



Rivermead
Primary School

Loddon Bridge Road, Woodley, Reading, Berkshire RG5 4BS

Telephone 0118 954 0770

Email admin@rivermead.wokingham.sch.uk

Website www.rivermead.wokingham.sch.uk

Headteacher Mr Brian Prebble

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Dear Parents/Carers

I hope you all enjoyed the summer holidays and the time with your children. It has been lovely having the children back, and I have enjoyed walking around the school seeing the children smiling, engaged, motivated and enjoying being back at school. It has been a very hot week with the weather, which the children have handled very well.

We are looking forward to this year as a school team, and to the many exciting learning opportunities your children will experience. The support you offer with your child/children in conjunction with the school makes a significant difference and strengthens the partnership further throughout the year – ensuring a successful year for everyone.

RAAC

You may have seen recent media coverage regarding Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC) and its use in educational settings. RAAC is a lightweight form of concrete; because it is weaker than regular concrete, concerns have been raised about its long-term durability.

Department for Education (DfE) has recently changed its guidance to education settings on the management of RAAC to take a more precautionary approach and as a result areas in affected spaces will be vacated.

During the last academic year, schools were asked to fill in a questionnaire regarding their estates, which we completed. We do not have any confirmed RAAC in our buildings and have not been asked to close any areas. However, we want to take additional precautions and to ensure the safety of the children, the building will be checked through survey teams from the Trust and the Local Authority to ensure that RAAC has not been used in the construction of any part of our building. We will update parents/carers with any further information.

The school day:

A reminder of the school day and times for all year groups, including EYFS from next week:

EYFS: drop-off 8.40am – 8.45am pick up: 3.10pm

Year 1 to Year 6: drop-off 8.40am – 8.45am pick up: 3.15pm

In the morning, please note the school day is starting at 8.45am, which is 5 minutes earlier. The teachers may not be able to be at the door for the whole time to greet children, as they may be supporting children coming into class. But when the doors are open children can go straight through. Please allow some patience at the end of the day when collecting your child, the teachers are getting to know parents/carers to ensure that children are leaving with the correct people.

The school gates (the main entrance and the entrance from the field) are closed from 9am to 3pm each day. You can come into the school to drop off/collect items, collect your child, but you must

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come to the main gates on Addington Gardens where you can be “buzzed in” by our admin team.

Home /School partnership Parent engagement

We want to continue to strengthen the home/school partnership and increase parent engagement. We are taking feedback from the parent survey regarding providing more opportunities for parents/carers to come into the school. We will be offering more opportunities through termly learning reviews, productions, concerts, Parent/Teacher consultations, curriculum information sessions, and volunteering with trips and events.

Meet the Teacher – parents/carers for children in Year 1 to Year 6

Next week we are providing an opportunity for parents/carers to a ‘Meet the teacher’ session. This is an information giving session only and any specific questions will need an appointment. The information shared will include: class & school expectations, daily requirements, information about homework, PE days, timetabling and school/home partnership. Parents/carers in EYFS have had a meet the teacher session this week, which we hope you found useful.

- Year 1 & Year 2: Tuesday 12 September
- Year 3 & Year 4: Wednesday 13 September
- Year 5 & Year 6: Thursday 14 September

The sessions will be from 3.20pm until 3.50pm, in your child's classroom. The children will be in the small hall where they will be supervised watching a video. The session will end at 3.50pm, where parents will be asked to go to the playground, the children will be brought to the classroom and released to you from their normal pick-up point. If you are not wanting to attend and want to collect your child as normal, please inform the school office so your child will be available at the classroom door to be collected.

Parent/teacher consultations.

We are taking notice of feedback regarding parent/teacher consultations, where some parents/carers would like to come into school for a meeting. We are also aware through feedback, many parents prefer having a virtual meeting as this has been more convenient with work commitments and child-care. This year we are offering both face-to-face and virtual meetings for parent/teacher consultations. The meetings are an invaluable opportunity to discuss learning, successes, and development areas of your child. These meetings will continue in the same format as last year, where you are able to book a 10-minute slot through an on-line booking system. Information on how and when to book on the various consultations will be sent out closer to the time.

Dates for the consultations:

- Face-to-face meetings: Wednesday 18 October
- Virtual meetings: Thursday 19 October

SEND parent/teacher consultations

These meetings will be held face-to-face, unless a parent/carer requests a virtual meeting. The meetings this year are planned for:

- Wednesday 11 October
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- Wednesday 17 January
- Wednesday 1 May

Parent Information sessions – Reading, Phonics and Maths

Parents will be sent login details next Friday to access the school's OneDrive. On the OneDrive we will be providing Parent Information presentations on reading, phonics and maths. These will provide information about that curriculum area, and how phonics, reading and maths are taught at school and strategies on how you can assist and support your child at home. We will be holding in school meetings to share further information and enable parents to see resources. These meetings will be held after the children have been dropped off in the morning:

- 9am: Phonics – EYFS & Y1: Tuesday 19 September
- 9am: Reading – Year 2 - 6: Thursday 21 September
- 9am: Maths – Year 1 - 6: Thursday 28 September

Learning reviews

Last year we held 'Learning Reviews' where the children were able to share their learning from the term with their parent/carer in the school. We are continuing with the 'Learning Reviews' and will be developing them further. Parents/carers will have an opportunity to come into school from 2.45pm to 3.15pm and sit with their child to go through their books and discuss their learning from the term. The children will be highlighting pieces of work they are proud of, which will enable parents/carers to celebrate their child's successes. The 'Learning Reviews' will be held in the large school hall, and examples from art or DT will be displayed. The dates for the learning reviews for the Autumn Term:

- EYFS Monday 27 November
- Year 1 & Year 2: Tuesday 28 November
- Year 3 & Year 4: Wednesday 29 November
- Year 5 & Year 6: Thursday 30 November

Productions

We will be continuing with how we ran Productions last academic year:

- EYFS: 11 & 12 December
- Year 1: 30 & 31 January
- Year 2 & Year 3: 26 & 27 March
- Year 4 & Year 5: 21 & 22 May
- Year 6: Production performed at the Leavers Evening, 22 July

For children in Year 2 through to Year 5, we will continue to allow children who do not want to perform to be part of a research project. There will be an opportunity for parents to come into school where their child's work will be showcased, and they can discuss the project with their child.

Learning & Teaching – curriculum enrichment



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This year to enrich our curriculum further, each year group will be planning a trip or visitor or an event each term related to their learning within a topic.

Sport

Last year we entered a variety of sporting events, this year we will be increasing the sports offered and the opportunities for the children to represent the school. We are also starting chess and debating clubs, with an opportunity for some children to go to be part of competitions against other schools.

Choir

The choir has been an important part of the school for many years, and this will continue. The choir will, like last year, be performing at the O2 in London, performing at the Woodley Carnival, and we will be holding a concert for parents at the school.

Charity days

Each year the school council members are voted in by their class. With the class council and school council meetings they decide the charities the school will be involved with and fundraise for. Each term we hold a school council led fundraising event. Details of these will come to parents as decisions are made by the school council.

Harvest Assembly

A fundraising event the school gets involved in each year is with the Woodley Food Bank. This is a partnership that has developed over the past 9 years and supports families in our local community. We will be working with the Woodley Food Bank again this year, donating all foods collected for Harvest to this local organisation. We are currently planning our Harvest Assembly with the Woodley Food Bank and further information will be sent out closer to the time on dates and food items you could donate.

Food/Healthy snacks

When providing a snack for your child, please remember that the school does have a healthy food policy and encourages healthy snacks. Please also be aware that the school has a policy where foods containing nuts cannot be eaten at school. We have a number of children with nut allergies, some of which are particularly severe and life threatening. We would appreciate your support with these food items.

Giving out sweets for children's birthdays

We would also like to fade out over this academic year children bringing sweets in to give out to the class on their birthday. We have spoken with some parents to gain their feedback. We appreciate it is a nice thing for the children to give something out on their birthday in recognition of their special day. However, for many, giving sweets out is an added pressure. We do have several children with allergies who cannot have specific food items, and having sweets etc handed out can create problems for those children and families. We still want children to celebrate their birthday within school, wearing a birthday badge, the class singing happy birthday etc. but next year we will be asking you not to bring in sweets to be given out. A suggestion made by a parent which we support, is for parents to pack into their child's lunch box or bag a treat your child could enjoy with their lunch to help make their lunchtime and day a little bit special.

INFORMATION

Autumn Term dates:

Half term: Monday 23 October – Friday 27 October



INSET day: The school will be closed on Monday 30st October for an INSET day. This is the first day after the October half term.

End of term: Friday 15 December

Use of school grounds after school - Playground equipment

As a school we are very proud of our grounds and facilities, and we do allow parents to enjoy the grounds after school with their child/children.

However, to ensure the children are safe while playing in the grounds, we do ask for the following:

- That the children are supervised by their parent/carer while on the school grounds afterschool. If a child walks/bikes home they must leave immediately
- The children do not play on the adventure playgrounds or trail play area
- The children do not climb onto the top of the climbing wall
- The children know that during school time they are not to go into the wild-life/environment area – this rule continues after school
- The children do not climb over the story-telling chair, the boat and other equipment before and after school
- Do not ride their bike or scooter through the school grounds, as we have had incidents where children on bikes/scooters have knocked into children and adults

We appreciate your support to enable us to have a safe playground and the use of the facilities are enjoyed by all.

Leave of absence/Holiday requests

The Department of Education advises schools to only authorise leave of absence/holidays in exceptional circumstances. The examples we are given where we can authorise are:

1. For service personnel and other employees who are prevented from taking holidays outside term-time if the holiday will have minimal disruption to the pupil's education
2. When a family needs to spend time together to support each other during or after a crisis.

Please be aware that if holidays are taken which have not been authorised, we must pass this information to our Education Welfare Officer at Wokingham Borough Council, where a Penalty Notice may be issued without further warning. The Penalty Notice is a fine of £60 per parent/carer, per child (a family of 4, 2 adults and 2 children would result in a fine of £240). Please be aware that these fines will be issued by Wokingham Borough Council if parent/carers take unauthorised leave of absence/holidays during term time. There are various absence's we are able to authorise – school visits, exams/tests, close family members funerals or weddings of immediate family, but not birthdays, for the day of the event and an additional day in some cases for travel. If you have any concerns or questions in the future regarding leave of absence for your child, please feel free to make an appointment through the school admin team to discuss further.



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Parking

There are various lines and markings on Addington Gardens, the road leading up to the main school gates. Can you please adhere to the markings and not park on the yellow lines, in front of the school gates, or in the disabled bays if you do not have the appropriate badge. The community police and traffic wardens will be visiting regularly to ensure that these restrictions are enforced.

We have had residents on the housing estate and on surrounding roads beside the school ring to complain about parents/carers parking – blocking driveways and making access difficult. The advice we have been told to give residents by Traffic Management at Wokingham Borough Council is to report cars to them directly. Our main concern is the safety of the children, I hope that everyone will support the school and respect the rights of the residents, consider the access to the school and park responsibly and respectfully.

Vacancies

We currently have the following vacancies available – Breakfast club position for Fridays and After school club position for Wednesdays and Thursdays. If you are interested in either of these roles, please complete an application form which can be found on our website or collect from the school office. Please hand in to Mrs Tooley in the office.

I hope you have an enjoyable weekend.

Mr Brian Prebble
