



NEIGHT HILL
HIMBLETON
DROITWICH
WORCS
WR9 7LE

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HEADTEACHER: Mrs Gemma Martin

Wednesday 4th September 2019

Dear Parents/Carers,

I hope you all had a fantastic summer break and that you are looking forward to the new school year.

I had the pleasure of meeting many of you at the open evening at the end of the Summer Term and I am looking forward to working with you from now on.

WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP

Over the holidays and on our Teacher Education Days, the staff team has been working hard to plan and prepare lots of exciting opportunities for the children. I feel fortunate to be the incoming Headteacher of such a vibrant school, where it is clear that the children are truly at the heart of everything. There is a real sense of family here and I can't wait to become part of this.

I understand that there have been a number of changes at Himbleton in recent years and this is another new chapter for the school. I am hopeful that we can look forward to a period of stability, where we can all work together in partnership to develop and this special place. This is also a new chapter for me personally; I worked at my previous school for six years in a variety of roles, before becoming Headteacher, so saying goodbye to the community was emotional! We all know that our small Church schools provide a unique education and I am excited about this next step and getting to know everyone at Himbleton. I invite you to come in to school to meet with me informally either at 2.30pm on Wednesday 25th September or Thursday 3rd October at 9am in the conservatory if you so wish – I am really interested to find out your views and ideas.

STAFFING

We welcome Miss Cleary to our staff team this year. She will be teaching Key Stage One on a Monday as Mrs White reverts to her part-time position of four days a week. Mrs White is currently still off school and will be until at least the end of the month, so the class will have Mrs Gordon as their teacher Tuesday to Friday until Mrs White is ready to return. We of course wish her all the very best and will keep you informed. I have worked with both Miss Cleary and Mrs Gordon in previous schools and know that the children will be in very good hands.

We will be holding 'Meet the Teacher' sessions straight after school on Thursday 12th September, this is a chance for you to come in and find out more about current routines and expectations. If you would like to come in to school and meet Miss Cleary, you are welcome to come to the Key Stage One classroom straight after school on Monday 9th September.

Mrs Stewart has also joined the team as our new School Administrator and is always on hand to help.

COMMUNICATION

As you are aware, I will be in school for three days a week and will be working in a school effectiveness role for two days a week for the Diocese of Worcester. I absolutely believe that communication is key and ask that if you have any queries, concerns or comments you do let me know so that there are no misunderstandings or uncertainties. I will be on the gate each morning that I am in school to talk to, or if you would like to chat more privately at any time then please do just let me know so that we can arrange an appropriate time. On the days that I am not in school, Mrs Wallis will continue to be Acting Headteacher and, as you know, is always happy to be approached too. Please continue to use reading diaries to communicate with your child's class teacher on a day-to-day basis.

From Monday 16th (as long as the bags arrive in time!) we will be starting a new approach to home-school communication with 'Mail on Monday'. Each family will receive a mail bag which will contain a weekly newsletter and any other relevant communication. Mail bags will need to be returned to school each Friday, to a box in their classroom, by your child (eldest if you have more than one in school), containing any required returns e.g. consent forms, reply slips. We hope this will ensure that communication is effective. In the first mail bag you will find a list of key dates for planned events for the year. Of course, additional events may be added and things may change due to unforeseen circumstances, but we are aware of how useful it is to be able to pop these outline dates in your diary.

As well as this, we are currently working on a new school website so that we can share even more about what happens at Himbleton with you. We will keep you posted as this develops.

REWARDS AND SYSTEMS

Celebration Assembly will move back to a Friday morning and will take place at 9.10am in the Key Stage Two classroom, beginning on Friday 13th September. You will be informed by Wednesday evening if your child will be receiving a specific award for our values or for their work and you are very welcome to attend the assembly. Each week I will have a tea party for our 'Workers of the Week'; I believe this a great way to get to know the children informally. If your child would like to share an award or certificate from out of school they are very welcome to do so; please continue to complete a green slip from the School Office to make us aware of this.

This year we will be having three 'houses'; we have decided to name the houses Oak, Ash and Elm in line with our 'Nurture, Nature, Knowledge' motto. Each house will be made up from children from each year group and the houses will work together for a variety of activities e.g. curriculum theme days, Sports Days. Rather than e-Praise points, each child will be awarded house points this year and the house with the most points each week will be awarded the trophy in our Friday assembly. Children will be allocated to their house very soon.

We will be appointing our 2019/20 Head Boy and Head Girl by the end of next week. They will be nominated by their peers and will be ambassadors for our school throughout the year. We will keep you posted on this! In addition, our Pupil Parliament will soon be elected and will be made up of two children from each year group. The parliament will meet regularly to discuss school issues and plan actions, being the voice of the children in the school. Again, we will let you know who the members are once this has been finalised.

CURRICULUM

The term we will be continuing to have specialist sports coaches in school. There will be a coach in school each Tuesday, who will deliver outdoor PE sessions to each class throughout the day. There will also be a coach in school each Wednesday, who will deliver indoor PE to each class throughout the day at the village hall. Please ensure that your child has their full PE kit in school on these days and that all items are clearly labelled.

Key Stage Two will be attending swimming lessons at Perdiswell Pool in Worcester on a Friday morning, leaving school at 10.15am, for the Autumn Term (first session on Friday 13th September). Key Stage One will swim in the Spring Term and Early Years will swim in the Summer Term. For swimming, all children need a towel and either a one-piece bathing costume or trunks (no loose fitting shorts) in a named bag please.

Forest School is an integral part of the curriculum at Himbleton and we will continue to provide this for each class in school as follows: Wednesday – Key Stage One, Thursday – Key Stage Two, Friday – Early Years. However, please ensure your child has a pair of wellies, a long-sleeved top and an old waterproof coat in school at all times, as we do like to be flexible in our outdoor provision.

If your child is in Key Stage One or Key Stage Two, please also ensure that your child has a named water bottle, filled with fresh water each day, in school at all times so that this is readily available in the classroom. Early Years have cups available at all times so this is not necessary for them.

Himbleton offers an exciting, engaging and diverse curriculum. Current learning themes are 'Fabulous Food' in Early Years, 'Down on the Farm' in Key Stage One and 'Remarkable Rainforests' in Key Stage Two. We will be having a Science Week in school during week commencing 21st October, where children will be taking part in a range of investigations and experiments. We are also looking at scheduling a whole school trip during this week - more information to follow soon. Throughout the year we will be holding 'Link and Learn' sessions for each class, where you will be invited in to take part in your child's learning.

We will also be offering a range of after-school clubs and you will receive a separate letter regarding this very soon.

Many thanks for your patience in reading this rather long letter – there is just so much to say! I look forward to working with you all as we move forward.

Kind regards,

Gemma Martin