

Milborne St Andrew First School



14 July 2016



Dear Parent,

It's hard to believe we have come to the end of another academic year; it doesn't seem that long ago that we were looking forward to the new school year! As I write this, final preparations are taking place to get ready for next year. As I look around, I see a community of children who make me very proud. Year 4's have matured and taken on the responsibility of being the oldest members of our school and the practical jobs that this entails. They have done this consistently, reliably and with honour- these roles are earned, and have been keenly anticipated for many years. They have worked with our youngest children in Seahorses, as Reading Buddies, which has been a mutually beneficial and rewarding arrangement. Many Year 4 buddies took this role to a whole new level, planning and sharing strategies to help their partner with tricky words. I can honestly say that it a great honour and pleasure to eavesdrop on these interactions. Year 4 are ready for the next part of their learning journey and transition work has been taking place throughout this entire term to prepare them, so that they are comfortable with this. They have had several opportunities to share their concerns and get answers to some burning questions!

Seahorses have had a great start to their school life. They settled in well in September and in no time at all were a working part of the school. They have continued to work hard and make good progress, and are clearly getting used to being citizens in our community. They have a keen sense of what is right and wrong and what should be done to make a situation right. I regularly talk to the children about aspects of school and subject areas and have been really impressed with each child's sensible approach and their ability to articulate their point of view in a mature, polite, assertive manner.

Schools are cyclical by their nature and changes happen, some years more than others. This year, we have had quite a few, not least the changes to assessment both in Reception and at the end of Key Stage 1. We have worked together with the Middle School to look at assessment and achievement of pupils so that the children and staff will know exactly where the children are.

We also had some changes within the staff; Mrs Plant has begun a phased retirement, Mrs Pearcey moves on to pastures new, and Mrs Ball will no longer be with us as staff but will be as a parent. Miss Jones starts a new phase of her life as she gets married in August. We also say goodbye to Louisa Macnair and thank her for bringing music to life at Milborne. I would like to wish them all every happiness and success, as they follow their chosen paths.

Children at MSA do themselves, you and us proud daily and we challenge ourselves constantly to improve our school and be as good as we can be. We work with other groups to challenge each other and support actions. This is especially true of the Greenwood Tree where Headteachers have worked closely with each other and with Paul Chadwick, the Executive Head. As a staff and Governing Body, we have identified actions for next year, which will be displayed in the reception area in the Autumn term, as they were this year.

Staff- all staff, work especially hard in our school and I would like to say a big thank you to them. We have also had many volunteers over the year and years who give up their time regularly to work with, and support your children and these people, together with staff play a vital role in your child's development. The Governing body are volunteers who give up their time tirelessly to further improve our school and they also deserve a big thank you.

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GREENWOOD TREE
ACADEMY TRUST

DASP
Getting it right
by working together

We know, however, that children learn best when there is support and engagement of their parents. So thank you, too.

I suspect that many of you will take the opportunity during the holiday, to prepare for September and I would like to give you some notice for when you are buying uniform and other things for school. We will be having much more emphasis on the wearing of our school uniform, as it should be worn, and hair appropriately tied back or up. Please check the expectations on the website. I believe it is an important part of belonging to a community and having a pride of themselves within that community. Whilst jewellery isn't allowed, we do encourage watches, and I would suggest children coming into Year 2 who perhaps have a birthday coming up or a Christmas present, would benefit from an analogue watch. Time is a concept that we know the children find difficult to understand and visual, regular exposure to the clock face would help, I'm sure. To encourage smooth transition and increased independence, we are changing drop off and pick up arrangements for children in Year 3 and Year 4. These will be explained to the children and shared with you in September.

I would also like to ensure that your children can access the field area for much longer periods of the year, than they currently do, and have discussed this at Parents Forum. To this end, please supply a pair of wellies or outdoor shoes so that when needed, children can change footwear.

Finally, thank you all for your help supporting the school and I wish you a happy, safe holiday and look forward to seeing you and your children refreshed and energised, ready to start in September.

Yours sincerely

Sharon Hunt