
Widening Horizons, Raising Aspirations

Mrs N Murrell
Headteacher
Mrs T Cripps
Deputy Headteacher

14th July 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Let us begin by thanking you for your support, patience and understanding during these unprecedented times.

We hope you have found our information booklet helpful. As promised, we now have dates and times ready for our September start. In preparation for this new beginning, we have carefully considered our children's current needs/interests in light of the national lockdown.

Many of our children starting school this September have been unable to attend their nursery/ pre-school since March 2020, when lockdown began. As many of you know, Briary Pre-School (our main feeder nursery) has only recently opened this past week; some of our other feeder nurseries have also been closed. Our children have been in the comfort of their own homes with close family for the past 3 or 4 months. With summer holidays also taken into account, this could be 5 months of missed education for many of our children. We anticipate that transition to 'big school' could, therefore, be more challenging than it would usually be under normal circumstances. We have not been in a position to run our usual summer term transition arrangements, including home visits, pre-school visits and 'Stay and Play' sessions. We have decided, therefore, to carry these activities forward into September 2020 and to welcome the children to school in small groups on a staggered timetable. Introducing the children into school in smaller groups will enable us to adhere to social distancing guidelines more easily in the outset. Teaching the children about social distancing and frequent hand washing will also be easier in smaller groups.

As we are unable to organise home visits this year, due to current government guidelines, we are instead inviting you into school with your child to meet the teacher and the TA and to also see the classroom environment. We are running Teddy Bears' Picnics next term too, as well as morning-only sessions initially in order to give our children the best start to school possible. We must not underestimate how tired they will feel to begin with, as there are lots of changes for them to take on board – new adults, new friends, a new environment and new routines, to name but a few.

We want to make sure that all of our children are as ready as possible for their first full day of school and strongly believe it is in their best interests not to rush this settling in process, especially having seen the success of our small Year R bubble this June/July and how well our current Year R children have settled and thrived in smaller groups on a staggered timetable. We want to replicate this success for your children. Their well-being is our priority and we want them to feel happy and confident in school, knowing that Briary is a good place to be.

We hope that you can understand and appreciate our decision to introduce a slower and more gentle transition to school this year, following what has been a period of long absence from education for many of our children. As with all school planning at present, please bear in mind that any plans we have for September are subject to government guidance and change, dependent on the local and national situation of the COVID crisis. But be assured that we will notify you of any changes (should they occur) as soon as possible.

Any questions, please contact the school office.

Many thanks.

Yours sincerely

Mrs N Murrell
Headteacher

Mrs A James
Key Stage 1 Lead