



7th January 2011

Pre-Prep Beginning of Term Letter, Lent 2011

Dear Parents and Children

Welcome to Pre-Prep in 2011. Despite the short time available to support staff over the holiday and unwelcome snow flurries, I am very proud of the work which we have been able to do. The fencing around the play area has been expanded to provide a larger secure area for the children when outside. We have begun work on a giant timeline for along the corridor, which will be added to gradually over the years to include significant people and events that make up 'History'. This will encourage more awareness of chronology; hopefully give a visual clue to the passing of time and help to order eras such as the Saxons, Norman, Romans and Vikings – always a tricky thing, it never seems very logical!

The teaching staff have been busy too, I had an enjoyable birthday with the team; relocating art, IT and music resources in order to set up our new Year 1 and 2 classes. I am so pleased to be returning to two classes in each year group and I am grateful to parents for bearing with us during the reorganisation over the past couple of years. Many thanks.

Welcomes

We welcome Mr Richard Follett, our new Head; we have met or been in touch frequently over the last few months and have begun working on new initiatives including a website for prospective parents. I am sure Mr Follett will be a regular visitor to Pre-Prep; he will certainly have a number of invitations.

We particularly welcome Mrs King to Year 2; she has been busy getting to know the school, our children and curriculum. She is a very experienced member of staff and comes highly recommended. We are also joined in Pre-Prep by new Gap Students, they have been invited to spend an evening with me, Mrs B and our teenage sons who have promised to induct them into all things British!

Hollie Haines and Hannah Adamson, students from Bexhill College will also be supporting us this term in Reception and Kindergarten; they are studying for a NVQ in Child Care Learning and Development.

We also welcome new families; Alexandra Hamilton joins Mrs Harding's class and Diotima Cook joins Mrs Hammond's class. Our Nursery class is joined by Felicity Ruffer and Hugo Edwards. Max Joseph joins Year 1. Thank you to everyone who has been in touch with them over the holiday, it does make a big difference!

Class Activities

This is purposefully planned as a quieter term and an opportunity for the children to really build on their progress last term. The teachers will be sending out year group letters which will indicate in more detail the areas of learning that are to be covered.

Highlights

This term will include assemblies to be held by Year 2 and later Year 1 as well as our Parents' Evening. At the end of term we will hold, in liaison with the Friends of Vinehall, our traditional pancake and Easter events. All the dates for these events and others are in the calendar and are available from the Vinehall website.

E-Learning and Staff Training

Our Inset days promise to be extremely busy and productive; we are continuing to add to our VLE support which can be used for curriculum enrichment and extension activities at home, school closure or not. Our links to websites are now also posted in this area as well as the gallery of photographs taken over the term.

In addition we are focusing on providing increased challenge and problem solving opportunities for the children. Our staff have worked with an external trainer to consider how they can further promote the children's thinking and learning.

Weather

We have an information phone line in the event of severe weather, the number line is 01580 883058. We intend to keep Pre-Prep open whenever possible; however please understand that we need to ensure we have the requisite amount of staff available to maintain safe ratios and would advise parents not to make unnecessary journeys that are potentially hazardous with their young children. We have an effective cascade system for staff and this seemed to work well for parents too, my thanks to the FOV for enabling this.

Clothing

Please provide your children with named and looped hats, gloves and warm, waterproof coats. We try to get the children out everyday even when the weather is cold and wet! All children should have the correct PE kit, including white socks. As above all games kit should be clearly labelled and looped.

Holiday

A reminder that any requests for holiday absence should be in writing to our Head or to me. We permit 10 days over the year (though do not encourage this); any time above this would have to be unauthorised.

On behalf of all the Pre-Prep staff, I wish you a belated happy New Year and look forward to a rewarding Lent term.

Yours sincerely

Tessa Richardson

Head of Pre Prep