

Cheam Common Infants' Academy

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Headteacher: Mrs V Riziotis BA (Hons) PGCE NPQH

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Dearest Parents and Carers,

I have had the privilege to lead Cheam Common Infants' Academy over the past 7 years and I have been fortunate enough to work with an incredibly talented and committed team of staff, parents and children over this period. **Mrs. Rosewell**, **Mrs. Buckeridge** and **Mrs. Williams** have all been an amazingly stalwart senior leadership team this year during a period of great change.

I am really happy to say that over this time the whole school team at Cheam Common Infants', supported and challenged by the previous Infant School Governing Body, have visioned and established many wonderful development projects and provisions. As a result, we have been able to offer the children a rich and extensive curriculum and the means by which to develop their emotional and physical wellbeing.

- **Malawi "African Vision Malawi"** - where the whole school supports, learns about and values a community and country beyond their local world. The children have done the most wonderful research projects and linked our festival celebrations through storytelling, song and dance whilst doing this. **Mrs Buckeridge** even went to Mkhunku school last summer, making it even more real and accessible for both communities of children. The school and FRIENDS have fundraised continuously to support this project.
- **Music "If music be the food of love, play on"** - and so we do - through our choirs, Rocksteady bands, violin learning and performing, singing in class and assemblies and through our theatrical and musical performances and celebrations. We have an established relationship with **Christ Church with St Philip Church**, who have helped us to build and sustain our community. We sing every year on 21st September for **World Peace Day** and use it to teach the children about what peace means to them and to the wider world. **Mrs. Buckeridge** has been instrumental (forgive the pun!) in ensuring this breadth and consistently high standard of musical provision and performance.
- **Tasty Bite Catering** - developed by the children, for the children, so that yummy infant appropriate meals could be enjoyed by the children (and the staff!). **Mrs. Williams**, our School Business Manager was instrumental in this development and its success is because of the highest quality staff, led by our wonderful catering manager **Mrs. Moore**.
- **Forest Friday** - a few years ago our infant school governing body spotted the potential at the local scout provision to get some green and natural space for our children to learn and develop in. We buy into this every year through our P.E. funding to enable a broad and rich outdoor curriculum offer. We used a Forest Friday expert, **Mrs. Guertin** from **Heathbrook Primary in Lambeth**, who worked with both **Miss Hobby**, our Assistant Head and **Mrs. Furner**, our Outdoor Learning Leader, to train teachers in the use of this curriculum provision, supporting staff in how to use it effectively. The children dance in the scout hut, whilst others explore mini beasts, do natural art projects or maybe a maths activity. In the summer we have our P.E. and Sports Day there, which makes it into such a hugely important community event. Year 2 have their farewell picnic and the Nursery use it for their picnic and Sports Day events. **FRIENDS** also use it as a community resource to meet in at the beginning of the year.



- **P.E.** - Last year **Mrs. Barber** moved on having led the school to gain the **Silver P.E.** award and handed the reins over to **Miss Kalbfuss**, who has taken up the enormously important mantle of ensuring that our children have the best P.E. teaching and physical activity provisions. Over the years, we have brought in a number of professionals - **Danny Laverick** (Playball) to teach the core P.E. skills and games from Nursery through to Year 2; **Sarah Platt** teaches Dance; **Donna Maxey and Suzy (from Sutton Schools Partnership)**, teach Gymnastics. They all model for the teachers to build their skills for teaching P.E. and so we have been able to raise the standards in this area and the amount of physical exercise. We have many sports clubs which run after school also. We are working towards Gold Awards for both P.E. and for Healthy Schools. **Mrs Furner** has led a strong PSHE curriculum and ensures the emotional well being of the staff also with her secret fairies.
- **Mobile Technology & Online Safety.** Having fundraised through **FRIENDS** and agreed match funding with our previous infant governing body, **Mrs. Williams** and I found a great educational company, **Solutions Inc.** to purchase our I pads from and to run a highly successful CPD programme for all staff across the school, to ensure their effective use for learning across the curriculum. **Mrs. Rosewell and Miss French** worked very closely with Vicky Bacon from Solutions Inc. to train and run this programme over two years. Its success was recently heralded at our first LEO conference in October 2018, where **Miss French** ran a workshop for all the other schools. **Miss French** has also trained as an **Online Safety Champion**, training up all staff and ensuring that the children learn about online safety at school and how to be safe at home and supporting parents and teachers with this through providing up to date information.
- **Wrap Around Care Clubs (WACC)** provide services for over 100 children. We wisely decided to bring the provision in-house this academic year and with the support of **Mrs. Williams** and the past and current leaders and staff within it, we now have a dynamic and stable provision, with one of our long term TA's, **Ms. Davey** leading the Early Birds Club and **Carly Vincent** heading up Fireflies. The children are safe and happy before and after school from 3 years old and upwards and now enjoy a rich feast of additional internal clubs within Fireflies, such as **Little Kickers, SuperSports, Chinese and Cookery**, thanks to the vision and organisational skills of **Mrs. Williams**.
- **Trainee Teachers have become our NQTs, trainee Teaching Assistants and Volunteers** have been welcomed into the school over many years, enabling their own career development and training to take place and to provide additional support for the classes. **Mrs. Rosewell and Mrs. Buckeridge, together with all our teachers** have played a huge part in this, whether organising, inducting, training or mentoring - helping to provide future teachers and TAs. The classes have been well supported by **parents as volunteers** whether reading, attending trips, filing, sharpening pencils or going to Forest Friday! Without this we cannot do as much as we do.
- **Expansion** came 7 years ago and with all the increased pressure on school budgets and the costs of becoming an academy last year, this led us to vision and develop our **Nursery Unit**. We have been providing a fully flexible offer - developed originally by myself, **Miss Hobby, Mrs. Meaney and Mrs. Williams, together with the Dfe and Sutton LA**, over the past 3 years, resulting in a provision which has now been extended to nearly 90 children. This means we can finally fill up our Reception Classes and hopefully be more cost effective as a school.
- A year ago we converted to **Academy status** and joined The LEO Multi-Academy Trust. Change is always a difficult process and this was a mammoth decision to take for the school, but the process was supported successfully by both our Infant governing body and by our staff governor **Mrs. Clarke and Mrs. Williams**, who both worked closely with myself to facilitate the consultation process with staff and with the unions. We continue to adjust to

the new working practices of LEO and to glean and give support as they continue to develop into an established Multi Academy Trust.

- **Successful Outcomes above national** across the school, in all areas of learning, are the result of the team work by senior and middle leaders, managers, teachers and teaching assistants and are enabled due to the honest relationships between parents and the school. The children love learning, want to come to school, are happy and thrive in this environment because we care and provide for them and for you as families, as much as we can in the broadest sense. So much work has gone on between senior leaders working so closely with core leaders like **Mrs. Hughes** our English and Year 1 leader, **Mrs. Furner**, our Year 2 leader and **Miss Keating** our Mathematics lead, together with the **Early Years' leaders** to substantially raise standards of progress and outcomes. The vision and drive of all staff is really strong and we work together as a very strong team to achieve this. Children who have additional needs at any one time are well catered for by our Specialist Teaching Assistants, **Mrs. Marshall and Mrs. Brady**, who have done such a fantastic job to ensure those children catch up and make the progress they need to.
- **Family Support Worker - Joanna Hicks** is an invaluable resource and works with passion and integrity to support families, children and teachers to work out solutions to issues they may be facing.
- **Midday Supervisors (MDS)** and our **Learning Support Assistants** must not be the unsung heroes across the school. They are dedicated to the children's learning and to their emotional well-being- at all times. They are careful that the children eat well, are safe and feel happy at playtime and in their learning. They help the children overcome any hurdles and praise and encourage them at all times. **Mrs. Winfield** needs a special mention here as the long term **leader of the MDS's**. Her compassion, her love of children, her ability to organise and reorganise, her unflappability when I suggest what appears to be an impossible idea or when there is a really difficult situation to resolve, allows the school and children to always feel confident and assured.
- **Mr Chalke, our Site Manager and Mr. Fear, from the Juniors** work together to keep the schools safe and protected and are supportive and on board with us at all times. Mr. Chalke does a great job of 'high-fiving' the little ones coming into school, providing a great male role model and regularly cheers up everyone at the gate.
- **School Office - Mrs. Meaney** ensures that effective communications happen within school and from the outside in. Her rigour and dedication to this school has ensured that attendance is excellent, admissions are dealt with effectively and efficiently and that anything that I don't understand is researched and sorted. **Mrs. Quallo** thought she had an office job until we discovered her talent with the younger members of our community! She shows such understanding and love of young children and is able to work with professionals to move them forward. Last and by no means least, **Mrs. Wall** is seemingly the quiet finance officer but really she is my right hand woman- not to mention our **Safeguarding guru**. She cares deeply about the children and their families with whom we work. She is a calm and realistic problem solver and keeps us all up to date with the latest legislation and procedures. She also looks after me and keeps me sane on a daily basis!
- **FRIENDS** - you are amazing, you are relentless, you are dedicated and you are REALLY WELL organised. **Thank you** to all the FRIENDS volunteers, the leaders past and present, because you not only raise money for us, you provide fun for the children and ensure a continued community for us all and you do it with such perseverance
- **FINALLY, THE CHILDREN.** Well, they are just delightful, joyful, endearing, polite, hardworking, friendly and HAPPY. They make this school what it is. In a very recent inspection one child described the school as '**great, fun, kind, brilliant and safe**'. What more could we ask for?

As I reflect upon all the strengths and provisions that are truly embedded in this wonderful school and with the support you as parents give to this community, I am completely reassured that I can finally go quietly out to graze.

It is time!

I have taken the very difficult but correct decision to begin my retirement at the end of this term. I will be handing over the baton to **Mrs. Rosewell, our current Deputy Head and SENco**, who has stood at the helm alongside me for the past 7 years, to steer this wonderful ship into the future.

Thank you for your care, understanding and support over these years and in the words of one of my favourite childhood musicals....

So long, farewell



Mrs Val Riziotis
Headteacher