

Galleywood Infant School

11th September 2015

Welcome to the new school year! We hope that you all had a great summer. It was lovely to see so many summer diaries, which the children have really enjoyed sharing with their new teachers and classmates.

Thursday and Friday last week were training days for our staff. On Thursday we worked as a staff team to focus on our school improvement priorities for 2015-16 - a summary of these will accompany next week's newsletter. On Friday we had an excellent joint training day with St Michael's Church of England Junior School. It was a really inspiring day led by a former head teacher, looking at how we can provide outstanding learning consistently for all our children from Foundation Stage to Yr6. Mrs Rumsey and I have planned further opportunities for our staff teams to work together.

Children have settled really well into their new classes and the school feels calm and purposeful. Thank you for ensuring your children have smart new uniforms, which help them to feel part of our Galleywood Infant School community. Thank you!

We are delighted to welcome **Mrs Kelly Fennell** to our school team as our Special Educational Needs Coordinator. She will be working 2 days each week, sometimes in classrooms, sometimes with small groups and individual children. Mrs Fennell is available to meet with parents by arrangement and will be preparing for Autumn Term review meetings.

Congratulations!

We are pleased to have received a letter of congratulation from Clare Kershaw, Acting Director of Commissioning for Education and Lifelong Learning at Essex County Council. This is because our school was one of 11 Infant Schools in Essex to achieve **over 85% Level 2B+ in reading, writing and maths**. Well done, Everyone!

Meet the Teacher

The staff have been working hard both before and during the summer to plan your children's learning for this term, using traditional tales and our fantastic school grounds as the starting point. Please come on Thursday 17th September at 2:30 or 7pm to our Meet the Teacher sessions to hear about "Down in the Pumpkin patch.....", our Key Stage 1 learning theme for this half term. Mrs Foster and Miss Mildinhall will explain how we are using the new Foundation Stage Baseline Assessment. They will talk about how children are learning letters and sounds for reading, spelling and handwriting. All teachers will outline themes for the year and provide information about ways to support learning at home. We hope you can join us.

The evening meeting will be followed by a short AGM for GIPA, our parents' association, to celebrate their successful fundraising in 2014-15. This will take no more than half an hour. Further details on Monday.

Parent Governor Vacancies

The School Governing Body is in place to undertake ongoing overview of the performance of the school, to support the staff and to help plan the way in which the school operates and moves forward. To achieve that, we require a range of skills and abilities which as well as knowledge of the school, include matters such as financial management, IT, HR etc. We find that it is often preferable to have the skills delivered from a mixture of parent, staff and other governors. As the term of office is 3 years it can often be useful for parents to join the governing body as their children begin school, although that is certainly not a requirement, and indeed many governors continue after their children have moved on.

If anyone feels they would like to offer themselves in these roles, I would be happy to explain a little more what is required - and what the benefits are.

Please feel free to contact me either by email or phone: robjpeters@googlemail.com, 07745616302

Dates for the year

Attached to this letter is a list of key dates for the school year, providing as much notice as possible of special school occasions.

Year 2 children will not be presenting class assemblies this year as they work towards two significant events, The Infant Music Festival in March and their Leavers' Assembly in July, both of which are shared with parents and families.

Please note our **Open Mornings** for pre-school children and pass the dates/ times to any parents know who may be applying for places for September 2016.

Child Protection Policy

We have updated our school policy for Child Protection, which is available on our website under News, Policies.

YMCA Family Support

Following the retirement of Sandra Martin in July the YMCA in Chelmsford have appointed Bev Macpherson, who will work in our school every Friday. We are pleased to welcome her as part of our school team. After an initial assessment Bev will work 1-1 with children for about half an hour each week for a block of 6 or 12 weeks. She can also offer home visits and meet with parents/ carers either at school or in the home setting. Please speak to

your child's teacher or to Ms Belmar if you would like more information about Family Support.

Helpers needed please!

We are always grateful for offers of help from parents and friends. Please speak to us or email the office if you can spare any time, perhaps a morning or afternoon each week.

We would welcome offers of help to:

- Support children with reading
- Check skills for maths challenge awards
- Support art and craft activities with individuals or pairs of children
- Support Forest Schools sessions
- Work with a few children on a one off basis to fill tubs and planters around the school
- Work with volunteers from Galleywood Horticultural Society to help our young gardeners!

For safeguarding reasons all helpers are required to undertake a DBS check, which the school will arrange.

Birthday cards

Do you have any birthday cards that you no longer need? We cut the backs off and "recycle" them for 180 children and 30+ staff
Thank you!