



Welcome Back

3 September 2021

I hope everyone enjoyed the summer break, the weather was relatively kind, though not quite up to the high standards set before we broke up!!

It never ceases to amaze me how quickly the children get back into the routine (at least at school!). They have returned all looking very smart in uniform, thank you for supporting the school in this, and have all very quickly got back into the swing of things.

I'm looking forward to a more straight forward year (I know, a man can hope) of fantastic topics, some great trips and 2 residential opportunities for pupils in KS2 this year. The first being Morfa Bay for Yr5 and 6 in November and Skern Lodge in Westward Ho, Devon in March for Yr3 and 4, more information on this to follow soon. We've proved over the years that working together we can provide the children with the best possible primary school experience and memories they will cherish for years to come.

New Faces

As per my final newsletter last year we have welcomed back Mrs Formoy-Brown and Mrs Fortune into the classrooms having returned from maternity leave. We also have welcomed some new Teaching Assistants to the Priestley Team, Mrs Holmes, who is working in Pufflings, Mrs Boyd-Cox who is working in Harlequin and Mr Henshall who will be working with Avocet.

I would also like to take this opportunity to welcome our 'deadline day signing', Miss Waterfield. Miss Waterfield joins the team from a school in Swindon and will be teaching Kingfisher class this year.

Over the summer our very own Miss Morgan finally got her long-awaited wedding day and has now returned to school as Mrs Clifford, we wish her and her new husband all the best for the future.

Covid Plans

This remains a contentious issue for most people in how best we move forward and get back to 'normal'. Although apparently all is well in the world now and school's apparently do play a part in the transmission of Covid within a community, it is still expected that the school has a detailed risk assessment and contingency plans in place. So, we at Priestley are initially taking a slightly cautious approach and hope to gradually return to 'normal' as the year progresses. As you are already aware, we will continue with the staggered starts and finishes to the day, the extended lunchtime and staggered breaktimes in order to mitigate as many risks as we can. Although the days of whole bubbles being sent home look like they've gone, we all still do not want children having to isolate for ten days here and there if we can help it. There will be more opportunities for the children to mix outside of their particular class groups at breaktime and lunchtime, but this will be restricted to mixing within their cohort groupings (EYFS, Yr1/2, Yr3/4 and Yr5/6) initially. We would still request that face to face contact between parents and staff be kept to an absolute minimum and

that the ask@priestley.wilts.sch.uk (learning based queries) and admin@priestley.wilts.sch.uk (admin based queries) email addresses be used please. We are continuing to not encourage items from home to be brought into school other than the essentials, so can I please ask that bikes, scooters, mobile phones etc. be left at home. Can you also check that your child has everything they need for the day, before they leave for school, to avoid unnecessary visits to the office. Thank you.

Hopefully, we'll continue to be able to avoid too much disruption and be able to 'unwind' a little more as the autumn term goes on.

Currently if your child shows symptoms of Covid 19 then please do not send them into school, keep them at home and phone school providing the reason for absence. Book a PCR test and let the school know of the outcome. If your child returns a negative result, then we'll look forward to seeing them back in school that afternoon or following day if well enough. Should your child return a positive result then your child will need to isolate as advised by track and trace.

Currently it will only be the individual child that will need to isolate, the rest of the class will be expected to continue in school. School work will be provided for the isolating child to complete, should they be well enough, during their isolation. However, these procedures may change should several children return positive tests from a particular group. The school will then be guided by Public Health as to how best to break the lines of transmission.

Attendance

There have been some 'very definite' communications from the Department for education over the summer with regards to attendance. Expectations have now returned to what they were, with the last national average taken before the pandemic of just over 96% being used as a benchmark for schools. Please let's work together this year to ensure the attendance percentage for Priestley achieves the magic 96% mark!

Remember as little as 7 days off during a whole school year for holiday, medical appointments or illness will already bring your child's attendance down to 96%

Remember you are required to contact school, by 9.15 am, to inform us of a reason for absence and we will require a little more detail than your child is 'just feeling poorly'.

Breakfast Club

We will be restarting Breakfast from Monday, 6th September, there is a limited number of places available, please contact the school office for more information.

Free School Meals

Can I please remind you that if you are entitled to apply for Benefits related Free School Meals that you do so asap, even if your child is in KS1 and currently getting a free meal anyway. I'm not in possession of a crystal ball or any inside information but should the Government continue to fund Free School Meals during the school holidays I would hate for anyone to miss out in October.

Dates

Wednesday 1st September – TD Day

Thursday 2nd September – Back to school

Tuesday 28th & Thursday 30th September – Virtual Parents Evenings

Wednesday 20th October – Last day of term 1

Thursday 21st – Sunday 31st October – School Holiday

Monday 1st November – First day of term 2

Monday 8th – Friday 12th November – Yr5 & 6 Morfa Bay Residential Trip

Friday 3rd December – TD Day, school closed to all pupils

Friday 17th December – Last day of term 2 - 1pm finish.

Priestley & Proud

A Marsh-Ballard

Mr Marsh-Ballard