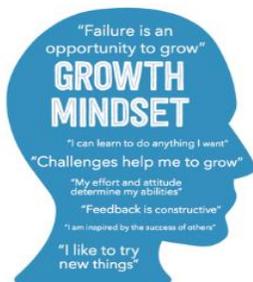


We have had a great start to the new academic year here at Durham Lane Primary School. The children look amazing in their school uniform and I was overwhelmed by their behaviour and impeccable manners; they are indeed a credit to you. I have been so impressed with how the children have settled back into school, especially due to the new Covid-19 social distancing arrangements. Our new children in Nursery have settled well and we are all looking forward to an amazing year in school.

Growth Mindset

This year, we will be starting to promote an important part of a new school approach – growth mind-set. This is a school-wide approach to learning, praise and reward designed to encourage all our children to be resilient and self-motivated learners. Children who view difficulty, challenge, perseverance, making mistakes and failure as an integral part of their own learning processes are often the most successful learners.



Staffing

This term we have an established staffing team and our current staffing arrangements are as follows:

Head Teacher	Mrs H Gregory
Deputy Head Teacher	Miss E Barrett
School Administrator	Mrs C Ennion

Early Years

Mrs F Khan, (Key Stage Lead), Mrs R Guest, Mrs R Robinson, Mrs J Harding, Mrs Z Afsar

Key Stage 1

Mrs A Evans (Key Stage Lead), Mrs K Jessop, Mrs L Spruce,

Lower Key Stage 2

Miss B Drew, Miss E Hugill, Mrs M Ahmed

Upper Key Stage 2

Mr A Beane (Key Stage Lead), Miss E Barrett, Mrs L Bain

Staff changes

We will be sad to say goodbye to Mrs J Ball and Mrs J Glindon next Friday. I would personally like to thank Mrs Ball for all the time she has given me, to make sure that I am fully prepared to take over as Head Teacher of Durham Lane. She has created such a wonderful school and I am extremely excited about building upon its success.

On another sad note, we will also be saying good bye to Mrs L Adamson, who will be retiring at the end of October.

Lunchtime Arrangements

This year we continue with our daily mealtime choice system.



May I remind parents that the cost of school lunches is £10.25 per week, which should be paid using dinner money envelopes; these will be sent home over the next few weeks. Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are part of the Universal Free School Meals programme and are entitled to a free meal each day.

Can I remind parents that if you are eligible for free school meals, it is important that you let the school know, as it allows us to claim additional Pupil Premium Funding on your child's behalf. All children receiving free school meals are eligible for additional funding which, as a school, we can use to improve the quality of education and ensure all children have the opportunity to participate fully in school activities. Further details on this funding and parental eligibility will be sent home next week. All enquires will be treated in the strictest confidence.

If children are bringing a packed lunch to school we have a policy on the content of lunchboxes which is available on the school website. We have several children in school who have severe nut allergies and request that parents do not include nuts or any nut based products in school packed lunches. Children must also bring their own drink (not fizzy) and a spoon for yoghurt or jelly. Staff based in the dining hall, will monitor children on packed lunches and will encourage them



to eat all items provided – please only add to a lunchbox the food you expect your child to eat.

P.E.

Across school, all children are expected to participate in 2 hours of physical activity each week. Due to Covid-19 risk assessments at this present time, we would like children to bring in their trainers to wear during their P.E lessons. This may change over the coming weeks due to changes in Covid-19 risk assessments. Therefore can I please remind you that our:



School P.E. kits consists of:

- jogging bottoms and hoodie, white t-shirt, navy shorts and trainers/plimsolls.

I am fully aware due to Covid-19 and lockdown that some children may have made limited progress in their reading. Therefore, this year we will continue to promote home-school reading and I expect all children in school from Nursery to Y6 to spend some time sharing books with adults, listening to stories read aloud or reading aloud together at home.

Every child should change their reading book regularly and I would ask parents to monitor this and ensure that all home reading is recorded in a child's reading record. If you are concerned about the frequency of your child's book change, please speak to their class teacher or contact me directly. I am aware that Mrs Evans and Miss Barrett have sent out a separate letter with regards to home-school reading and more information regarding online reading will be communicated with you in the near future.

Home Learning

As you are aware, we subscribe to a number of home learning programmes available for use via the internet. These include:



Please note that many of these platforms will re-set the start base at the start of the new term.

Communication

As the new Head Teacher, I will ensure that Durham Lane will continue with an open door policy and we welcome all communication and interaction with parents. Due to the current unprecedented situation we are in, if you have any urgent messages to pass onto your child's class teacher, could you please inform Mrs L Adamson on the school playground in the morning, who will share the message with the class teacher. Please do not hesitate to contact a member of staff if you have any

questions or concerns, as I would like to believe we can solve any issues as soon as they arise, with clear communication. My door is always open if parents wish to talk with me directly and I will endeavour to meet with you, arrange a phone call or a zoom meeting as soon as possible.

Attendance

If your child is ill, please contact the school office by 9.30am on the morning of the first day of illness. Our school office is open from 8.00am and a school administrator will be available to take your call. Regular attendance in school is very important and I expect children to attend every day, unless they are ill.

I will be taking the responsibility for monitoring and promoting school attendance and will be available to support families when concerns with persistent absence arise. (Persistent absence is when a child's attendance falls below 90% in a 12 month period, not just in an academic school year).



The governing body reviewed the attendance policy and procedures for the academic year 2019-20 (available on the school website or in hard copy from the school office) and made the decision to continue with current policy including the thresholds for the issuing of fixed penalty notices for unauthorised absence. These remain in line with Local Authority guidance.

May I also stress to parents that if a leave of absence is required during term time, the appropriate form

must be completed and returned to school prior to the absence. This is essential, as under our safeguarding arrangements, we have a legal responsibility to know the whereabouts of all children during term time. Failure to complete a leave of absence form may lead to a formal 'child missing in education' referral being made to the local authority.

Administration of Medication

We only administer medication prescribed by a GP which needs to be taken four times each day. Parents must complete an appropriate form and hand all medication into the school office. The medication must be clearly labelled and contain a spoon (if required). Staff are not permitted to administer any medication without authority from the Head Teacher. Medicine must be collected from the school office at the end of the day by an adult. Please ensure that all inhalers are in date and have been handed into the class teacher. These will be passed up to your child's new teacher.

After School Club

We have availability in our breakfast and after school club. If you are interested in booking places, please contact the school office and speak to Mrs C Ennion or email her on dclubs@sbcschools.org.uk
Costs are:

Before School Club

8am – 8.55am £4.50 (Breakfast an additional 50p)

After School Club

3.15pm – 4.30pm - £5.50

3.15pm – 5.50pm £10.00

(This includes a snack tea at 3.45pm)

Parking

Can I urge all parents to consider carefully where they park at the end of the school day. I am aware that some parents are parking on the zig-zag areas at the front of the school. We would like to stress the importance of following the voluntary one way system. Not only does this cause congestion, it also poses a risk to many children as they leave school on foot because they cannot see moving traffic. I am sure everyone will agree that the safety of our children on the road is of utmost importance and we would not like to see an accident occur in which someone got hurt. Please park at the local shops and walk through to school if you are unable to walk directly from home.

Bikes and scooters

Due to the congestion outside school at this moment in time, we have made the decision, for the children's safety, that children do not attend school on bikes or scooters. This will be reviewed in the coming weeks once the children and parents are more au fait with collection arrangements.

PD Days 2020-21

Tuesday 1st September 2020

Friday 23rd October 2020

Monday 7th June 2021

Monday 19th July 2021

Tuesday 20th July 2021

School will be closed to children on these dates.

For a full list of school holiday dates please see: <https://www.stockton.gov.uk/media/1959177/school-term-and-holiday-dates-2020-2021.pdf> for a full list of the 2020-21 term dates.

Message from Mrs C Robinson Chair of Governors

It is always a pleasure to welcome our families back in September and meet our new arrivals, but never have we ever had to experience what we have as a community over the past 6 months. It made our first day back all the more special and it was a delight to see so many happy smiling faces, from both adults and children on the playground these last few mornings.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the support you have given us since March. It has been an extremely challenging and turbulent time but through the pulling together of all our families, staff and governors we are in a strong place for the year ahead.

Speaking to the children, it is lovely to hear how happy they are to be back and how excited they are to moving onto their new classes soon.

As a governing body we are very proud of all the children and dedicated staff at Durham Lane and are eagerly looking forward to the new academic year.

On behalf of the governing body, Clair Robinson.

Chair of Governors

Thank you

Finally, I would just like to say a huge thank you to everyone, for welcoming me into the 'Durham Lane Family'. I have had such a wonderful week and I am really looking forward to getting to know you all. I will be on the playground every morning, so please come and introduce yourself.

Kind regards,

Mrs H Gregory

helen.gregory@sbcschools.org.uk

