



Friday 17th July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers

As we come to the end of the school year it seems strange to be writing to you, rather than standing at the school gate. However, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank you for all your help and support during these unprecedented times. No-one can underestimate the challenges that we have all faced both practically and emotionally as we have navigated the changes to our way of life enforced by the pandemic. Thank you to all of you for the part you have played in supporting the children: those of you who have been working with them at home, staff who have been offering care for the children of key workers and those who have been teaching bubbles of Year 6, Year 1, Reception and Kindergarten. Managing the school environment to ensure that it is clean and safe and keeping all the administration going has been an amazing team effort and I am privileged to work with the most wonderful group of staff who have all worked so hard this year, often with limited and frequently changing guidance. The school governors have been a great support, meeting regularly throughout this period to offer encouragement, guidance and advice. The teamwork and effort, going above and beyond, has been truly fantastic. Thank you, every one of you.

Although the school holidays are now upon us and we have time to reflect on the past few months, we also begin our preparations for welcoming all year groups back in September. There is much to do and when we do return there will be many measures in place to minimise the risks presented by COVID-19. Please read the accompanying letter from the Interim Director of Children's Services asking for your support with the arrangements that we need to make. Further details will be issued in September but there are a few things that we would like to make you aware of now to help with your planning.

Term will start for most children on Friday 4th September. On returning to school, there will be a staggered start and end to the day, different entry routes and a one-way system in operation on the school site.

Staggered Start

- 8.40 – 8.50 am Year 6
- 8.45 – 9.00 am Year 2
- 8.50 – 9.00 am Year 3
- 9.00 – 9.15 am Year 1 and Year 4
- 9.15 - 9.30 am Reception and Year 5

Staggered End

- 2.45 – 3.00 pm Reception
- 3.00 – 3.15 pm Year 2
- 3.15 – 3.30 pm Year 1

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- 2.50 pm Year 3
- 3.00 pm Year 4
- 3.10 pm Year 6
- 3.20 pm Year 5

For families with children in different year groups, all the children in the family can come into school at the earliest of the times allocated. However, at the end of the day, you may need to wait for a short period as we will only be releasing children at the designated time for their year group. Initially there will be a limited OSCAR facility with breakfast club running from 8.00am and after school club running until 5.00pm.

On the first day of term we are asking all children to bring a packed lunch, which will be eaten in the classroom. From Monday 7th grab bags will be available to order. To minimise sharing of resources we are asking parents to provide the following items for their child. Please name these. We will provide a plastic wallet in which the children can keep their resource pack.

- A pack of coloured pencils
- A rubber
- A pencil sharpener
- A 15 cm ruler
- A small pair of scissors
- A glue stick
- Key Stage 2 only - a highlighter (any colour)

As we work to a full return to school, we hope to be able to adapt our staggered start and end to reduce the length of time it takes to get children safely in and out of school. We also hope to be able to return to a full OSCAR service in due course. Many of our usual routines will need to change and many of the opportunities for parents and carers to be involved in school life will look very different in the Autumn term. We trust that you understand the reasons for this. We are putting in place contingency plans should we need to go into another period of lockdown. Thank you to all of you who have responded to our home learning questionnaire. We have received over 80 responses with a range of opinions ranging from those who were extremely positive about the provision we put in place to those who did not feel that the home learning was at all adequate. We recognise that home learning has been a different experience for everyone and all responses will be considered as we plan for any future need. Although all the school reports are ready to send, the task of sending them securely and individually by email has been more time consuming than we initially thought. Please be patient: you will receive them in the next couple of weeks.

In September we will be welcoming three new teachers to The Ridge - Miss Hannah Wesson (Yr 3) Miss Emily Howarth (Yr 4) and Miss Ellie Coggan (Yr 5 and SENCo) hope that they will be very happy in their new posts. At the end of term we are saying "goodbye" to Miss Ware, who is leaving The Ridge to train to be a nurse. Charlotte first joined us as a student over nine years ago. She has worked in every year group from Kindergarten through to Year Six and more recently has been OSCAR Deputy Leader. We shall really miss her but we know that she will make a brilliant nurse and we wish her every happiness in her new career.

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Finally I want to wish our Year 6 pupils all the very best as they move onto secondary school. They have been a real credit to themselves and their families as they demonstrated incredible maturity on returning to school. They have had to face a very different transition programme and missed many of the traditional rights of passage for our leavers. We trust that they will all be very happy at their new schools: we shall miss them but they have secured a place in the school's history as our 'lockdown leavers'.

Whatever your summer may hold, I hope that you stay safe. Thank you again for all of your support. Your kind words have been a real encouragement to us all. We look forward to welcoming you back to school in September.

Kind regards

Mrs D A Hudson
Headteacher