



Caldecote Church of England Academy

Manor Place

Upper Caldecote

Biggleswade

Bedfordshire

SG18 9DA

Telephone: 01767 316206

Fax: 01767 313429

30th December 2022

Dear Families,

We hope you are having a great Christmas break. We are writing to let you know some key information for next term.

Welcome Back

We are really looking forward to welcoming you back on 4th January 2023 for a new school term. Staff return on 3rd and the children return on 4th. We would ask that you ensure that your child arrives in school before 8.55am each day. We are also monitoring attendance as this is really important in helping your child to reach their potential. The Education Attendance Officer will be meeting with us regularly to discuss and monitor attendance, as in all schools.

Gemini Staff

We are very excited to welcome Mrs Alice Jackson and Ms Sharan Bhalla to our Gemini team. Mrs Jackson will be working on a Monday and Tuesday. Ms Bhalla will be working on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Both staff are very experienced key stage 1 teachers who are very keen to meet you and to work with your children. Ms Bhalla will be with us for the Spring term. For the summer term, we welcome Mr Jackson, who will job share with Mrs Jackson. He is currently teaching and so has to fulfil his notice period before being starting with us. In the interviews held before Christmas, Mrs Jackson and Mr Jackson came to teach in Gemini and the feedback from the children was very positive. Whilst we appreciate that there are significant changes for the pupils, we are very confident that the staff we have in place will provide the education, support and nurture that the children deserve. Ms Bhalla will be in school on 5th January prior to starting on 11th, to meet with the children.

Uniform

Please ensure that your children are coming in to school in the correct uniform: Grey or black skirt or trousers, white or red polo shirt, red cardigan, fleece or jumper, black school shoes (not heels and no open toes). There is a lot of un-named uniform at the front entrance and so it cannot be returned to its rightful owner. Children are also required to have the correct PE kit. For this term, when PE is most likely to be inside, black shorts, red or white t-shirt, plimsolls or trainers. The children will also need track suit bottoms and a warm top in case the weather is good enough to go outside. For PE, children with long hair are expected to have it put up so it is safe; earrings are expected to be taken out or covered with microporous tape (provided from home). These are health and safety requirements. The children will have PE on a Wednesday as previously and we are also fortunate to welcome Laura from Tenacity Dance back for another half term on a Tuesday afternoon. The feedback from the children was that they would like to continue with Tenacity Dance.

Forest School

Polaris will be doing Forest School sessions during the first half of the spring term. We are very fortunate that we are able to offer Gemini and Cygnus Forest School during the first half term also. The children will need waterproof, warm clothing and waterproof boots / wellies. This will begin on Tuesday 10th January.

Before and After School Club

Have a look at our after-school club provision for this half term. There are some great activities going on. From February half term, we are also aiming to provide another sport club, (possibly dance or gym) after school on a Friday. We will confirm nearer the time.

Before school club is increasing in attendance also, which is great news. At your request, we can provide children with breakfast. If your child has not had breakfast in the morning, please let us know and we will be able to provide them with something to eat.

Volunteers

As always, we are looking for family support in the classrooms. Do you enjoy art? Crafts? Reading with children? Supporting them with their learning? Gardening? Playing games? Forest School? Do you know anyone who would like to spend some time in school each week?

If so, we want to hear from you. We are very keen to provide a range of activities during the school day for our children but we need your help to do this as the funding crisis hitting homes is also hitting schools. All volunteers will be subject to a DBS check to ensure their safety to work with children. We can provide training / guidance for any activities you would like to undertake.

National Online Safety

We hope that you managed to have a look at the National Online Safety portal. We only have the portal for a year as part of the training package through the National College. It gives key information about how to keep our children safe online. In logging on and creating an account, you are able to access a whole range of information and videos on helping you and your family stay safe. It also enables our school to become accredited as an online safe school – family participation is a criteria.

Families Supporting Families

We met earlier in the year to introduce Learning with Parents to you. We've had a few teething problems with the technology, but we hope these are now all sorted.

We would like to have another coffee / tea / cake morning with you in the first half term. I will be speaking with Mrs Giugno on our return to school to set a date. We will be asking families for some ideas on what you would like us to cover or to look at during that morning, in addition to some information we would like to share with you.

Schools For the Future

Vaughan Johnson and I met with the Schools for the Future planning team again just before Christmas, to discuss the ever-developing plans for our school. The newly drawn up plans are very exciting and we hope to be able to share these with you very soon. We have worked closely with the planning team to create plans that will really enhance our school and what we will be able to provide as a primary school.

Tiny Forest

As you know, we were successful in our bid to develop a Tiny Forest on our land. Mrs Evans, Mrs Freeman, Mr Johnson and myself met with the Tiny Forest Planning team and we now have a plan in place for where, when and how the forest will work. We have a list of native trees that will be planted within our forest school area and we are very excited to be able to tell you that the children will be involved in the planting, monitoring and maintenance of the area.

Thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Campbell and the Caldecote Team