

CONIFERS PRIMARY SCHOOL



21st September 2018

Dear Parents/Carers

A month in and everyone has settled quickly into 'school life'. Summer is now a distant memory and in my case, one I am happy not to repeat. May I take this opportunity to thank all of you who offered your well-wishes and sincere greetings on my return. It's good to be back!

It has been a pleasure to welcome our new children into Reception and across the wider school and also a pleasure to meet our new parents, who I warmly welcome to the Conifers community.

It was also fantastic to see so many 'old faces' (I mean that in the nicest possible way), at our Rights Respecting School afternoon. Over one hundred and seventy of you joined us to design and produce your leaf, flower or bird for our Community Tree. Marvellous stuff!

As a school, Conifers strive to provide a safe and stimulating learning environment. The following is a quick recap on some of what we do, for those of you who are new to the school or for whose children are somewhat reticent and answering your question, "What did you get up to today then?"

We teach the core subjects Maths and English during the first two hours of the day, when children are usually most alert and receptive - allegedly. We teach the foundation subjects, History, Geography, Art, Music etc. through a topic or themed approach, throughout the rest of the day or as a 'block' piece of study. All areas of teaching are planned to be delivered in as creative a way as possible, and our Creative Curriculum is underpinned by our desire to provide children with as many opportunities as possible, to Learn Outside the Classroom (LOTC). All pupils will participate in reading every day, and cursive handwriting practice, within teaching episodes, as this has been adopted across the school and greatly improves presentation skills. Opportunities to practice extended writing skills are offered every half term with our 'Time to Shine', where children can choose their favourite piece of writing to redraft and present in their best possible writing style. We also have a focus on teaching mental arithmetic skills, and English grammar on a daily basis, alongside the many other subject areas.

Whole school assemblies take place on a Monday afternoon and these are used to; celebrate the class with the best attendance, celebrate children who have worked exceptionally hard in their Maths, or in their English, and often, any sporting successes we have excelled in. Key Stage 1 assemblies, in which parents are welcome to attend, usually run on a Wednesday afternoon (except for this half term) where they have been swapped to a Friday, and Key Stage 2 assemblies usually run on a Friday afternoon, (except for this half term) where they have been swapped to a Wednesday. I hope that makes sense? These assemblies are 'theme' based, and taken from our Rights Respecting Schools charter.

Your feedback on what we do is always welcomed and listened to. You can have a natter with me on the school gate, where you'll find me every morning, or at the end of the school day, when I'm usually found at the playground entrance. Alternatively you can write or use our website. The feature for this is the 'Parent View' option, which can be found at the bottom of our Homepage. This link will navigate you to Ofsted's 'Parent View Homepage' where you are invited to comment on the school using the 'Give your views now' icon. Your views are important to us as a school, and we will use these to help us improve our provision. I would hasten to add that positive views are just as welcome as ones offering areas for development.

Returning to our commitment to provide Learning Outside the Classroom opportunities (LOTC) I am excited to report that our Year 6 children have already had the opportunity to experience some intensive 'learning outside the classroom' this term. Our week-long residential to Dartmoor, staying at the River Dart Country Park, was an enormous success. I was lucky enough to be 'let out' of the office on a couple of days, and shared in the children's experiences of caving, climbing, kayaking and balancing their way through the High Ropes course, to name but a few of the activities. I was

somewhat envious that I couldn't participate as much as I would have like to, but the children were clearly having an amazing time. I imagine you'll hear more about this in our next newsletter.

I would like to formally welcome three new members of staff to Conifers who have already started to make a very positive contribution to the children and the school. Working alongside our Year Five Team we welcome Mrs Trivett and in our in our THRIVE base we welcome Mrs Stavrianos and Mrs Kirlew.

Conifers Primary School is a THRIVE school. This means that in our school we have a THRIVE 'base', which provides nurture founded intervention for the children who need additional help with their social and emotional needs. Part of this intervention includes using the THRIVE online assessment and development tool, to create individual action plans. The aim of the THRIVE base is to provide a therapeutic teaching and intervention programme to support children with their social and emotional difficulties. The base is managed and led by 2 trained THRIVE Licensed Practitioners and additional support staff. The THRIVE base is a short term intervention strategy where the children participate in a balance of curriculum work and THRIVE interventions using the 'THRIVE Approach', (more on this can accessed through the school's website). The children attend the THRIVE base for 3 full time days (Monday -Wednesday) and then they spend Thursday and Friday in their classroom with their teacher, supported by THRIVE base staff.

REMINDER

Nature Area Open Day!

Wednesday 26th September @ 3.30 - 5pm

Bouncy castle

Raffle and Tombola
Pond dipping

Ice creams

BBQ

Nature Area Hunt Craft stalls and cakes!



Next Wednesday, 26th September, there will be a non-uniform day (£1 donation) where we invite all of your children to dress up in the theme of 'The Ugly Bug Ball' - so dig out those ladybird, spider and bumble bee costumes as there will be prizes for the best dressed bug! The winners will be announced at the Open Day which is taking place from 3.30pm. You can also send your child in non-uniform on this day.

Each year group will also be making crafts to sell at the Open Day where all monies raised from these stalls will go towards our partnership school in Katharaka to fund a child's education for the whole year.

Many thanks to the Friends of Conifers Primary School for their continuous hard work in organising and supporting the development of our Nature Area. If anyone has anything that you would like to donate to our raffle for the Nature Area Open Day, please bring them to the School Office, thank you

I look forward to seeing you at the 'Open Day' and thank you for your continuing support.

Yours sincerely

Mr A Johnson
HEADTEACHER

