

***Live . Love . Learn - Littletown***

Friday 8th September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to start by welcoming you all back to Littletown for the academic year and extending a warm welcome to all our new families in Nursery, Reception and across the school this September. It is always a wonderful privilege as a Headteacher to see everyone coming back to or starting school in September, especially when there is great happiness and joy in the school as has been the case at Littletown this week.

Compared to September where the school began a new timetable, extended school day, new curriculum approaches, Read Write Inc and OPAL lunchtimes, this year we are carrying on exactly where we left off which allows us to really hit the ground running in all areas which makes me really excited for the year ahead.

On Monday, the whole staff were able to come together to discuss current research and evidenced based approaches to behaviour management in schools and how we can further improve on our children’s good learning behaviour that already exists at Littletown. As a result, we now have only 3 school rules at Littletown to be applied consistently. These are: ‘Ready, Respectful, Safe’. I explained these to the children in assembly on Tuesday and they have all begun work on exploring these in their classes this week. I will write to you with more information about this next week, but why not ask your child about them over the weekend and see what they say!

We have also been delighted to welcome Miss Prince to Littletown this week as she commences her role as Special Educational Needs coordinator (SENCO). Miss Prince has made a fantastic start in the role and you may have seen her on the playground at the start and end of the day.

Please read below all of our start of the year reminders, especially the one about attendance. Our attendance at Littletown has always been well above the national average, but this continues to be a key focus for the Department of Education this year.

We are also pleased to share below in this newsletter details of our OPAL parent afternoons coming up on Wednesday 20th and Friday 22nd September. Next Wednesday afternoon, we look forward to welcoming local Honiton charity Parental Minds to our Community Room for a coffee afternoon for parents.

Next Friday you will receive a Curriculum/Year group newsletter outlining curriculum overviews and key information for your children’s classes. My thanks to staff for putting these together next week. Please find below a table containing class email addresses should you need to contact the class teacher for any reason. Parents are also able to contact me via email at head@littletown.devon.sch.uk

Yours faithfully

David Perkins 

Principal

Swimmi

**Mental**

**Children’s news**

We look forward to selecting our first set of Year 5 news reporters next week and they will submit their first children’s news bulletin in next week’s newsletter.

**Information about attendance**

Our Attendance Policy is inline with the Devon Model Policy/Government Guidance and our approach is in line with DfE expectations and as a result, the same as the vast majority of other schools. Please see below a summary of the key information and changes for parents/carers:

 Attendance and Registration

* Attendance target is 97%
* Persistent absence is defined as under 90% attendance
* Persistent lateness is defined as 5 or more late marks recorded in a single half term
* The School day starts at 8.50am
* A pupil will receive a late mark if they are not in their classroom by 8.55am
* The register closes at 9.20am
* It is the parent/carer’s responsibility to inform the school if their pupil is absent (each day) before 8.50am

Medical and Illness

* As far possible, medical and dental appointments should be made outside of the school day
* Children are expected to attend school for as much of the day as possible on the day of an appointment.
* Evidence of medical and dental appointments may be requested.
* If an illness lasts for 5 days or more parents may be asked for medical evidence

Holidays

* Request for leave is defined as exceptional circumstances, holidays are not usually considered as exceptional circumstances. Unauthorised holidays will be referred to Devon County Council who consider further action as appropriate.

Monitoring

* The school monitors attendance of all pupils closely and reports data every 6 weeks
* The school will notify parents/carers by letter or phone if attendance is low, support will be offered to help improve a pupil’s attendance, which may lead to external agency support or court involvement if required
* Specific information regarding the schools' possible statutory action following persistent absence and persistent lateness can be found under section 8 of the policy
* The Education Act 1996 states ‘a parent commits an offence if they fail to ensure their child’s regular attendance at a school they are registered with

 Safeguarding

* A pupil’s attendance is fundamental to a pupil’s safeguarding and persistent absence can be explored as potential neglect

The full Attendance policy can be found on the school website here:

[Littletown Primary Academy - Policies](https://www.littletown.devon.sch.uk/website/policies/486967)

**Premises developments over the Summer**

It has been another busy Summer at Littletown as we continue to work to improve the premises for the children. Additional insulation has now been installed to all the pitched roofs in the school. Miss Chalmers has worked alongside Mr Jeffery, our Premises Manager, to decorate and develop our school library which the children have really enjoyed using this week. We have also completed the renovation of the Reception outside area with a new two tier canopy, artificial grass surfacing and new resources for our new Reception children to enjoy. You will have noticed, and most likely, already used in the hot conditions, our new shelters on the playgrounds. These will create more shade and shelter from hot and wet weather for children and parents at drop off and pick up. My thanks to the PTFA for funding the materials and to thank Steven Brown from URBN Carpenter LTD for constructing these free of charge for us last week. I just need to work out how much to charge parents for usage!

**Nursery kitchen**

As well as the developments above, we now have a brand new, high quality kitchen in the Nursery as per this press release below:

The Honiton community has been proving its enormous generosity and community spirit yet again over the summer, coming together to transform the extremely outdated and worn kitchen in the Nursery at Littletown Primary Academy, completely free of charge. An appeal was put out to see if anyone could help us with improving our kitchen, which was installed 25 years ago when the nursery was first built. Thousands of children have attended Littletown Nursery since then and it had served them well, but was no longer fit for purpose. Within hours, MKM Building Supplies, Honiton had agreed to donate us a complete new modern kitchen. Steve Brown (urbncarpenter.co.uk) immediately came forward and offered to install our new kitchen completely free of charge as well offering to supply all our brand new appliances, and Matt Williamson of ML Energy also came forward offering to do any electrical work and electrical installation needed completely free of charge. True to their word, as soon as the summer holidays came, they have all sprung into action, and our amazing new kitchen was ready for us when we opened the doors to our new Nursery children and families this week.

We cannot express how grateful we are to MKM for their hugely generous donation, as well as Steve and Matt for giving up their time, including over weekends in order to get our kitchen installed and finished. The end result has surpassed our expectations and wishes, providing us with much more storage space, worktop space and modern appliances. This is going to enable us to be more adventurous and frequent when cooking with the children and make providing breakfast and snacks for the many, many children who attend Nursery and our Early Years Breakfast and After-School club so much easier!

**Mental Wellbeing**

Next Wednesday, Parental Minds will be hosting a coffee afternoon in the Community Room at 2pm. It is an opportunity to meet other parents and hear about the activities and support services available to Littletown families. We look forward to seeing lots of you there.

**OPAL (outdoor play and learning) lunchtimes**

We are delighted to be starting our second year of OPAL after such success last year. To start the year, we are excited to be able to invite you to our first OPAL Parent/Carer Open Afternoons later in September. We are pleased to be able to have Kate Smith, our OPAL Regional Mentor, join us to share the overriding philosophy of the OPAL approach and the impact it is having on primary schools in the UK. Perhaps, more importantly, it is a chance for you to see how your children play and learn at lunchtimes at Littletown!

We are hoping this will be the first of many OPAL open afternoons which we will be able to host to share new and exciting types of play and resources. The open afternoons will consist of Kate Smith leading a talk in the school hall followed by the opportunity to be able to play alongside your child/children outside.

We will be sending out a letter on Monday with more details and reply slips which will need to be returned prior to the afternoons.

**Music at Littletown**

Our Key Stage 2 choir (Year 3-6) will begin again from **Monday 17th September**. There will be a form given out on Monday to be returned by the end of the week if your child is interested. It runs from **3.30 to 4.15** in the school hall.

Once again this year, at Littletown we are lucky enough to have many private peripatetic instrumental teachers who teach a plethora of musical instruments. We usually suggest Year 3 as being the best age to begin but please contact the teacher directly or the school's music email address littletownmusic@littletown.devon.sch.uk for more details, as in some cases our teachers will take on younger students.

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| Name  | Instruments  | Contact  |
| Matt Parr  | Drums  | mattparr@icloud.com  |
| Joseph Binmore  | Singing  | joe.binmore@gmail.com   |
| Emily Miller  | Ukulele Violin  | emilymillermusic@yahoo.co.uk   |
| Alan Webster  | Guitar  | 07930 358832  |
| Gail Denning  | Piano Brass (trumpet/cornet)  | gaildenning@outlook.com   |
| Steve Grant - (New from September providing there is enough uptake)  | Woodwind (flute/clarinet)  | kandsmusic@outlook.com 07810806627  |

**Week Beginning 11th September 2023 events**

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| **Monday 11th September** | **Tuesday 12th September** | **Wednesday 13th September** | **Thursday 14th September** | **Friday 15th September** |
|  |  | 2pm Parental Minds coffee afternoon |  |  |

**Class email addresses**

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| **Year group** | **Class Teacher(s)** | **Class Email Address** |
| Nursery | Mrs Jackson | nursery@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
| Reception | Miss Croft | classrnc@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
|  | Mrs Katane and Mrs Hawkins | classrnkmh@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
| Year 1 | Miss Meecham | class1lm@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
|  | Miss Chalmers | class1sc@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
| Year 2 | Mr Luxton | class2al@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
|  | Mrs Bentham and Mrs Lambert | class2cldb@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
| Year 3 | Mr Priddle | class3cp@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
|  | Mrs Searle and Mrs Davis | class3jssd@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
| Year 4 | Mrs Driscoll  | class4sd@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
|  | Mrs Heywood | class4zh@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
| Year 5 | Miss Bodgin and Mrs Arni-Tossell | class5rbga@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
|  | Mrs Wright and Mrs Arni-Tossell | class5gwga@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
| Year 6 | Mrs Binmore | class6cb@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |
|  | Mrs Fallon | class6jf@littletown.devon.sch.uk  |

**Term Dates for 2023 - 2024**

Please see reminder of the term dates for the year below. This includes the now 1 week October half term and the 2 week half term in May. Term dates for 2025-25 are due to be agreed this half term and will be shared with parents.

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|  **Autumn Term 2023** |
|  Monday 4th September |  Non-pupil day |
|  Tuesday 5th September  |  Term begins for children |
|  23rd October – 27th October |  Half Term (1 Week) |
|  Friday 15th December  |  Term ends for children |

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|  **Spring Term 2024** |
|  Tuesday 2nd January  |  Non-pupil day |
| Wednesday 3rd January  | Term begins for children |
|  12th – 16th February |  Half Term (1 Week) |
|  Thursday 28th March  |  Term ends for children |

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|  **Summer Term 2024** |
|  Monday 15th April  |  Term begins for children |
|  Monday 6th May |  Bank Holiday |
|  27th May – 7th June  |  Half Term (2 Weeks) |
|  Friday 26th July |  Term ends for children |

**PTFA News**

The PTFA are looking forward to another busy year. We had a very successful end to last year with our fete, disco and tea towel sales and we were able to raise much needed funds. We have been able to contribute a lot of this money towards OPAL, including the new uniforms for the OPAL team and most recently the materials for the shelters in the front and back playgrounds which will provide protection from the rain and sun whilst the children are outside. We would like to thank Steven Brown from URBN Carpenter LTD who volunteered his time and skills over the summer holidays to build the shelters. I am sure you will agree that they look amazing and will be a welcome addition to the play areas.

We will be holding our AGM later this half term to look at plans for the coming year. If you would be interested in knowing more about the PTFA, if you have any ideas for fundraising or if you would like to be involved as a committee member or as a volunteer at our events then please email us at ptfa@littletownacademy.org. The AGM date will be confirmed in the next couple of weeks and advertised in the newsletter.