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Head Teacher: Mrs H Yarranton

5th September 2023

Dear parents and carers,

We hope you and your families have had a wonderful summer! We are really looking forward to welcoming your children back tomorrow!

I just wanted to get in touch, before things get really busy, to share some information about the new school year.

Celebrations

We mentioned this at the very end of term but we are thrilled to share that we achieved the gold award for our provision for social, moral, spiritual and cultural (SMSC) education. This is an important achievement for us, as it acknowledges the fact that we go above and beyond when it comes to nurturing our pupils. The inspector spoke to a number of pupils and parents and was extremely impressed with everything she saw and heard. She summarised our strengths in the following points:

- SMSC is a clear thread that underpins Childer Thornton's shared vision and values.
- SMSC is incorporated into all aspects of the school's rich curriculum.
- The importance of SMSC is understood by all stakeholders.

Her report comments, 'The school provides a happy, safe, and stimulating environment in which staff and children can thrive. Positive relationships are evident throughout the school. I know you are, quite rightly, proud of all that the school offers its pupils and the wider community.'

Well done and thank you to Mrs Belding who led on this application!

At the start of the holiday, we also received the Platinum award for the School Games Mark. This was the first year we were eligible for platinum and we are very proud to have gained this award which demonstrates our commitment to high quality PE and extra-curricular provision. Well done and thank you to Mr Grooms who goes above and beyond for our pupils.

We don't make a huge fuss about our SATs results as we believe that this is just a part of the picture at Childer Thornton; however, I did just want to let you know that once again, our Year 6 achieved results that were well above the national average. The fact that this continues to be the case despite the disruption children faced during the pandemic is a testament to both the fantastic pupils and brilliant staff team.

Attendance

I know we communicate about this quite regularly, but it's because as a school, our attendance is only just in line with national average and much lower than it was pre-pandemic. We want to work with parents as much as we can to improve this statistic as we all know that being in school is so important for the children.

We fully recognise that children become ill with the usual bugs, but the decrease in attendance also seems due to an increase in term time holidays. If you are considering a term time holiday, I urge you to think carefully about the impact that this has on your child's learning, as it really is impossible to catch them up on lost content now that staffing levels are very low across school.

Just a reminder as well that children are expected to be in school ready to learn for **8.45am** – please make sure they are on the playground ready at **8.40am**.

Finances

Our trust has a new policy on how it deals with finances and one of the big changes for us is that we cannot have outstanding debt of any kind. Therefore, school meals will now need paying for in advance. We suggest you top up your account at the start of every week to ensure your child has access to a school lunch if they require one. We will also not book any children into Wise Owls – please ensure that this is booked and paid for up front. We have always tried to make things as easy as possible for parents and help where we can but we do need to follow this policy and appreciate your support with this.

There are still some outstanding debts from last year – please make sure these are paid before your child returns to school.

General Reminders

- Considerations for weather – children will need hats and sun cream this week!
- Please name all uniform – we have had to throw a lot away that wasn't claimed.
- Consider insect repellent – there were lots of nasty insect bites in the summer term. Please just spray children before school rather than sending it in.
- Please make sure PE kits are in school every day – PE will start from tomorrow.

Clubs

Clubs will begin on September 18th – details of new clubs and the release date will follow next week.

Meet the Teacher

We look forward to welcoming you in to school on **Wednesday 13th September**. Please meet in the hall at **6pm** for a general introduction to the school year. This will be followed by meetings in classrooms with your child's class teacher. These sessions will be repeated so parents can move between classes for those of you with more than one child with us. It is important that someone does attend, as this is where we share information about class routines and homework, but more than anything, it is a chance to get to know the adult who will be spending so much time with your child!

See you all tomorrow – we are really excited for the year ahead!

Mrs H Yarranton