

Sytchampton Endowed Primary School

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Dear parents,

I hope you all had a great summer break and made the most of the sunshine! It was wonderful to visit classes this morning and see so many children looking smart and excited to be back at school! I would like to welcome our new families to Sytchampton; I know you will make them welcome. The children seem very settled and reflect all the work staff did in the summer term getting to know them. Eagles (year 5 and 6) all look very smart in their blazers and we have a high expectations for them; leading the school through our school council, house captains, as school ambassadors and preparing for their transition to secondary school. Look out for secondary school open evenings which usually start in October.

We are all looking forward to another successful year as we grow both our school and our learners! We are very keen to involve our families and our first celebration assembly will be held this Friday at 2.30pm (these are held every 2 weeks). There will also be opportunities to see children's work on our Open morning (Oct 4th) which is for both prospective and our existing families, and during the year children enjoy sharing their learning through presentations/performances to parents. I attach our initial diary dates for the Autumn term.

Children's results.

I am very pleased to confirm that our reported results were all above Worcestershire and National expectations: **87 %** of our Early years achieved a good level of development compared to 72% nationally, **91%** of year 1 passed their phonics and **94 %** achieved age related expectations in KS1 SATS in Writing & Maths and **88%** Reading against national levels of 70%. In KS2 year 6 achieved **93%** pass in Reading, Maths and grammar and **87%** in writing compared to a national figure of 74%. **WELL DONE TO CHILDREN AND STAFF FOR ALL THEIR HARD WORK.** It was excellent to see 15 pupils stay with us until year 6, with one moving to Westacre in year 7, half moving to Stourport High School and 3 pupils achieving academic scholarships to local private schools.

Our targets this year will focus on creative writing and reading widely in English, as a staff we have reviewed our guided reading in school. The introduction of 'No Nonsense spelling' from year 2 – 6 has focused on spelling rules and moves away from the dependence on phonics. We are also continuing to focus on reasoning/challenge in maths but it is essential that pupils have the basic skills, such as times tables knowledge, to apply this.

School Priorities

On our Training day we reviewed our school development plan with Governors and our key priorities are:

- To encourage learners to gain confidence and make progress through quality teaching, feedback on learning, a growth mind-set and independent attitude.
- Continue to establish our Primary school by encouraging positive behaviours and attitudes to prepare children for each stage of their learning journey. To encourage this we have introduced a **POSTCARD** which will be sent electronically and only given for an exceptional attitude to school. This will run alongside our usual golden ticket and tea with me.
- To provide a broad and balanced curriculum which is relevant, linked to exciting experiences (visits/visitors) and to key skills. We value highly the opportunity for pupils to experience music and performance, sporting opportunities and other languages.
- To encourage pupils to be caring and thoughtful, understand how to stay fit and healthy and to appreciate cultural differences in the world we live in.

How can you help?

Attendance and prompt arrival.

Attendance is key to children's learning and good attendance means that pupils will have few gaps in learning. We follow a sequence of learning to meet the needs of the curriculum. We do understand the exceptional circumstances eg. an outbreak of chicken pox. The Government do not encourage any holidays in term time and I will not be able to authorise any holiday absences unless there are **exceptional** family circumstances.

Registers

School registers are now being taken electronically in the classrooms, and at 9am are submitted to the office for Mrs Bishop and Mrs Lawson to follow up on any absences. It is therefore very important that if your child arrives late (and is unable to join the lines to come into class with other children) you bring them in to school via the office so that they can be marked as present.

Timetable - Staggered lunchtime

It is important that children have breakfast and a healthy snack, we do have fruit available for all children. We are a healthy school and encourage children to drink water from their **labelled** water bottles. This term we are trialling a staggered lunch-time to ease the pressure on the playground, especially when the field is out of use. Reception and KS1 will have lunch from 11.45 – 12.45 and have first sitting, KS2 will have lunchtime from 12.15 – 1.15 and have second sitting. **We currently have a staff vacancy for a lunch-time supervisor, please see Mrs Bishop in the office.**

Early Years Reading Information evening

We would like to invite our new parents to a reading evening on Tuesday 18th Sept from 6-7pm. This will give Miss Gilmour and Miss Hopkins the opportunity to share how we teach reading and phonics so that you can support your children at home. Refreshments will be provided and it will be a good opportunity to meet each other and for you to give us some feedback.

Uniform and P.E. kit

Please can you ensure that **ALL uniform is labelled clearly**, with minimal jewellery and school appropriate hair accessories. Appropriate black footwear should be worn – no trainers.

We would also like to keep P.E. kit in school at all times (pupils get changed in school) in case there are changes to the timetable or to take advantage of good weather. Can you please also ensure that the kit includes outdoor kit (navy blue/black tracksuit bottoms and a top) as we intend to go outside as much as possible. In reception and KS1 it would also be helpful if children have wellies in school at all times, they will all have Forest school on Fridays. Hawks will have swimming on Wednesdays, starting 26th September.

Homework

Reception (Falcons): Children have phonics cards and are then introduced to books, they also have the opportunity to write a weekend diary entry when they take Cwtch (our friendly dragon) home for the weekend.

Ospreys: pupils will have Year 1 or year 2 spelling list and these will also be taught daily in school alongside phonics - children will be tested on Mondays. We encourage parents to hear children every day and develop a love for reading which such an important skill and is the key to learning across the curriculum. We also ask you to practise times tables and number sense. Topic work will also be set.

Hawks: We will continue with our homework booklet for spellings and times tables and a discussion question. Additional topic work will be set and we encourage children to read widely at home.

Eagles: use the CGP books in Maths and English and pages are completed to reinforce class work. These then become important revision booklets for SATs tests. Spellings will be tested on Fridays and again we encourage children to read widely.

Parental Involvement

PTA Annual General Meeting on Thursday 13th Sept at 6.30pm. Please support our PTA who do an amazing job in fundraising for all the extras in school, for example, our text messaging service, Christmas activities, funding for trips, new laptops. However, they can only achieve all this if they have a committee to steer events along – this is a great way to meet others and most of all have fun! I would like to personally thank Debbie Holbeche, who is stepping down as Chair, for all her commitment and support.

We look forward to seeing you at Celebration assemblies, open morning and parent consultations this term.

Car Park Can I please remind parents to use the community centre car park for access to school and wrap around care. We are very lucky to have the use of the car park and we ask parents to pay an annual fee of £15.00 per family which is less than 50p per week that we pay to the parish council. Please park cars as closely together as possible and follow the existing system. The widening of Cow Lane has helped the movement of traffic, however, please do not park in the lane or on the verge.

Please supervise children on the car park and escort them down the pathway to the gate and onto the playground for an 8.50am start; pupils are not supervised until 8.45am. I have asked children **not to run around or use the play equipment in the morning**. At the end of the day can I please remind parents that they do not need to be on the playground until 2.55pm, ready for 3.00pm end of day.

Staffing

I am pleased to report that Miss Waring gave birth to baby Leo on the 15th August and both are doing well. Mrs Lawson is our senior teacher and Acting Head when I am out of school. Mr Webster will now be in charge of Ospreys. Mrs Oliver and Mrs Martin have taken on some extra hours to support staff planning/management time. Mrs Hothi will also increase time for class support in Hawks and Ospreys as well as her lunchtime duties.

Thank you to our WAC team for running very successful sessions in the holidays and thank you for your support to make these viable. We offer wrap around care from 8.00am for breakfast club and also after school.

Contact with Staff. Can I remind parents that staff need to be in classrooms at the start of the day, so if you need to see a member of staff can you please either send a message via the office or book an appointment for after school.

Parents should not enter classrooms where staff are preparing for the day and briefing others.

In my five years at Sytchampton I have always tried to communicate clearly with parents who I know value our texts, emails, letters, tweets, newsletters, website and assemblies. I am always keen to share learning and my priority has always been high quality teaching in class. Mrs Lawson as Special Needs Co-ordinator follows up any concerns from parents and staff and works closely with outside agencies.

Office procedures/online communication

I know that many schools are now using online methods as the main form of communication and we have now decided that all communication will be sent electronically this year, saving time and printing costs and being ECO – friendly. We are also rolling out a new online payment system (SchoolMoney) that you will receive details of shortly – we would encourage parents to make ALL payments to school online using this system. Any letters regarding trips will be emailed and consent can be given via the payment system. If you do not have an email address and would like a paper copy of any letters this can be requested from the office. What's App groups are also a great way to communicate as a year group, but if anyone has any concerns or questions please come and discuss with me – it may be something we are aware of but need more information. It is also important to remind parents of data protection laws, in particular always being cautious about sharing personal information and photographs online.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have questions, your feedback is very much appreciated and I look forward to our next academic year, further developing our staff team and continued success.

Thank you for your support,

Sharon Williams, Head teacher



Miss Waring popped in to see us yesterday with Leo – and both doing well.