

16th April 2010

Beginning of Term, Summer 2010

Dear Parents and Children

I hope you have all enjoyed the Spring sunshine and return with renewed enthusiasm for our Summer term.

Staff

Our staff will be supported this term by a number of students. From Bexhill College we have Hollie Haines who will be with our Kindergarten and Cara Payne with Reception. For the first time, we also have a student who is working at degree level. Charlotte Sellers is in her first year of teacher training at Brighton University and will be based in our Reception class. She will work closely alongside Mrs Hammond and be involved in some small group work, also delivering the occasional class introduction or plenary session.

Traditional Events

As usual, we have planned a number of outings and performances. We look forward to the Year 2 informal concert on Tuesday 15th June, the Reception play on Wednesday 23rd June and the Nursery and Kindergarten summer concert on 1st July. Year 2 have an outing to Wilderness Wood on Tuesday 27th April, while Year 1 is visiting Battle Abbey and St Mary's church on 18th May and Hastings on 22nd June. The Reception classes are returning to Bedgebury Pinetum for minibeast hunting and pond dipping on Tuesday 25th May. More details will follow from the class teachers.

Charity Day, Wednesday 7th July, will be in aid of our Pre-Prep charity The Fellowship of St Nicholas which supports deprived families in the Rother area, funding initiatives such as a Nursery and the Fun Van. We ask the children to arrive in 'Mad Shoes', decorated shoes or boots. Please ensure that the children are wearing flat, practical footwear for safety: we have a treasure hunt and picnic that day. Thank you.

Arts Festival

This year, we are 'Dreaming of India', encouraging an appreciation of our wider world and cultures. Year 2 are to embark upon a project comparing Indian lifestyles with our own and we hope to share the Year 2 work with the whole of Pre-Prep. We have a dance troupe booked for the Tuesday and hope to offer a number of workshops over the week following half term for the children to circulate around. Ideas so far include cooking with an Indian theme and Indian wooden block printing. If any parent has a relevant skill or knows a suitable contact with skills which could be offered, possibly henna hand painting, sari wear or Indian folk storytelling, we would like you to be involved so please do contact me. In addition, please encourage children to bring in (named) items for our India display to help inspire others.

Sport

There is a Year 2 swimming gala on Thursday 27th May and *Watch Swim* weeks for Year 1 and the Reception classes. Miss Plant and Mrs Towner will be coaching the children for our traditional Pre-Prep Sports Day on Friday 2nd July; this will go ahead whatever the weather, inside if necessary. There will be a *Watch Dance* week as usual and the Years 1 and 2 Gym Display on 7th July from 2 pm.

Transition

As usual, we have planned ahead to ensure that all the children feel confident and happy moving on to their next class. There will be opportunities for staff to work alongside the children whom they will teach in September and the children will visit their new classes. We have arranged *Meet the Teacher* sessions for current Year 1 and Reception parents to be at morning drop-off times on 23rd and 24th June, followed by a 'carousel' on Wednesday 30th June when the children move around to their new class and parents are asked to collect children from there at 3.15 pm.

Current Year 2 children have a planned programme of activities to introduce them gradually to the Prep School. Parents and Year 2 children will be invited to our Open Morning on Saturday 8th May. This will be an introduction to Year 3 and an opportunity to meet the Prep School staff and children joining from other schools. Please could Year 2 children attend in school uniform and be reminded that they are expected to be good ambassadors for our school. Please let class teachers know of any new interests children have outside of school so that we can keep the children's profiles up to date. This helps to personalise learning for them.

The Early Years children and parents have a separate induction programme and we will be welcoming some new families to Vinehall, starting with an evening on Wednesday 12th May, for parents with children entering our Early Years (Nursery, Kindergarten, Reception) in September 2010. If you have any queries about the next steps, please don't hesitate to contact your class teachers or myself. On Friday 18th June from 2.30 pm, our current Reception parents are invited to meet Mrs Hammond who will feed back on the children's progress against the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile scales.

We are likely to be full in a number of year groups in September, so we will be operating a waiting list. I intend to be involved in directly supporting small group work in the Early Years in September and we are going to expand our Early Years provision to make use of the art room. The art facilities will move to the spare Year 2 room. If you have children that are not registered or know of anyone who is interested in joining Pre-Prep, it will be important to register an interest early to avoid disappointment. We are also planning welcome events which we like to involve new parents in, so please contact me or the Registrar, Mrs Fiona Parry, if you need to.

Reminders

Uniform Children should return in Summer uniform with all their uniform, including each item of PE kit clearly labelled. Staff are spending a large amount of time searching for kit and spare clothing to lend as children are increasingly turning up to school with incorrect or lack of kit. All children should have separate white socks to change into for games.

Illness Please be reminded that we need to take a firm stance on children returning to school after sickness. They should have **24 hours at home** following any such symptoms. Please alert us of any conditions that we need to flag up to our community, particularly as we may have pregnant ladies and children who are susceptible to infection.

Car Park Please take great care on the drive. There has been a number of 'near miss' accidents with young children wandering unsupervised around parked and moving cars.

We very much look forward to an exciting term ahead and hope that the children share their enthusiasm and enjoyment with you. There is much on offer and I hope that the children find a balance between the creative, academic and sporting opportunities available. Our Arts Week is an occasion for our community to come together to be enthralled and informed. Please see the published calendar, class letters and notice boards for further details.

With best wishes for the summer, 2010,

Tessa Richardson

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