



Plantation Primary School & Nursery

'Love to learn, aspire to achieve'

Hollies Road, Halewood, Knowsley, L26 0TH

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@PlantationSch

Friday 6th May 2016

Dear Parents

There have been some queries from parents over the last few days regarding the staffing and classes here at Plantation. As a school we are always working to ensure the best educational provision for our children. With this aim in mind we have moved towards a reduced pupil admission number for September 2017. This is due to a fall in pupil numbers over recent years, and as such we will be changing the structure of some of our year groups to include mixed age classes.

This is not a change that the Governors and I have taken lightly and is in response to significantly lower numbers in some year groups than our capacity of 90 children. Our intake over the past few years in Reception has been well below the admission number of 90 children and while we have maintained a teaching compliment (teachers and support staff) for 3 classes in every year group, this is not a model we can continue to sustain.

As a result, we have reviewed staffing in consultation with staff members and associated trade unions to complete a staffing review and restructure – something which we are in the process of completing currently. From this staffing review and new school structure there will be some children who will be placed into mixed age classes in September 2016 in Years 2 & 3, and Years 4 & 5. By doing this we are able to manage class sizes more effectively and deliver the quality learning experience for our pupils that you have come to expect from our school.

We will be working on children's assigned classes for September 2016 over this term and where a child will be placed in a mixed age class we will write to inform you directly of this, should you wish to discuss this once you have received such notification please do not hesitate to get in touch. As a parent myself who has had a child attend a one and half form entry school and go through most of his Primary School life as a child in a mixed age class this was a positive experience for him and if anything supported his learning in all areas to achieve very successful outcomes at the end of Key Stage 2 before moving on to high school. For some of our children who are born late in the school year they are often more closely related by age to children in the previous year group. In many cases a mixed age class can be a positive influence on social and academic progress.

Decisions on which children will be involved in mixed age classes is a complex one and will not be simply put down to single factors such as ability or date of birth. I will be discussing our children with Class Teachers, Key Stage Leaders, SENCO and the Learning Mentor to inform decisions based on factors including academic achievements and their social and emotional needs to ensure children are placed in the best possible class to meet their individual requirements.



Headteacher: Mr. Simon Hanley, B.Ed (Hons), M.Sc, NPQH, LLE



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As stated above, we are currently in the process of completing a full staffing review. Once this has been completed we will begin to organise class places for September 2016. The decisions necessary regarding class groups for September, however, will be completed late in the summer term. This is due to the number of pupils who join our school during the year. Each year we take children into classes other than Reception, and this year has been no different. We are rarely able to confirm precise numbers until late in the summer term and therefore cannot publish class lists until this time.

Please be aware that the staffing review process has been one of consultation with school staff, the Local Authority and Trade Unions which has quite rightly meant that during consultation there has been movement and changes to plans. In addition, intake numbers in Reception next year and in other year groups during this school year has meant that decisions have had to be altered. This has meant that the process has not until now been shared with parents until a firm decision has been made on the position of staff and the roles they have at Plantation. Both the Governors and I will continue to monitor pupil numbers closely and assess this for the needs of our school.

You may well be aware of the current media reports around the government's announcement and White Paper that all schools will be Academies by 2020. I understand that there have also been rumours on social media that Plantation Primary School is set to turn into an Academy. I can assure parents that at this time there are no plans for this.

I hope the information above provides explanation of the changes to our school and I look forward to updating you with information about classes later in the summer term.

Yours sincerely

Mr Hanley, Headteacher



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