

Newsletter

Vol 14, No. 1

Friday 11th September 2020

Welcome Back!!



It is almost 6 months to the day since I wrote a regular newsletter. How the world has changed since then! However, I can honestly say what a pleasure it has been to have the whole school community back where they belong—learning and playing alongside each other in the classrooms and playgrounds. I am confident that the new, strict, but above all, safe measures that we have put in place are being carried out effectively by the staff and the children. I must also congratulate and thank all the parents for being so understanding of the new measures in place. You have been brilliant!!

We have begun the year with every class from Year 1 upwards focussing on two really important aspects of school:

1. Working out where the gaps in learning are from so many children not having been in school regularly since March. All classes have done assessments (they are what we call diagnostic tests meaning we want to see where they are now and what we need to do to close any gaps) in Reading Writing and Maths. Once we have collated all the information we need from these assessments we will be able to structure our teaching and support around the children's needs.
2. Making sure that children's emotional wellbeing is developed. You may remember we introduced the social and emotional learning tool called RULER last year and we are continuing with it this year. So far each class has created a class charter which enables the children to tell us how they want to feel in their classrooms. We have also put "mood meters" up which will help children develop an emotional vocabulary and also identify and manage their emotions. We will start regular taught RULER lessons fully from next week. Given the traumatic time many of us may have had since March we consider the RULER programme an excellent resource.

Staff news:

We welcomed our two new teachers Mr Tull (Y6) and Miss Kee (Y5) this week and they have made an excellent start. In addition we are joined by Kate Benstead an agency TA in EYFS and Y1. Mrs Wignall is currently enjoying maternity leave and baby Gene is doing well! Miss Gethin Jones is with us until next week and will then be going on maternity leave. We wish her the best of luck.

Attendance:

Well done! In the first week of being back, attendance is at 94.07%. This is higher than we expected and we are so pleased so many of you are back. We look forward to it being even higher next week assuming we are all well.

Gentle reminders:

Just to reiterate our thanks to parents for being so cooperative with the new measures in place. However please do remember to turn up at the right time every day, please don't congregate in groups outside the school gate (in the interests of Covid safety) and please remember that you are welcome to come into the school as long as you make an appointment in advance.

Introductory sessions for parents on Google Meet:

We have texted you a link to a letter about parent Google meets for next week. The dates and times are in the dates section on this page.

Monday 14th September—New nursery class to start this week; Breakfast club and playcentre to re start this week; Y5 and 6 Google meet sessions for parents 5-5:45pm

Wednesday 16th September—Y3 and 4 Google meet sessions for parents 5-5:45pm

Thursday 17th September—Y1 and 1 Google meet sessions for parents 5-5:45pm

Monday 21st September—Google meet session for Y6 parents re secondary transfer 4:30pm

Tuesday 20th October—Flu vaccines for YR—Y6

Friday 23rd October—last day of Autumn 1
Week beginning Monday 26th October—half term week

Monday 2nd November—first day of Autumn 2

Friday 18th December—last day of Autumn 2.

Thought for the week:

**If you want others to be happy,
practice compassion. If you want
to be happy, practice compassion.**

Dalai Lama

Have a lovely weekend!

Yours sincerely,

J. Burt, Executive Headteacher:

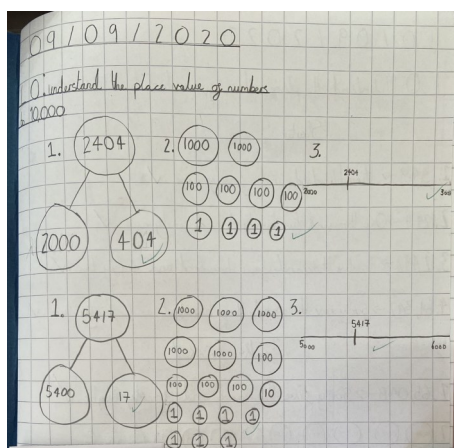
New playground mural:

An amazing mural has appeared in our playground. It is based on this most unusual year and is made of contributions from the children collated and produced by James Mayle of imageskool.com with much help from Miss Wratten. Whilst we appreciate parents cannot see it in the flesh, please enjoy the photos. The children love it!



Children's learning at Friars: Values and assemblies:

We have not wasted any time getting straight back into our learning here at Friars. In maths in Year 6 they recapped their understanding of place value and partitioning. Sokraya chose the challenging option and showed really good understanding of how numbers up to 10,000 are made up.



One of the government guidelines about schools being covid safe is that assemblies are not to happen at the moment. Our assemblies are based on world and religious events (all faiths) throughout the year but predominantly our school values.

Those things will still be focussed on this year but in class rather than assembly. Our focus value for this half term is Compassion.

Star of the week will also start from next week but in class rather than assembly.