



Willow Lane Community Primary School

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Dear mums, dads and carers,

RE: Reception Class September 2020

I hope that this finds you and yours well and your child keen to start school in September.

Over the Summer term, you would normally have had a tour of the school, stay and plays and an opportunity to hear key messages from myself and the class teacher. Our staff have had to approach induction in a different way this year and hopefully you have found the social distance home visits, videos and posts on Seesaw accounts and telephone calls useful and informative.

From myself, many of the messages will have been around our curriculum, our pastoral support and how we know that the best outcomes are achieved through school and home working together. In particular, we know that if parents are supportive of school and teachers then children feel safe and happy in school and any potential behaviour challenges are easily resolved. At our school, there will be times when decisions are made that you may find odd or may even disagree with. In these times, we continue to ask for your support as decisions we make at school always put children first and foremost as well as considering the needs of staff and the community. With nearly 200 children in school, not every decision will feel right to everyone all the time but we ask you to trust us. There are hundreds of years of combined experience in our school and our school is on a journey going from strength to strength.

Many of you will be wondering what school will look and feel like in September. The letter 'September 2020 Letter' will answer many of your questions and the insights (including the video on Seesaw) from the class teacher will show you the environment that young children will thrive in. There have been changes to the learning environment. However, as recognised by the government guidance, young children cannot social distance and continue to learn best through tried and tested early years methods including role play, handling resources and outdoor learning. This approach will deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum which is the bedrock of their future learning. Your children will be joining our school for the first time so won't have a comparison to previous years which will help them. They will be welcomed in to a warm, fun and stimulating learning environment where we have full confidence they will thrive.



One key change to previous years is the opportunities for communication between parents and staff. Normally the best communication is the daily informal chats at the start and end of the day which allow positive relationships to develop. Unfortunately these aren't possible at this time and apart from the briefest interactions at the school gate conversations/meetings will need to be made over the phone. We would prefer to do these face to face so please remember that whilst we are following this guidance at the moment, this doesn't mean we don't want to hear from you.

You may be wondering what you can do over the Summer and I know the teacher is giving weekly suggestions via Seesaw. There are also other ideas from Lancashire shared on the school blog. One simple thing to do is get children their uniform. Dressing up and role playing school can help and excite children about starting. Uniform is available from The Uniform and Leisurewear Company in Lancaster with many items available in supermarkets and local shops. Details can be found on the school website at <https://www.willow.lancs.sch.uk/mums-dads-carers/uniform/>

Reading with and reading too continues to be one of the best ways of developing vocabulary and a lifelong love of reading. Conversations also model language, new words and social interactions which will help your child. If you are after suggestions then we recommend the government's Happy Little Minds '<https://hungrylittleminds.campaign.gov.uk/>' website as well as the BBC's Tiny Happy People resource '<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people>' which was recently endorsed by the Duchess of Cambridge.

We have an experienced and talented team in Red Class and when your children start school they will continue to support you with any queries and concerns. If you have any issues you need to raise with myself then please contact me on the number or email above. Starting school is a big step in a young child's life and we will work together to ensure all children settle in quickly, are happy at our school and are learning.

From all the team at Willow Lane, I wish you and yours a relaxing, healthy and safe Summer.

Mel MacKinnon

Mel MacKinnon
HEADTEACHER

