



## MARLBOROUGH - A SCHOOL OF SUCCESS

**We would like to extend a warm welcome to the new school year to all our children, parents/carers, staff and governors and are very much looking forward to building on our successes from last year.** The teaching and support staff have worked hard to prepare the school for the Autumn and a rigorous programme of maintenance and redecoration around our premises has been completed. This has contributed positively to the children settling in so quickly into their new classes.

We are delighted to inform you that Marlborough Primary School has been recognised by the London Mayor's Office as a 'School of Success,' and that Mr Murrell and Mrs Gill will be attending a special award ceremony at City Hall at the end of the month. We are also pleased to report that the outcomes from the academic year 2016-17 show that our children have continued to achieve well in all Key Stages.

Please remember that our Infant (Years 1 and 2) and Junior (Years 3, 4, 5 and 6) Parent/Carer Meetings to help launch the new term will take place at 7.00pm in the School Hall on Tuesday 19th and Thursday 21st September respectively. During these meetings we will outline the highlights of the previous school year and our improvement priorities for 2017-18. In addition, there will be an opportunity to hear more about our continuing link with Cavendish Primary School and for Year 6 to receive information and advice in respect to the secondary transfer process.

We look forward to seeing you.

## SERIOUS CONCERNS OVER OUR ATTENDANCE FIGURES

**Despite the our school's successes, we are becoming increasingly concerned about the our attendance figures which declined over school year 2016-17.** Unfortunately, overall attendance has now fallen below the national average for 2016-17 and the number of pupils whose attendance is below 90% has risen significantly. This is further exacerbated by the increasing proportion of pupils who arrive late in the mornings. This issue now presents the most substantial barrier in terms of the school's aspiration to be judged as 'outstanding' by Ofsted.

Whilst we would like to take the opportunity to thank the majority of parents/carers who always ensure that their children attend school regularly, arrive promptly and avoid taking term-term holidays, we would also like to respectfully remind those parents/carers who find it more challenging to support the school in this regard of the following:

- There is a very strong statistical link between poor attendance and lack of progress in learning. It has also had a negative impact on a pupil's confidence and well-being and capacity to succeed at school and beyond
- A child with 90% attendance at the end of an academic year has missed 19 school days which equates to almost 4 whole school weeks
- The unnecessary absence of pupils causes additional difficulties for hard working teachers as they have to adapt learning activities to cater for the needs of children who have missed previous lessons
- Arriving late for school causes children otherwise avoidable stress and disrupts the learning. The need to repeat explanations and instructions to latecomers also compromises valuable teaching time
- Unless a child experiences an exceptional medical circumstance or has an ongoing serious condition, it would be extremely unlikely that their attendance would fall below 97% over the duration of a school year
- It is a legal responsibility for parents./carers to ensure that their children attend school regularly. The Local Authority have the powers to take action against parents/carers who keep their children off school without an acceptable reason. These powers include issuing Parenting/Education Supervision Orders and fines

Please be aware that we will continue to try and work with the parents/carers of the 62 children whose attendance fell below 90% during the last school year in order avoid the damaging consequences to the life chances of their children. We would also encourage any parent/carer who is uncertain whether their child is well enough to attend school. e.g. when they have a mild cold, to bring their child into school and allow the teachers to assess the situation. Please be assured that the school would not be encouraging any child to attend school when they are genuinely unwell and would take immediate measures to have a child sent home in the case that illness or injury prevents them from learning at school.

**REMINDER: KEY DIARY DATES FOR 2017-18 ARE NOW AVAILABLE ON OUR WEBSITE.**



## SAFEGUARDING OUR PUPILS

**Following a recent review of our Safeguarding Policy, we would like to clarify the following arrangements for the dropping off and collection of children.** Please be aware that, along with other safety concerns, these arrangements are designed to minimise the time in which the school might be vulnerable in terms of accessibility to the public.

### **Morning Drop-Off Arrangements:**

- The school gates will be opened at 8.35am in the mornings
- Soft Start - The classes will open at 8.45am from which time children can enter their classroom and occupy themselves with an independent learning activity
- The school day officially starts at 8.55am when the class doors will be closed and secured. Any child arriving after this time will need to report to the school office where they will be registered as late
- The school gates will be closed and made secure as soon as possible after 9.05am. We therefore request that all parents/carers leave the premises as promptly as possible

### **Afternoon Pick-Up Arrangements**

- The school gates will be opened no earlier than 3.20pm. This is due to the fact that outdoor learning activities e.g. PE lessons will still be in session until this time
- All children from Nursery to Year 4 will only be released to a known parent/carer
- In order to encourage pupils in Year 5 and 6 to gain independence, the pupils will be released directly from the classroom and be expected to find their parent/carer themselves. If they are unable to locate their parent/carer, they will be expected to return to the classroom
- Only children from Year 6 will be given permission to walk/travel home independently. Year 6 parents/carers must inform the school office in writing if they wish their child to walk/travel home independently
- The school gates will be closed and secured at approximately 3.50pm and we encourage parents/carer and pupils to leave the premises as quickly and safely as possible
- Any child who has not been picked up by 3.45pm will be taken to the school office where they will be supervised while our receptionist tries to contact the parent/carer in question. If we have not received or made any contact with a named carer by 4.30pm, we will then contact the duty officer at Children's Social Care to make arrangements for the child to be taken into the care of the Local Authority

### **Other reminders and expectations:**

- The school car-park is out of bounds to parents/carers with the exception of disabled badge holders who can apply for an annual pass. These will be issued at the discretion of the school's Board of Governors and only where an exceptional mobility circumstance can be demonstrated
- In the interests of safety, physical well-being and the environment, we encourage all of our parents/carers to avoid bringing their children to and from school by car. Where this is not possible, we would expect all motorists to avoid putting members of our school community and the public at risk by parking away from the school premises and certainly not parking near to the school gates. In addition, we ask motorists not park illegally e.g. leaving their vehicle on corners, on yellow lines, mounting kerbs, or obstructing our neighbours drive ways. We also ask that drivers always ensure their children only travel in the appropriate car seats/restraints
- If you wish your child to ride to school, please be aware that children must be wearing a safety helmet and that we do not currently have facilities for storing bicycles other than those owned by staff
- For safety and insurance reasons, parents/carers must ensure that their children do not ride bicycles or scooters on the school premises and do not use school play equipment before and after school e.g. climbing frames, adventure trail, earth dome
- Please let the office know if another adult/carer is going to pick up your child. This will avoid any unnecessary difficulties for the staff and/or the carer in question, as we instruct our teaching staff never to release a child to an unknown adult. Please be aware that we will not release a child to an older sibling or carer who is of Primary School age
- Children must not bring mobile phones or other such devices e.g. tablets into school. The only exception would be for Year 6 pupils who are travelling to and from school independently. Although we would still discourage this, parents/carers can apply to the school for such permission. The pupils concerned must hand in their phones to office on arrival after which they will be locked securely in the school safe until when they come to collect them at the end of the school day

**Thank you for your support, understanding and co-operation**