7th October 2021

Dear Parents,

 There is definitely a feeling of some normality in that I can’t believe it is October already – term is literally flying by! The children have been producing some lovely work, and are very engaged in their learning activities. Today is National Poetry Day, so do ask your children if they have enjoyed the poems they have been looking at as part of their English lessons this week.

 It was lovely to see a number of parents at the PTA AGM. It was a most interesting meeting with some new ideas shared. I am looking forward to the Hallowe’en cake sale which is the first event coming up on Wednesday 20th October – the children (and indeed adults) do enjoy a spooky cup-cake! If you are able to donate goodies for this event, then please drop them into the office on the day. Thank you. As usual, don’t forget cash for 3:10pm! The children have drawn their self-portrait for a tea-towel, and designed a Christmas Card. I am sure you will be interested in ordering both of these for the festive season. (I am optimistic that we will have a reason to be festive this year, after the disappointment of not being able to see family last year.) Our thanks to the PTA for organising these opportunities which all help the school.

 Year 5 children have finally started their swimming lessons, after some initial delays due to problems at the centre; they are really enjoying learning in the water. They are also increasingly excited about their visit to the National Space Centre next week. It is now only two weeks until Y6 visit Waddesdon Manor to assist with bulb planting, and Y4 visit Woodrow High House for two days of learning outdoors. It is so good that visits are now permitted as the restrictions have been eased. All the children have welcomed the return of Curriculum Enrichment after such a long time when we were not able to offer this during the period of restrictions due to the pandemic – they are really enjoying the opportunity to learn in a different way.

 I would like to thank all those parents who have already responded to our request for a termly voluntary contribution of £10 per term. This money allows us to fund the Curriculum Enrichment programme, and to fund visitors (either virtual or in 3D) to enrich the children’s learning. If this has slipped your mind and you are able to support the school in this way, then please do make your contribution via e-Schools.

 Earlier this week Y6 and their parents attended a meeting about our planned residential visit to the River Dart centre next May. This visit offers our oldest children an amazing opportunity to challenge themselves and develop their resilience as they participate in a range of outdoor activities. More details will be shared with Y6 in the coming weeks.

 May I take this opportunity to remind all parents that if your child is participating in a visit off-site, then we do need your written permission. (For local area walks and swimming additional permission slips are not a requirement.) We do appreciate a prompt response for permission, as without it we cannot legally allow your child to take part in the visit off-site.

 In the last newsletter I mentioned that should you wish to contact the teacher, then please use a new email address of admin@cheddington.bucks.sch.uk and your message will reach the member of staff. We would like to use this email for all messages to the school from parents, as it separates them from the literally hundreds of other emails which arrive into the office daily. Therefore if you are reporting an absence, requesting a change to pick-up, notifying us that your child has an appointment to attend, or any other business then please use admin@cheddington.bucks.sch.uk This email address will be monitored at set times throughout the day and therefore you may not receive an immediate response, but your message will have been noted. We thank you for your co-operation with this.

 It has been brought to my attention that, particularly in the morning, some children are crossing the High Street at points other than with Mr Frankum. This is most concerning. As our crossing patrol person, Mr Frankum has the authority to stop the traffic so that it is safe for the children to cross. I do appreciate that this may involve a slightly longer walk round the green if the children are coming from New Street, but it is not safe to be crossing close to Church Lane as oncoming traffic cannot be seen clearly. If your child walks independently, please can you mention this to them. We do talk with the children in school about the importance of being safe – both physically and virtually – on a regular basis.

 May I remind parents of children in Y3 that they are cordially invited to attend our assembly on Friday 22nd October starting at 2:40pm and lasting about 30 minutes. Y3 are the first class to share with their parents as well as the school, and will be focusing on the theme of Harvest. We do hope that you will be able to join us.

 The Guidance for Schools document continues to be updated frequently. I would like to clarify for all parents that NHS Track and Trace is now responsible for identifying close contacts of people who test positive. Whilst we are learning to live with the virus, the latest instructions for primary age children are that if your child is symptom free, even if they have been advised by NHS Track and Trace to have a PCR test, then they should attend school. We do respect your personal decisions regarding risk, as we recognise that it is very difficult for young children who have tested positive to be isolated from their siblings. The Government are clear that children and young people should not be subject to more disruption to their education, given that in the vast majority of their age group the virus is not severe, and so many adults are now fully vaccinated. We are aware that some local schools do have rising numbers, especially in the secondary sector. We continue to follow all the Guidance from the Department for Education and Public Health regarding prevention of spread; and will, of course, keep parents advised should the situation require any action beyond the current requirements.

 We are hopeful that the Hall roof repair should be concluded next week and the scaffolding will then come down. We are looking forward to this work being finished as it was severely delayed due to global supply difficulties. It is certainly looking lovely so far. We thank you for your understanding whilst we have had works on-site.

 Attached to this newsletter is a special edition newsletter about online safety. This is a new initiative which we hope to develop over the year. We do trust that you will find if helpful as we support the children in keeping safe in the digital world.

 Lastly please may I remind you to ensure that your child does have suitable clothing for the weather. As Autumn is well and truly here, the weather tends to be more changeable and so suitable outdoor clothing is essential. The children do go out to play in light rain, we only have wet play if the rain is particularly heavy. Please do keep an eye on the weather forecast so that the children can enjoy their outdoor time. Thank you.

Mrs K. Tamlyn

Head Teacher