25th June 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for your ongoing patience and support during this unprecedented period. It has been so lovely to have reached the point this week where we have Reception, Year 1 and Year 6 back with us in school. With that and the Government restrictions causing us not to be able to have children from Years 2,3,4 and 5 however we are very positive that the Government are convinced that all children will return in September and, if they are correct, then we have only three more weeks to bear under current advice and guidance. Taking this into consideration we would like to share with you what a ‘normal’ return in September will look like as we have a few changes that I would like to explain fully.

Classes for next year:

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| --- | --- |
| Reception  | Miss Youds |
| Year 1/2 | Mrs Hobson and Mrs Phipps |
| Year 3/4 | Mrs Commins and Mrs Tassell |
| Year 5/6  | Miss Haley |

Over many years Our Lady’s was in a fortunate position financially to be able to split classes in the mornings so that English and Maths were taught in smaller groups. Sadly we are in a position now where we are no longer able to finance this split. We have briefly explained recently in a Governor’s newsletter that the school is now facing a deficit budget which is a challenging time however we have several plans in place to get ourselves back from this. We will be communicating more in the new academic year about this and calling on the help of our wonderful families to help us with different aspects as a joined up approach is key.

This change to classes however it is not something to worry about and is usual for a school of our size. We have been planning extensively how we will work our curriculum so that every child accesses what they need throughout their school career here at Our Lady’s. Teaching in this way also brings a great amount of positives and staff being so experienced will utilise a variety of strategies to make this scenario work effectively. We are especially delighted that Mrs Tassell and Mrs Commins will now join forces and lead our Year 3/4 class.

Mrs Evans is taking a step back from life in the classroom as a class teacher but we are so grateful that she will continue to work at Our Lady’s a day a week as our SENCO, a role which she is passionate about and we are so thankful to her for her knowledge and the support she gives our children and their families.

Another change is that Mrs Nicholls is sadly leaving us at the end of this term to spend more time with her family. We thank Mrs Nicholls for all her dedication and hard work at Our Lady’s over the past 14 years and will really miss her. We are delighted to welcome back Mrs Phipps to our team in September following on from her covering Mrs Nicholls’ maternity leave.

Today we said goodbye to the wonderful Mrs Davenport who has served at the school over the last 13 years. We wish her every happiness in her retirement and thank her for everything she has done to support the school over the years. She will certainly be missed by the whole school community.

On the 6th July we welcome Mrs Palmer to our team as our new full time Business Manager. Mrs Palmer is very experienced having worked for a number of years at another local Primary School. I’m sure you will all give her a warm welcome when you get to meet her.

Finally we are going to be very sad to see Mrs Hornby leave at the end of term. Again Mrs Hornby has given over 23 years’ service to the school and will be sorely missed. We wish her every happiness spending more time with her family and enjoying the sunshine in her beautiful garden.

With regards to Before and After School club we also are hoping for this to be a full return. Again we can’t say for definite but it is out wish if guidelines say we can.

We will continue to be in touch if there are any further changes between now and the end of term that might be an update to plans for September but we are all praying that the Autumn term will be back to a ‘new normal’ and more importantly that we are all back together again. All of this obviously comes with a health warning as we have to follow Government guidelines and September essentially is a long way away yet so many things can change – a lesson over the last few months that we have really learnt as a country. We are also planning an opportunity for children to pick up their books before the holidays so will be in touch with more details of how this will work.

Can we thank you all for your support over the last few months in what has been a very challenging time. We have had so many kind messages and thanks that have meant so much as we have worked through incredible unprecedented times. We are so excited for the day that we can all be back together again as a whole school family! Please God it is not too far away now.

God bless and stay safe.

Mrs Rachael Batson

Headteacher