



11th September 2020

Dear parents / carers

Welcome back

As said earlier this week, it has been an absolute delight to welcome children from Years 1 – 6 back to school. We are also looking forward to welcoming Reception next week and enjoyed meeting them again at today's Teddy Bear's Picnic. We have already received lots of positive feedback so we do hope that your child has also had an enjoyable start. A school is just a building when left empty, without the young souls who help bring it to life. It has been wonderful to feel the building's true heartbeat now that the children are all back amongst us. As a Catholic school, community plays a pivotal role in all that we do and it has been a real pleasure to have the whole school back together. Whilst so much of what we know has changed, many aspects have stayed the same. For example, children in Year 1 enjoyed their usual Forest School this week in addition to exploring a colour creature that might help them to express different ways that they might feel. Children in every year have received Covid specific lessons in addition to completing usual start of term work such as finding out more about their class saint. The children have shown such maturity and every member of staff has been utterly impressed. I have visited every class, daily, and have been met with smiling, enthusiastic children who seem very eager to learn and who have already settled into their new routines. We couldn't be more proud of them.

Our Catholic purpose

This week began with a virtual Mass, celebrated with Bishop Richard at Arundel Cathedral. This was a wonderful way in which all Catholic schools could come together to worship. The closing prayer, for the new school year, was from Saint Thomas Aquinas, which you might like to share at home.

Grant me, O Lord my God, a mind to know you, a heart to seek you, wisdom to find you, conduct pleasing to you, faithful perseverance in waiting for you, and a hope of finally embracing you. Amen

During the Mass, Bishop Richard's words of hope, strength and sense of Catholic purpose for the year ahead resonated with our staff who had previously enjoyed watching, virtually, reflective pieces by a gentleman called David Wells during our recent INSET (do google him to find out more or to also watch the videos – they are superb). David Wells offered reflection on the importance of Catholic schools and allowed staff the time to reflect on our role within that. During the INSET we also shared training focused on how best to support the children's wellbeing, post their recent experiences, along with what we are calling Step Up September and our Recovery Curriculum. We will share more information on this in the coming weeks. Please remember that we are always here if you need anything at all. If you have any further questions or suggestions on how matters can be further improved, please do get in touch.



Roald Dahl Day

13th September is Roald Dahl day. As it falls on a Sunday this year, we celebrated this wonderful author in school today. Teachers shared a range of information about Roald Dahl himself and explored, with the children, why his stories are still so popular. Roald Dahl had a unique way of writing children's books, usually told from the point of view of a child. His characters are larger than life with unusual names, unpleasant habits or special abilities. He always introduces us to a hero and makes us hope for them to have a happy ending. Even his worst, most horrid characters are always full of humour. We recommend families sharing some of these at home if you haven't already had the pleasure. Classes focused further on one of Dahl's many brilliant titles, *The BFG*. Children explored how the BFG catches dreams and how he transfers them to jars. Children then wrote their personal dreams (goals) on jar templates and collated a class book of dreams. Some of the younger year groups also read and listened to *The Smartest Giant In Town*, by Julia Donaldson. Whilst not directly related to Roald Dahl, the main character is also a giant who is incredibly friendly and kind and someone who focuses on helping others. Something that we encourage the children, and each other, to do at all times. Our Rainbow Tree of Hope (hopes and dreams) is still proudly displayed in our play area and is continuously added to. I wonder what act of kindness we can all offer to others...



Welcome Mrs Tubb

Children in a range of year groups enjoyed their first music lesson, with our new music teacher, Mrs Tubb, this week. I enjoyed joining one Year 4 class with their music lesson (from the hall doorway of course!). These children enjoyed using boom whackers to make improvisations linked to pulse. The children were particularly thrilled when Mrs Tubb introduced her instrument, the cello, and played *Happy Birthday* to a little boy who was celebrating his birthday that day. We are delighted to say that all our specialist teachers are offering lessons as per usual albeit socially distanced to ensure no bubble cross over.



Thank you, for your ongoing support. It's been a busy time but it's worth it to have the children back and to see them smiling. Wishing you an enjoyable weekend.

Rachel Breen (Headteacher)

Meet your child's new Class Teacher Years 1 - 6

Every year, in early September, we invite parents into school for a meeting with their child's new teacher in order to familiarise parents with class expectations and routines plus, meet the new teacher! This year, we are unable to hold these meeting in the usual way. Instead, teachers have made a video in order to introduce themselves to you and also explain the important routines you need to know about. Videos will be posted on your child's Seesaw page on Wednesday 16th September. Next week, all children will receive new home learning codes for their new year group Seesaw page. Old pages have been archived. The way the system runs means that whilst teachers access archived work, children can not. Any children new to school will be given further information regarding how to use Seesaw. Similarly, if an existing family needs help with regards on how to use Seesaw or requires technology support, please do get in touch. Moving forward, the majority of homework will also be set via Seesaw so it is important that children retain their codes for this. However, hard copies of homework will also be available on request. In the event of full school closure, bubble closure or individual isolation, Seesaw will also be used.

Please do take the time to have a look at the videos. We hope they will give you all the information that you need to ensure a smooth year ahead. A handout of all information will also be available on your child's year group page on the school website. If you have any further questions, then please do not hesitate to email your child's class teacher. More information regarding all of the above will be shared with new Reception families next week and your own Meet The New Teacher video will be posted on 23rd September.



Beach Clean

Look who they made the cover girl to promote the most recent Brighton beach clean - Brighton #leavenotrace campaign. As many of you know, Ms McCartney swims in the sea all year round. Before every swim, she fills a bag with rubbish that has washed up on the shoreline. She reports that disposable face masks are now being seen washed up on the shore which is such a shame. Like many of us, Ms McCartney has also been saddened to see the vast amount of litter left behind on the beach this summer. Last weekend, Ms McCartney also swam around the West Pier again, in order to celebrate a year since she raised £3000 for a water purification system in a Ugandan school. What a woman!



Clean Up!

Following on from above, I wanted to share a book that addresses water pollution via a super story that I recently bought for my son. It's called Clean Up and is by Nathan Boyd and Dapo Adeola. I would certainly recommend it for children in KS1. The story is about passionate Rocket as she sets off on a mission



to save a Caribbean island from plastic pollution. When Rocket goes for a holiday to visit her grandparents, she's shocked by the pollution that is spoiling their island home and putting the local sea life at risk. She tries to think of a way to save the day and organises a beach clean. It is an empowering picture book that shows how we all can make a difference.

Breakfast Club

Due to some challenges with staff recruitment, mixed with recent staff absence, this will not be able to open until a week on Monday. The first day will be Monday 21st September. However, we are pleased to say that we will be able to open one Breakfast Club per bubble. Therefore, places are now open to all families requiring childcare - we had previously stated the places would be prioritised to those of Key Workers. Breakfast Club will begin at 8am and, for this half term, will be charged at £3 per child. If you require a place, even if you have previously registered interest, you are now required to email ruthyahiatene@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk (or call / email the school office who will forward the email on) to confirm your requirements eg days or dates. Breakfast club is no longer a drop in club and places need to be booked for each the half term in advance. Payments also needs to be received, for the full 5 half term weeks, in advance. If you require a place, please also ensure that the full payment has been paid into your ParentPay account by Friday 18th September. Should payment in advance be a challenge, please contact natashacamilleri@cottesmore.brighton-hove.sch.uk who can discuss a payment plan with you. (or again, call / email the school office who will forward your email on). Due to the fact that we are running a bubble based, classroom service, our menu will be limited to that of cheerios, a wholegrain / slow release cereal, bread and sugar free jam (no toast I'm afraid) plus bananas. Drink refreshments will be milk or water. We are also unable to offer flexi arrival times. Again, due to staffing, children are only able to arrive between 8am and 8.10am. The gate that runs parallel to the staff car park, from The Upper Drive onto the KS2 playground is the only one that will be open. Children will need to be brought to this entrance, with an adult, so that Mr Clarke can sign them in. This gate will close at 8.10am. As we do not have office capacity until 8.30am, should you arrive later than 8.10am, you will have to wait outside, with your child until the start of day gates are opened as per usual and your pre paid fee will be lost. We look forward to offering this service for you.

Starfish – message from manager Paul

As you know, we have taken over the after school care



provision at Cottesmore. The school website has a copy of our digital brochure which has everything you need to know. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to get in touch on 07941525291 info@starfishkidsclub.co.uk. We are working with the school to see what we can offer as soon as possible and we hope to be able to share more in the next couple of weeks. If you are interested in booking a place, for when we do go live, please get in touch as, once open, places will be limited as we will be required to run at a reduced capacity.

September	Dates to remember
Monday 14 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New Reception - Storytime : Group A 10am - 11am / Group B 1.30pm - 2.30pm
Tuesday 15 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 12:45pm – 2:45pm New Reception children Group A only 9am – 11.15am New Reception children Group B only
Wednesday 16 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.50am – 11.30am All new Reception children Meet the New Teacher videos shared on Seesaw and handouts available on year group pages of the school website for Years 1 - 5
Thursday 17 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.50am – 1.15pm All new Reception children
Friday 18 th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 8.50am – 1.15pm All new Reception children
Monday 21 st	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new Reception children all day Breakfast club starts – every weekday 8am prompt drop off. Spaces must be pre booked, in advance, for the half term.
Tuesday 22 nd	
Wednesday 23 rd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet the New Teacher videos shared on Seesaw and handouts available on year group pages of the school website for Reception.
Thursday 24 th	
Friday 25 th	