Tuesday 7th September 2021

Dear Families of St Mary’s

Welcome back to the academic year 2021 to 22.

We hope that you managed some positive times over the holidays and are ready for the year ahead.

We expected to be starting the year looking for ways to learn to live alongside Covid. Already Devon is under an enhanced monitoring phase due to the high numbers of cases at the moment but we hope that with holiday maker numbers falling as the school holidays end so will the Covid rates.

**New Covid Protocols**

In school we will be continuing to think about hand washing, surface cleaning, increased ventilation….ways to do what we can to add in safety.

Currently if someone tests positive for Covid they are required to self isolate for 10 days.

Other members of their household or school hub who do not show symptoms are not required to self isolate if they are under 18 or have had a double vaccine.

This is a big change to the protocols before the summer. To keep us all as safe as possible being watchful for symptoms and testing are more important than ever.

**Steps Forward**

We start the year with children in their own class bases but Eagle and Kestrel will have the same break times and lunchtimes. Owl and Woodpecker will have breaks together and Robin Class will join them in the hall for lunch and will begin to have break time with Owl and Woodpecker Class once they’ve been in school a few weeks. During breaks children will be able to mix if they choose to but will have separate bases to support those children who are less sure about playing in a wider group.

All of our children have only been with their own class group for almost two years and some children have spent all of their time in school or most of it with one class so some children will need some support with being with a wider group. We will be working to develop and support this.

Year 6 will be play leaders this year to support positive play. Year 6 will also be buddies for Robin Class.

Our Year 5’s will be leaders for the Gift Team and will be finding ways to bring light and happiness into school.

Finally we will be bringing back school council with 2 children from each of our Owl. Kestrel and Eagle Classes being elected by their class mates to represent their class at the school council. Their first task this year will be to bring back all of our recycling which has lost track during the last two years.

We will also have assemblies and will be building up classes to have whole school assemblies next week.

**PE timetable** : this week children will have PE with Mr Murnane on Thursday. The full timetable will begin next week. Please send your child in to school in PE kit on their PE days.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mon | Robin | Eagle |  |  |
| Tuesday |  |  |  |  |
| Wed | Robin | Owl | Woodpecker |  |
| Thursday | Woodpecker | Owl | Kestrel | Eagle |
| Friday |  |  |  | Swimming Kestrel Class |

**Before and after school club timetable will be sent separately tomorrow and we hope will be added to as the year progresses. For now the clubs will have more than one class group in them. If we do need to step back due to Covid the oldest class group will be the priority group for the clubs. Clubs will commence Monday 20th September.**

**Music lessons**: We will be developing this over the term. If you would like your child to access private music lessons, then please do email the school office. Please take a look at the attached music leaflet. If your child has an interest in another instruments, then let us know and we can try to track down a teacher.

**Teaching and Learning**

Class teachers will share with you the subject overviews for this term over the coming weeks. Homework for reading and essential learning such as spellings and times tables will be shared with you over the next week. We are very keen for children to access the IXL learning platform at home to help to practice skills and ensure that any gaps from the last two years are beginning to close.

We would expect to have parent information sessions in person this half term but will look to phone and Zoom as options as well.

For now, we wish everyone a great first week and please don’t hesitate to speak to your child’s class teacher or the office if you have any questions.

Mrs Mannix