Dear Parents and Carers

I am delighted to be writing to you for the first time as Headteacher of our wonderful school and look forward to welcoming all our families back on **Wednesday 6th September.** I hope that you find the information below helpful as you prepare for the new school year but please do not hesitate to contact the school office with any questions you may have.

**Welcome**

We are very excited to welcome several new members of staff to the team that bring with them a wealth of experience and skill. Mr James Barker is our new Deputy Headteacher and KS1 teacher, Mr Stephen Airey joins the Year 5/6 Team and Ms Sam Barton has taken up post as our School Business Manager. Mrs Laura Bibby has worked at the school for several years now, supporting children in different roles, but has now been appointed as our Senior Midday Supervisor and Wraparound Care Manager. We wish them all the best as they begin the new school year with us.

School Vision and the year ahead

As we embark on a new school year, we will endeavour to give our children every opportunity to love learning, to encourage one another and to flourish. Our school vision is strongly embedded and our committed staff team will continue to move forward with ‘Learning for all, caring for each other, preparing for the future’ at the core of all our work. We have three simple school rules, which we appreciate your support in encouraging at home:

Be respectful

Be safe

Be our best

Our staff have been busy over the holidays improving our shared areas to further foster the children’s love of learning - St Oswald’s has never looked better! We look forward to welcoming you into school on **Tuesday 12th September (3.30pm - 5.15pm) for our start-of-year open evening.** This is a chance for your child to introduce you to their new class teacher, to show you their classrooms and to visit our Reading Space, which was created with generous support from our parents and carers. Families are also welcome to explore the Wild Area, which you can enter from next to the zebra crossing, and will have the chance to take on an orienteering challenge using our new outdoor orienteering trail (maps will be available in every classroom). We just ask that our shared areas are treated respectfully as our new resources have taken much time and care to create.

Communication

This year we will continue to operate an open-door policy with teachers available for a quick chat at the start and end of each day. If you require a longer conversation or further support, please don’t hesitate to arrange a telephone or face-to-face meeting with us. Teachers are happy to receive emails from parents and will reply to them at their earliest opportunity, which is usually after the school day has ended. At St Oswald’s one of our core values is respect. All staff endeavour to live out this value every day and ask that in turn, parents and carers treat our staff in a respectful manner at all times.

Newsletters will be sent out half-termly and will include key information, events and dates for the diary. Our website is currently being developed to be a more useful portal of information. We hope you will find the site simple to navigate and helpful. The website now features our Twitter feed, which is updated regularly by each of the phases in school, showing snippets of our school in action.

Parents and carers are warmly welcome at our weekly celebration assembly that takes place each Friday morning at 9am. Please note that children in reception only join us for this once they have settled fully into primary school life and we will update reception parents when they do.

**Changes to school arrangements**

Start of day time

To be in line with what is expected from the Department of Education, we are planning to extend our school opening hours by 25 minutes a week. For minimum disruption, we are implementing a slightly earlier **start time of 8.45am** which will become compulsory **from October half term**. Gates to the playground will continue to open at 8.30am, with doors opening at 8.40am and will continue to close at 8.50am until half term, after which they will close at 8.45am. I trust this gives families enough time to adjust to the 5-minute earlier start each day. End times will continue to be staggered with reception at 3.05pm, KS1 at 3.10pm and KS2 at 3.15pm.

End of one-way system

During Covid, we implemented a one-way system for entering and exiting the school. While this has continued to have several benefits, Fulford Pre-School have been adversely affected with the children having no access to their outdoor area during the time it was accessed by our families. From this week, we will revert to using our own gate for both entry and exit to the playground.

Term-time holidays

From the start of term we will be implementing the City of York Council’s guidance for term-time holidays. Any family taking a child out of school for 5 or more days for a holiday will be issued with a fine. This includes those absences where parents inform us that their child is ill but we know that they have been on holiday. The children learn so much in every school day, usually building upon the day/s before and unauthorised absences can have a huge impact on learning. Term dates and holidays can be found at the end of this letter and on our school website.

Night Owls finish time

In response to our Night Owls Parent Survey we have extended our provision until **5.15pm**. All bookings should be made via ParentPay and are automatically capped at 30 children. The cost of a Night Owls session is £7.50. We welcomed all feedback from parents regarding our after school provision, all of which was very constructive and will continue to review it on a regular basis.

Please find attached to this letter autumn term dates for the diary and teacher contact information. I wish you all an enjoyable final day of the summer break, and look forward to seeing the children back at school on Wednesday morning.

Yours sincerely



Jemma Dunne