



# The Federation of The Downs & Northbourne Church of England Primary Schools



*Chair of Governors: Dr A Eyden  
Vice Chair of Governors: Rev D Ridley*

*"if you have faith as small as a mustard seed...nothing will be impossible."  
(Matthew: 17 v20)*

**Friday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2020**

Dear Parents / Carers,

## **All year groups back at Northbourne before the summer!**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our families for showing such patience and trust in us as we worked through the past few months. It has always been my aim to ensure that we provide every pupil the opportunity to return to school before the summer, if only for a few days. I am pleased to say that as of next week every single child will have had the chance to be back at school before the summer holidays!

It seems absurd that we are celebrating the opportunity for your child to be in school for just a few days, when just a few months ago they would have been in school full time as normal. But we are certainly living through strange times and we must make the very best of it. I am very proud of our pupils and the resilience they have shown over the past few months. They are a credit to their parents and families and we feel very lucky to be able to teach them at Northbourne.

Let's all look forward to a return to some semblance of normality in September!

## **Government plan for returning to school in September**

As you will all know, the government have made it clear that all pupils are to return to school this September. We are delighted with this news and cannot wait to welcome everybody back to school!

Naturally, there are still various guidelines that we will have to follow in order to make school as safe as possible. These guidelines will dictate how we structure school for your child next year. At this point in time we are still finalising the plan for September, but we will be able to share this with you next week. We hope that the steps we take will cause as little disruption as possible to the normal working day at Northbourne.

The buzz words for the curriculum in September will be "catch up" and "recovery". The "catch up" element embraces the need for all pupils to have the chance to catch up with the missed learning opportunities of the past months. Our teachers are already planning their curriculum for next year, which will revisit much of the core learning that your child did not access due to lockdown. Alongside the "catch up" element will be the "recovery" aspect of school life. This recognises the need for social skills to be rebuilt and opportunities for well-being and good mental health.



To this end, we are planning to ensure that next year all classes will access Forest School and outdoor learning on a weekly basis, rather than waiting for alternate terms as they do now. Mr Chidwick and the class teachers are working on some new curriculum opportunities which will enable all our pupils to make the most of our beautiful environment and our unique forest school every week. We firmly believe that these outdoor learning opportunities are vital to rebuilding resilience, confidence and positivity after such a long period of time away from school.

### **Year 6 leavers' celebration and hoodies!**

Whilst we have many of our Year 6 pupils back in school at the moment, we haven't seen all of them together since the end of March. At this time of year, we would usually be preparing Year 6 leavers church services and celebrations.

Despite the current situation, we are determined for our Year 6 pupils to have the opportunity to gather safely at school in order to enjoy a last Year 6 get together and to say goodbye to Northbourne before heading off to secondary school. We want to be able to do this properly and to involve all Year 6 pupils and staff members. Sadly, due to safety guidance and "bubble" restrictions we will not be able to include parents in the celebration.

We would like to invite all of our Year 6 pupils, whether they have been back at school this term or not, to attend on the morning of Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July. This is the last day of term. They will be able to enjoy a fun morning on the school field with their friends and teachers. Due to the number of Year 6 pupils, they will have to be in two separate "bubbles" for this get together, however, both "bubbles" will be out on the field together, giving the pupils the chance to say goodbye to all of their friends.

Once again, our wonderful Friends of Northbourne (FON) have very kindly ordered a Northbourne leavers hoodie for each of our Year 6 pupils, with all of the leavers names on. We know that they will be excited to receive these and we will make sure that they are ready to be presented when we all get together.

A letter with further details will be sent to Year 6 parents next week.

### **Reports, attendance and classes for next year**

Next week your child's end of year report will be available for you to collect from the school office. The reports this year focus on your child's progress and achievements up to March 20<sup>th</sup>, when the government closed the school. The attendance report also provides your child's attendance up to March 20<sup>th</sup>. Inside your report envelope you will also find a booklet welcoming your child to their new class and introducing them to their teacher and teaching assistant.

As I explained in the newsletter last week, the school is structured slightly differently next year, with a split Year 2 and Year 3, instead of the normal split Year 2 and Year 5. This is purely down to logistical reasons and balancing the class numbers. I have already spoken to the parents of pupils in next year's Year 2 and Year 3 who will be in Yrs 1/2 and 3/4. For most children they will move classes as expected.

### **Last day of term – Wed 22<sup>nd</sup> July – Early pick up from 1.00pm**

For those children who are currently attending school, our last day of term is Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> July. On that day you are welcome to collect your child early, from 1.00pm. School will stay open until 3.00pm as usual for those pupils who are not able to be collected early.

Mr M Reynolds

