



Fleet Primary School

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Welcome back – Academic year 2023-24

5th September 2023

Dear Parents and carers,

I hope you are all well and have had a fabulous summer. For the last couple of days, all the staff and I have been busy in school preparing for the return of your children tomorrow, Wednesday 6th September.

Firstly, I'd like to welcome our new Reception and Nursery families to Fleet as well as any families with children joining in other year groups. I look forward to many years working together as you and your children travel through Fleet on their Primary School Journey.

For all our children we are looking forward to a really successful year. Below is some important information for you and your children ahead of the coming term.

Start and finish times:

School day for Reception to Year 6

- Breakfast Club: 8am – breakfast provided – cost £1 per day unless child qualifies for a free place (if cost is an issue please speak to us)
- Junior Playground Open: 8.30am – toasted bagel available for all children as they arrive for free
- Classrooms Open: 8.45am
 - Parents and children are free to come up to the classroom at this time
 - This is a good opportunity for parents to come into the class and read/look at a book with their child and help settle them
 - If you have a quick message you want to pass on to the teacher or a question to ask this could be done at this time (if you need to have a private or more lengthy discussion please make an appointment as the teacher cannot have this kind of discussion in the open classroom)
 - For older children moving into KS2 and throughout that key stage, we want to foster their independence so while it's good to visit the class to look at displays, touch base with the teacher and see you child's books, please avoid doing this everyday
- School Day starts – 9am (children need to be in class sat and ready by 9am not coming through the gate at this time!)
- Finish at 3.30pm

School day for Nursery

- Classroom opens: 8.50am – parents and children free to come into setting and get settled
- School Day Starts: 9am – children need to be in the setting at this time – please ensure you are on time and not late as this is disruptive not just for your child but for the rest of the class
- Finish 3.20pm

End of the day pick up points

- **Nursery:** From the gate into the nursery covered area in the infant playground

- **Reception:** From the gate into the reception outdoor area – please line up against the wooden and green fence away from the buildings keeping the walkway clear for parents picking up from the Year 1 class and the juniors
- **Year 1:** From the door to the class at the end of the building - please line up against the classroom or the building opposite so as to not block the way to the playground
- **Year 2:** From the door beside the office by the main gate as you come in from Fleet Road
- **Year 3 and Year 4:** The class teachers will bring their classes out to the junior playground and release from there and not from the door to the stairs – parents please wait in the junior playground leaving the path clear and reducing congestion
- **Year 5 and 6:** Will be released into the covered area – parents please wait in this area leaving access to the playground free

Communication:

We will continue to use Parent Hub for all our parent communications. This has saved us a large amount of money over the last few years by avoiding paper and photocopying costs as well as the large cost associated with sending communications by text message. With the additional financial constraints facing us this year in terms of energy costs and cost of living increases it is more important than ever we are not wasting money. If you have not yet got the Parent Hub app installed please do so we can continue to make savings on text messages. Also, ensure that your phone has notifications switched **ON** for the app so you are alerted when we send a message (the same way you would be if it came by text). Please make sure you have registered your child and not just added the app/school to ensure you get child/class specific messages and not just whole school messages. **Instructions on how to install are in the weekly Wednesday Community Notices Newsletter or you can call Lisa in the office for support.**

Attendance and Punctuality:

As I am sure you will know, good school attendance is crucial to ensuring a child reaches their potential and maximising the learning opportunities afforded them in school. Regular attendance supports not just academic learning but fosters the forming and maintaining of friendships and social and emotional development. Over the last couple of years, the amount of absence children have been experiencing has increased significantly since pre-pandemic levels. This is particularly the case for the youngest children. Missing a few days here and there may not seem like much but over the course of a year if regular it does impact their progress and can lead to lots of gaps in the foundations of their reading, writing and mathematical skills. While we recognise there are times when children will be too ill to be in school we do also want to encourage resilience – that ability for children to be able to push through even when feeling a bit under the weather. After all, it is a vital life skill required of them throughout their life. Our target for attendance is 96% - to achieve this a children needs to have less than 8 days off in the year. We know the vast majority of children can manage this and this pays dividends in terms of their learning and future life prospects. If you are having any concerns over your child’s attendance of any related issues/barriers in meeting this target please do speak to your child’s class teacher.

With this in mind we would also remind you that children should not be taken out of school during term time for holidays. While we recognise there may, from time to time, be emergency situations that arise requiring time off – funerals, family illness etc. a holiday is not a valid reason to take time out of school as described in terms of ‘exceptional circumstances’ laid out by the Department for Education. We understand the intrinsic value gained from holidays and that costs during school holidays can be prohibitive but that in itself does not make them justified. In the majority of situations holidays during term time will be marked as unauthorised absence and risk a fine. If you are in an emergency situation and need to request time off for your child please contact the office as soon as possible to complete the request for leave form providing evidence of the need. Thank you for your ongoing support in this.

Punctuality is also a vital life skill children need to learn. Lessons begin at 9am and that means children should be seated in class at this time. Please do all you can to help your child to achieve this so as to avoid

missing vital information/teaching at the start of the day as well as not disrupting the learning of their classmates who have made it in to class on time.

Throughout the year we will be monitoring attendance and punctuality and from time to time you may receive a letter highlighting any concerns we may have or an invitation to a meeting to discuss these concerns. We want to work with you to achieve the best outcomes for your child and we appreciate your support with this.

Parent's Association, Class Reps and Parent Governors:

Each year we rely on the wonderful Fleet Parent's Association for their tireless work around planning school events and raising funds for the school. The money they have raised over the years has helped with projects such as funding our curriculum and trips, purchasing iPads, developing the playground and buying equipment. They really need as many parents as possible to take an active role, not just on the day of events but in the planning of them too. Please look out through the term for communications from them detailing meetings and get together. Help if you can.

In the curriculum meetings next week class teachers will ask for a parent/parents to volunteer to be their class rep. This is a role that exists to be the link between the class and the wider school. They are often key to managing communication for that class and their involvement in school events. We are very grateful for those parents who have taken on this role over the years. It is good if each year a new parent takes on the role so as to ensure that it doesn't always fall on the same parent.

At the end of last year the parents of a few children who left Fleet to move on to new adventures in other schools were parent governors. This has opened up some vacancies on the Governing Board. Early this term we will be sending out a letter asking for any parents interested in becoming part of the Fleet Governing Body. This is an interesting and important role and we hope some of you will put yourselves forward.

This year's teaching staff:

We are lucky this year to have a very stable teaching staff. Other than Holly, who has gone on maternity leave, our teachers are the same this year (but with some moving to different year groups – see below). We also have a stable support staff structure with all last year's support staff returning. Support staff are used more flexibly than teachers and will be working across classes. One new support staff member this year is Anne Darlington who has taken over from Margaret O'Sullivan in the Nursery as the Early Years Practitioner. Margaret will be working across the school now as a part-time member of the support staff. For your information see first names below of the teachers:

- Nursery: Nicola Budd and Rebecca Combes
- Reception: Beth Cleine
- Year 1: Rachel Webb
- Year 2: Ruth Hanfling (Oona Matheson 1.5 days)
- Year 3: Stella Nnochiri
- Year 4: Sinead Costelloe
- Year 5: Asha Sale
- Year 6: Lynley Benbetka (+Oona Matheson 2 days)
- Deputy Head: Becca Wall
- SENDCo: Rhian Mulji
- Cover & Catch Up: Tammy Wood

Curriculum Meetings:

Y1-Y6 classes will be holding their Curriculum meetings during week 2. These will be in person in the classroom. It is very important that if you can, you come to this meeting. It is an opportunity to meet the teacher and hear clearly what is to be covered this term as well as ask any questions you might have. There are a number of new initiatives happening across the school to support various areas of learning that you need to know about. So even if you think you have had older children pass through a year group before and therefore don't need to attend, you do – many things may have changed. Teachers may also have a number of important documents to hand out at these meetings.

Dates and times for the curriculum meetings – the meetings are held in the classrooms:

- Year 5 – Tuesday 12th September @ 6.30pm
- Year 6 – Tuesday 12th September @ 6.30pm
- Year 3 – Wednesday 13th September @ 6.30pm
- Year 4 – Wednesday 13th September @ 6.30pm
- Year 1 – Thursday 14th September @ 6.30pm
- Year 2 – Thursday 14th September @ 6.30pm

Topics and Curriculum:

Topic Letters and Topic snapshots will be sent out week of the 11th September following on from the Curriculum Meetings. Please ensure you keep the Topic Snapshot to support your child with their Topic learning for this term. It represents the key factual data the children need to have absorbed by the end of the topic and will be referred to throughout in class and for homework.

Topic titles this term are:

- **Nursery:** Marvellous Me and My Family Tree
- **Reception:** Super Stories by Sue Hendra
- **Year 1:** Lost
- **Year 2:** Round the World
- **Year 3:** Fierce Earth
- **Year 4:** Togas to Tunics
- **Year 5:** Raiders and Invaders
- **Year 6:** Arabian Nights

Homework and Home learning:

In Year 1-6 we will continue to use 'Seesaw', the online learning platform, to deliver homework. We will also continue this year to use 'Mathletics' (Y3-6) and 'Times Table Rockstars' (Y2-Y6) to support maths learning in school and for children to practice key skills in this area at home. They will be expected as part of their weekly homework to log into these online resources and complete work.

Obviously to access these online learning resources children will need access to the internet and a suitable device (not a phone!). If you have any problems, such as not having a suitable device, please speak to us and we can try to arrange support so the children do not miss out through lack of access. If your child does not remember any of their login details please let the teacher know as soon as possible so that they can get them a copy of the missing details.

Book Bags:

All children across the school take books home to support their reading development. In EYFS and KS1 as well as their reading for pleasure books there will also be phonics books that the children will be taking home. We have invested heavily in these books and it is really important that any books going home come back in to school **EVERYDAY**. They will usually be changed weekly. We would recommend a school book bag to hold books – this keeps them flat and in good condition and avoids them being damaged from spilled water bottles etc. For the phonics books, in the case of lost or damaged books we do ask for a £5 fee to replace them. Missing books means other children miss out.

Fleet book bags can be purchased from the school office for £3.50 and are perfect for carrying these books.

Lunches:

We continue to offer a hot, nutritious lunch, cooked on site by the school catering team from Caterlink. Children returning will be assigned a lunch based on their status at the end of last year – either school dinner or packed lunch. Please make sure you inform the office if you plan to change your child's lunch (either from packed lunch to school dinner; or school dinner to pack lunch) so that the kitchen ensure they make enough. As you will have seen in the letter sent home yesterday, for this academic year, the Mayor of

London has launched the universal free school meal offer for all children from Reception to Year 6. This means no child in these years has to pay for their lunch but it will be provided free of charge.

If you decide not to take up this offer and are going to provide your child with a packed lunch please ensure it meets the criteria of a 'healthy' packed lunch as laid out in Appendix 1 of our Whole School Food Policy. This can be found on our website at:

<https://www.fleet.camden.sch.uk/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Policies/Food%20Policy%20including%20Packed%20Lunch%20-%20Jan%202022.pdf>

If you think you qualify for free school meals status please ensure you have applied through Camden – <https://accountforms.camden.gov.uk/freeschoolmeals/>. Unless verified by Camden as being eligible, school does not receive the associated funding.

PLEASE NOTE: Although all children from Reception-Year 6 qualify for a free school meal under the Mayor's universal free school meals programme, as much of the school's funding is determined by the number of children eligible for free school meals (not universal) we would encourage you to apply if you think you meet the criteria, even though your child, for this year at least, if in Reception-Year 6, will get a free lunch. This will enable the school to get the funding we need to run the school as well as avoiding you being charged for meals should the 'universal' entitlement be withdrawn at any point in the future.

Equipment and things needed to be brought in:

- **Water:** Please send your child in to school with a water bottle (put their name on it) so that they have access to water throughout the day. They will be able to refill their bottles throughout the day. We know hydration is very important to support attention.
- **Stationary:** As is usual, all writing equipment and exercise books are provided by the school. If children do want to bring in their own pencil case and stationary items they are free to do so but it is not required.
- **Bags:** Space in classrooms, especially around coat/bag areas is restricted. We would encourage children to bring in book bags rather than large rucksacks. Not only do they keep books in better condition they also take up less space in the classroom. Packed lunches are not taken up to class but left on the trolley in the hall.
- **PE Kit:** Children need to have PE kit to wear on their PE day. This year Coach Keeley will be coming in on Mondays to work with Years 1-6 (and Friday's from later in the term to work with EYFS once children settled). Classes may also have a further session with their class teacher, with Arsenal or swimming depending term and year group. This information will be made clear in the individual curriculum meetings/letters each term. Up to Year 4 children are free to wear PE kit to school rather than need to change if they prefer. Year 5 and 6 need to bring in a change of clothes for hygiene reasons.
- **Swimming:** This year we hope to send Year 4-Year 6 swimming to Kentish Town Swimming Pool. They will be following the intensive programme which means they swim for an hour at a time every day for 2 weeks. The class going this term will be Year 4. More information will be given at their Curriculum Meeting for when this is.

Clubs

We will be resuming clubs this term. This week a letter will be sent out with the clubs we are able to offer. As you will have seen in the newsletters last term, we would love to have some parent volunteers to run some clubs. At Fleet we try to run as many of our clubs using volunteers and in school staff as possible so that we can continue to offer them at a low price and make them as accessible as possible. Thank you to those parents who have already come forward. Please contact the office if you are able to offer your time and expertise to run a club, it may be too late for this term but we can timetable in for next term. The letter you receive will have a link to a webform that you will be able to sign up your children to the relevant clubs. Costs vary from club to club depending on staffing or resource needs. There are discounted rates available

for free school meal status. Please do come and speak to us though if cost is a barrier to participation. We believe all children should have the chance to join a club so will do what we can to support where needed.

Class Assemblies & Christmas Shows:

For new families, these are events where each class puts on a performance showcasing the learning from their topic this term. A different class goes each week from Y1 to Y6. The parents from the class performing on any given week are invited in to school to watch. As is tradition, performances will usually be on Friday mornings at 10am unless indicated otherwise (occasionally events come up and we have to move an assembly – if this happens we will try to give as much notice as possible). See below for provisional dates so you can put the date of your child/s assembly in your diary.

- 13th October – Year 5
- 20th October – Year 4
- 3rd November – Year 3
- 10th November – Year 1

Year 2 and Year 6 do not do a 'class assembly' this term and they lead their respective Christmas Shows. The Infant Show (led by the Year 2 class in on a Friday and all parents from EYFS and KS1 are welcome to attend). The Junior Show – led by year 6 - is on a Thursday with two performances – a morning and evening one – and all parents from KS2 are welcome to attend. However, the evening show is ticketed with a limited number of seat available. All children in the juniors are expected to perform in the evening show even if an adult is not coming to watch them. More information will be available at the time.

- 8th December – Infant Show – Year 2 to lead
- 14th December – Junior Show – Year 6 to lead (performances at 9.30am & 7pm)

Trips and Visits:

Teachers have already been spending time this summer booking some exciting trips and visits to link in with their class topics this term. Details of the trips for your child's class for those already booked will be shared in the curriculum meetings. As is usual, we can only take children out on these valuable learning experiences with your support. Staffing is incredibly tight and if a situation arises where we do not have enough parent volunteers to come along we will be forced to cancel the trip/visit. Traditionally we tend to find the classes further up the school are more difficult to recruit parent volunteers for trips so if you are in KS2 and able to support on trips please do let your class teacher know. A complete list of trips and events is included in every newsletter so please do check this each week. As new trips/visits are booked they will be added here.

Parent Workshops

As we go through the year there will be a number of different events put on to support parents from open mornings to workshops. Below are those already planned. We are in the process of booking in other themed workshops and speakers. As these are arranged we will let you know. While we recognise not everyone can attend events during the school day we hope that with enough notice arrangements can be made for you to attend as many of these as possible. Feedback on previous events has been very positive.

- **29th September @ 3pm (time t.b.c.) – Head Teacher – Parent Session**
- **11th October @ 9am – KS1 and KS2 Phonics/Reading open morning**

Term Dates:

This year's dates are up on the school website at the following address. For your information I include the dates for this term below:

<https://www.fleet.camden.sch.uk/about-us/dates>

First day of term	Wednesday 6 th September 2023
Half term (inclusive)	Monday 23 rd Oct – Friday 27 th Oct 2023
Last day of term	Thursday 21 st December 2023 – close at 2pm

Family Support Worker:

We have been aware for some time of the increased pressures on families both before and since the pandemic affecting physical and mental health, work, housing, legal issues and many other areas. Families experiencing difficulties in any of these areas, while outside traditional school remit, nonetheless can impact on a child’s education or on a parents’ ability to engage in their education the way they might want to. While, through this period myself and my staff, especially the office staff, have done what we can to support you we haven’t always had the time, expertise or knowledge to support in the ways we would like to or that the situation needed. This year we are trialling a ‘Family Support Worker’ role within the school staff for three days a week. Lisa Tan, who will know as our amazing Admin Officer, is taking on this role for this academic year. The hope is that she will be able to work with any individuals/families to offer advice and support in a wide range of areas. This could range from support with grant applications for funding, housing difficulties, accessing local services or being a listening ear and supporting interactions with school. If you have any questions or want to access this service please do make contact.

Office:

With Lisa taking on the role above we will be covering her three days in that role with additional office support. Initially that is being covered by June, who has been volunteering in the office for a while and many of you will recognise. The office continues to be available throughout the school day to deal with any enquiries you may have. Please bear in mind that the beginning of the day and the end of the day are the busiest times for them and therefore maybe not the best time to go in and ask a question or complete a task that could be done over the phone or via email at a more convenient time. Remember that most costs, such as school dinners and clubs, can be paid for online – the office can advise on how to set this up. Myself, or another members of the school Senior Leadership team are on hand at drop off or pick up on the front gate and can also pass on any messages you might have for the office or a class teacher.

I’d like to thank you for your continued support and trust as we prepare for the year ahead. I look forward to seeing you all tomorrow when we welcome back the children.

Yours Sincerely,



Don Mc Gibbon - Head Teacher