



SOUTHRIDGE FIRST SCHOOL

June 2021



Rather like the blackbird nestlings that are beginning to spill out of their nest in my garden, the children are starting to look a little big for their classrooms. Some, like our super Nursery children are filling their carpet spots that looked so big back in the autumn, while our fabulous Year 4s are looking ready to spread their wings and fledge. Their dedicated teachers and support staff will continue to feed them with knowledge, skills and big healthy doses of our School Values, to see them safely up to the end of the school year. With the local situation regarding COVID-19 still very precarious, we here in school have been carefully trying to balance the risks and benefits to the children of a rich, positive transition experience against the potential impact of additional children and staff having to self-isolate in the instance of a positive case. As such, we will be providing the children with several short transition experiences in school where they will get to meet their new teachers and visit their new classrooms. We aim to ensure that the children leave school at the start of the summer holidays, excited and reassured about the teacher that will be guiding them through the next year of their education here at Southridge.



Bigfoot Arts Drama Workshops - The children in Year 1 and Year 3 have already enjoyed drama workshops aimed to encourage a love of nature and to care for their local environment. It was based on the life of a beehive in Uncle Beard's garden and offered each year group a different, but equally engaging, experience with those same central themes. Year 2 have a special drama workshop specifically planned for their year group coming up called 'Little Steps' which explores the exciting challenges and opportunities that await them in Year 3, while Year 4 have been invited for "Jury Service" in the trial of a wolf accused of being both big and bad! Meanwhile our youngest children in Reception and Nursery will enjoy a story telling session about a story tree that wants to write its own stories. The sessions are specifically designed to help children explore change in a safe, exciting and positive way.



Ready, steady, go!

The children have thoroughly enjoyed their Sports Afternoons in the sun this week with lots of competition supported by cheering friends and loud clapping for all! With a range of athletics races and competitions, the children have run, jumped, bounced and thrown their way around all sorts of super sports activities. As stickers and certificates were awarded for all their hard work and effort, the only thing missing were the grown up family members cheering them on. We cannot wait for next summer when hopefully this lovely tradition can return.

Staffing Changes:

We are very pleased to announce that Miss Sarah Koratzitis will be joining the Southridge Team as our new Deputy Headteacher in September. Having previously worked as a lead practitioner at Cramlington Village Primary School she brings with her a wealth of teaching experience and a real passion to see all our children excel. At the end of term we will say goodbye to Miss Amy Hepworth who has been supporting children with curriculum catch-up in Year 2, 3 and 4 this year. She is taking a post at nearby Coquet Park First School, as her contract with us comes to an end. It has been lovely having her back at Southridge this year and we wish her all the very best for the future.

Meet the Teacher - a virtual opportunity

Sadly, we are once again unable to offer a face-to-face opportunity to 'Meet the Teacher' but staff have been working hard to produce slide shows and videos that will be available to access from the school website in the coming week. We will notify you via text message when they are uploaded and ready to view.

End of Year Reports

Staff are busy preparing end of year reports for your children that will be sent home in the penultimate week of term.

A "Thank You" from the office staff to the parents in Reception and Year 1 who have already used our new Parent App system to update their contact details. This is vital if we ever need to contact you in an emergency. It will be rolled out to Years 2 and 3 in the coming week.

Sickness and Diarrhoea

From time to time children are sick (vomit) either at home or at school. Unfortunately it is not possible to distinguish between the causes, and therefore it is essential that the same rule of exclusion applies in all cases of vomiting or diarrhoea. In the Public Health Agency document, 'Guidance on infection control in Schools and other Childcare Settings', the recommendation is that any staff member or child with diarrhoea and or vomiting symptoms must stay away or be excluded from the school or early years setting until they have been free of symptoms for 48 hours (the '48 hour rule') and feel well. If your child is sick at school, we will ask you or your emergency contact to take your child home. They should not return for 48 hours to reduce the risk of infection for all children in school. Thank you for your understanding with this.

COVID-19 Tests

As the number of local cases of COVID-19 continues to rise I wish to assure parents that school continue to employ strict transmission control measures and staff regularly use Lateral Flow Tests to offer some additional security. The evidence from cases in our school suggests that children often do not show the 'classic' three symptoms of cough, fever and loss of smell/taste. As such, school may likely ask that if your child misses school due to illness that they have a precautionary PCR test. We recognise that this may not always be easy, but could be instrumental in preventing a further outbreak in school and the subsequent need for self isolation.