



LITTLEGARTH

A truly independent school & nursery

7th September 2018

Dear Parents

NEWSLETTER 2018/19 – 1

A very warm welcome back to all our children and parents at the start of another new school year. A special welcome to all our new families who have joined the school. The School comes alive when the children are back and I have loved walking around seeing them settling in and enjoying their lessons; a real privilege.

I am sure that with the wonderful weather we had the children would certainly have been able to enjoy spending time outdoors during the summer and they seem refreshed and ready to start the school year.

Fun House, Sports and 11+ preparation were some of the activities held in the School during the holiday and many of our pupils took advantage of these events. Our thanks go to the staff involved and to the children for their enthusiasm.

I hope you will have noticed all the work that has been carried out, especially on improving the grounds for the children to make the most of the wonderful scenery around us.

Staffing

New staff members

This term we welcome some new members of staff. Miss Deborah Mansell is our new Reception teacher following the retirement of Mrs Bennett. Miss Mansell is an experienced Reception class teacher who has been looking forward to joining the Littlegarth team and both she and the children are settling in very well.

Miss Holly McNamara will be enhancing our teaching assistance provision and will be with Miss Smith and her class. This means that we have full-time teaching assistants in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2.

Increased in-class support

I am delighted to inform you that we have increased the level of in class support we are providing in other key areas of the School. This year we have increased the amount of time given to learning support in the Pre-Prep with Mrs Claire Jones offering support to the children in Year 1 and Miss Alison Chapman supporting the Year 2 children and some Year 3 groups. We have also significantly increased the level of teaching assistant support provided to Year 3 children in core subject lessons.

Changes to Senior Management Team

This is an exciting period in the development of Littlegarth School and I am delighted to welcome Mrs Marie-Claire Elmakahleh (Head of EYFS), Miss Helen Smith (Head of Pre-Prep) and Mr Keith Dawes (Assistant Head, Prep) into the Senior Management Team. Congratulations to all three on their appointments and I am sure that they will work very hard to further develop their departments for the benefit of the children.

Congratulations to Miss Niamh Ging on gaining her Masters Degree this summer and to Mr Matt Halsey on gaining a BSc Honours. Mr Halsey will be training to be a teacher at Littlegarth this year and we look forward to supporting him in his Post Graduate Certificate in Education qualification which he is undertaking through the University of Buckingham.

Mr Dawes, Mrs Pashby and Mrs Atherton are the Heads of Constable, Gainsborough and Munnings and will be supporting form teachers to encourage the children across the School. I am also pleased that Mrs Atherton has agreed to take over the running of the PE department.

Friends of Littlegarth

We are fast approaching the first FLS Meeting which takes place on Friday 14th September at 8.50am (Dining Room). All parents are automatically members of FLS and we would be delighted to welcome any parent who is interested in supporting the work of the FLS to our meetings.

Mrs Emma Boorman, our new Chair of FLS has many exciting ideas for this academic year and events for this term include our annual Bonfire and Fireworks Night on Friday 9th November, the Christmas Bazaar on Friday 30th November and a glittering Christmas Party for Parents on the evening of Friday 14th December. We hope that you will be able to support as many of these events as possible.

New Prep School Tracksuits

This year the company that has produced our Prep School tracksuits gave notice that they will no longer be making this particular item. Consequently, we have ordered a different tracksuit for the children of Year 3 and have ordered enough for the older children to wear them as well. We are sure that you will like the new style tracksuit and that the children will be keen to wear this new addition to the School uniform. However, please don't worry if you have just bought an old style tracksuit for your Year 4 or 5 child as we shall make sure that we have a sensible lead in period for the new item of uniform.

School Blazers

The children are looking very smart in their School blazers and I am sure that they will do all that they can to keep them smart throughout the year. May I remind parents that the children are expected to wear their blazers to and from School and consequently they should not leave them on their pegs each evening. We are proud of the children and are keen that they wear their uniform proudly outside School. We shall be reminding the children of this expectation and we appreciate your support in trying to help the children take pride in their appearance.

End of the Day Pick Up Arrangements

The children from Years 1 to 6 will be released to parents at the end of the school day outside the Sports Hall/Dining Room area at pick up time. I am afraid we cannot release the children in a variety of different areas as this leads to complications and possible safeguarding concerns. It is important that all the children are together so that we can be sure that they have been collected by the correct parent or carer. A number of children in Years 5 and 6 have younger siblings and it is impossible for their form teachers to ensure they are with the correct person if pick up is dis-jointed. Thank you for your cooperation with this.

New Parents' Coffee Morning and Friends of Littlegarth School

We shall be holding a Coffee Morning for our new parents on Tuesday 11th September at 9.00 am in the Mallett Room, next to the School Office. Invitations have been emailed but all new parents are welcome to attend. This will be a chance to meet each other, members of staff who are not teaching at that time and members of the Friends of Littlegarth.

Events

Hopefully you will have received the School calendar outlining the term's activities. Events for the coming weeks are listed below.

- Tuesday 11th September 9.00 am. New Parents' Coffee Morning
- Friday 14th September 11.00 am – 12.00 noon. Nursery Teddy Bears' Picnic
- Tuesday 18th September 7.00 – 8.00 pm is the Year 5 Parents' Information Evening regarding Future Schools in the Mallett Room. Please note that many senior schools' Open Days are imminent. Parents will be given a list on the evening but please refer to the relevant school website and local press for further details as some may occur before our meeting.
- Thursday 27th September is Littlegarth Day of Languages. It has become a Littlegarth tradition to either dress in red, white and/or blue or in a national costume. The highlight of the day is a French breakfast of croissant and chocolat chaud. All are encouraged to speak in French or another language if known. Any dual-language children are welcome to teach their class a greeting or to count to ten!

Open Morning

Our first Open Morning of the academic year takes place on Friday 5th October between 10.00 am and 12.00 noon. If you have friends or family interested in joining us, please encourage them to visit. I am delighted that at present we have very few places left in the School, including Nursery, but we hope prospective parents plan ahead so that they are not disappointed!

Head Boy and Head Girl

You will see from the School calendar that Harry Tucker and Saanvi Kumar have been appointed as Head Prefects for the year. Congratulations to them and to all the Year 6 prefects who have already embarked on their duties with both enthusiasm and efficiency.

Clubs

All clubs will begin on Monday 10th September with the swimming beginning on Tuesday 11th September. The swimming rota can be found on our website.

Peripatetic Music Lessons

I am delighted that so many of our children take part in various peripatetic music lessons.

If you would like your child to play an instrument, please contact Mrs Pashby.

Those playing instruments, either in or out of School, can take part in our tea time concerts which take place in the Mallett Room. Again, if you would like your child to take part please let Mrs Pashby know in advance.

Health Check Forms – IMPORTANT

We will be sending out copies of your child's last contact information and a new Health Check Form next week. Please could you mark any changes to the contact information in red and complete the Health Check Form and return these to us by Friday 15th September at the latest in order for us to have the most up to date information on your child.

Year 6 Examinations

The Autumn Term is especially busy for our Year 6 children who will be working hard for senior school entrance exams. All are given the chance to sit practice papers under test conditions so that the real experience does not seem so daunting. Good luck to all those who will be taking the Chelmsford and Colchester 11+ examinations over the next few Saturdays. During the coming weeks all Year 6 children have a mock interview with me in my office.

If your child has a real interview looming, kindly inform the form teacher so that we can prioritise the appointments.

I am sure that this will be another exciting and successful year and we cannot wait to work with you to get the very best out of the children. Please remember that if you have any concerns, contact your Form Teacher as soon as possible.

I hope that you all have a lovely weekend.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Peter H Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Peter H Jones