

11th May 2017

Planned class structure for September 2017 and continuing school improvements

Dear Parents and Carers

Two weeks ago I wrote to you regarding changes to staffing in school. With the knowledge of new appointments to the staff team comes the opportunity to take a fresh look at classes. In September 2017 we will have four classes in our school, each comprising of approximately twenty five children. This is a positive plan which also incorporates Miss Hall's maternity leave and gives the school the capacity to manage the current reduction in pupil numbers whilst keeping classes and children supported with our current number of teaching assistants.

The planned structure is as follows:

YR/1	Class Jonah	Mrs Hodder and Mrs Stevens
Y1/2	Class Moses	Mrs Wade
Y3/4	Name to be decided	New appointment
Y5/6	Name to be decided	New appointment

One of the new appointments will also hold the role of Assistant Head teacher. I am excited to have shown seventeen prospective candidates around school who are interested in the vacancies we have advertised. Shortlisting is on 16th May and interviews are being held on 25th and 26th May.

Teaching the juniors in two classes, whilst keeping smaller class sizes will enable there to be more focus on the specific curriculum for these children. The National curriculum has clear expectations for the end of Y4 with learning objectives for Y3/4 and also clear expectations for the end of Y6 with learning objectives for Y5/6. This will make planning and teaching less challenging for the teachers enabling them to focus more on the progress of all learners in all subjects.

With four classes, we will have a vacant room. This creates another positive opportunity for our school to develop this space into an art / music room which will enable the teachers to take their class to this room rather than teaching art and music in the classrooms. This room will be a fantastic resource and improvement to our current learning environment.

In addition, our school has successfully secured £132 000 of funding from the Diocese for phases one and two of our long term building plan to improve the learning environment for all children. Firstly, to improve the security of the entrance from the car park by moving the office further out, creating a new entrance where visitors can come in without having direct access to the school. Secondly, to create an additional classroom so that when we return to five classes we will still have extra space to further enrich the curriculum giving your child continued access to an improved learning environment.

Even though our numbers are smaller, I want to reassure you that our school will continue to give all our children the opportunity to engage in wider curriculum enrichment such as clubs, trips, sports events, community activities and Congleton partnership initiatives within the town.

Recently, the choir sang at Astbury Mere care home, our Y5/6 and Y3/4 children joined other schools to create town teams in a TAG rugby tournament whilst Y3/4 danced in the Eaton Bank Academy dance festival. Our Eco club are entering a garden competition in the Congleton Park and Y5/6 have been busy designing and painting guitars to sell on their stall at May Day. Class trips have been enjoyed and have enriched the curriculum. Our active school council, led by Mrs Wade, has prepared and just started to deliver a whole school initiative on healthy eating. After half term, classes will start to work with Rector Jeff to plan and lead family worship in Astbury church. On 22nd May, we are having a visit from Congleton Youth Orchestra and in September we are planning to use the violins and cellos that have been in storage to teach a class of children to learn to play an instrument as part of an ensemble.

Before September, there is an opportunity to appoint a teaching assistant / play leader. There has been a demand for extra support staff in the classroom and on the playground at lunch (as raised as a concern by parents). It is hoped that this new post best fits this demand and will enable us as a school to employ someone to support learning in classes as well being on the playground at lunch time to support play.

The governors have put in a bid for over £10,000 of school improvement money from the Local Authority. This money will be used to address key areas for improvement post OFSTED through the actions set by the Raising Attainment Group. The actions continue to drive forward English and maths developments to raise standards in these two core subjects as well as focussing on improving behaviour management in the classroom and on the playground.

I trust that this letter has informed you about some of the future structures for staffing, classes, curriculum and the school learning environment.

If you want to talk through any of the content of this letter then please come along to an open chat on Thursday 18th May at 3:30pm.

Yours faithfully

Pip Worswick



Diocese of Chester

