from 8.40 a.m. onwards and, unless the children are attending Breakfast Club or an early morning Maths / English session taught by one of our Teaching Assistants, they should not be dropped off at school before this time. If your children walk to school by themselves, please ensure that they do not arrive at school before 8.40 a.m. The children should, of course, be present for the start of the school day at 8.50 a.m. Please allow sufficient time for your journey and, if necessary, for parking, to ensure that all the children are in the playground at 8.50 a.m. so that a prompt start to the school day can be made. If you drive to school please park your car showing consideration to local residents and businesses.

Thank you for your support of these rules which are there to ensure the safety and well-being of all pupils.

Finally, the teachers, support staff and I are looking forward to working with your children over the next few months. Annual written reports will be sent home on Friday 7th July when you will also be informed about class/teacher allocations for September; but if you have any queries or concerns as the term progresses, then please feel free to either 'pop in' and speak to one of us, or make an appointment to do so, if necessary.

Yours sincerely,

Timothy Bowen
Headteacher