Friday 13 th September 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

On the first day back at school, we welcomed several new pupils across Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Furthermore, this week we said hello to all our new Reception children. We hope they will be very happy at Old Stratford Primary School; the staff are looking forward to getting to know each and every one of them! We would like to say a big thank you to everyone who sent in cards, emails, letters, flowers and lovely goodies at the end of the summer term. All your thanks and good wishes were much appreciated by the staff.

Lots of work has been going on over the holidays to ensure that the school is looking fresh and bright, ready for your children to come back to. The hall floor has been replaced and the staff room has received a well earned face lift! The Year 5 and 6 classrooms have been decorated and we have some very popular new dinner tables for lunch time.

I can now formally report to parents our outcomes from last year, which were some of the best results that Old Stratford have produced. All of our children reached or exceeded their targets and they should be very proud.

93% of our children passed their phonics screening test.

83 % of pupils reached the expected standard in reading with 37% of children reaching greater depth. *The national average for reading was 73%*

87% of pupils reached the expected standard in Spelling, Punctuation, and Grammar (SPAG) with 57% of children reaching greater depth*. The national average for SPAG was 78%.*

93% of pupils reached the expected standard in writing with 13% reaching greater depth. *The national average for writing was 78%*

87% of pupils reached the expected standard in maths with 50% of children reaching greater depth. *The national average for maths was 79%*

Please visit our website for more details on Pupil Performance: <https://www.oldstratfordschool.org.uk/>

It has been delightful to see all the children return to school looking so smart and eager to begin learning in their new classes. Can we thank all parents for their support in getting school uniform and ensuring the children are prepared for the new year. Staff have been working hard planning exciting curriculum experiences for your children and will send out Topic Letters shortly to inform you of what your children will be learning this term.

**Staff News**

We would like to welcome Mr Andrews our new Reception teacher, Mrs Herman our new Year 2 teacher and Mr Dupre, our graduate teacher who will be working with Mrs Faraday in Year 4. Mrs Hoddinott also has a new role as our Year 2 Teaching Assistant.

Mrs Burnside will be taking Maternity leave from Friday 20th September with Mrs Sarbutts taking over her role of SEN Coordinator in her absence. We wish Mrs Burnside well at this very exciting time.

**Celebrations**

We have so many wonderfully talented children at Old Stratford School and it is important to celebrate their achievements at every opportunity. Therefore, there are many opportunities for you as parents to help celebrate your child’s achievements.

Celebration assemblies are noted on the school calendar and will take place on a Friday morning at 9.05am. We would also like to invite you in, to see what we see, during our ‘Walk in Mornings’. These will take place on a Friday morning between 8.45am – 9.15am, where there will be an opportunity for you to come in and work alongside your child on an activity set up by the class teacher. Again, these dates are noted on the school calendar.

Additionally, look out for a Golden Ticket invite to our very special VIP Assembly, which will also take place on a Friday morning. Each child at this assembly will be able to sit with their parents/carers during the assembly until it is their turn to walk down the red carpet and collect their medal before their class teacher explains the reasons for the award. The children are very excited about the VIP assemblies and are looking forward to seeing who may get the very first Golden Ticket!

**Rewards and Sanctions**

Children also have an opportunity to collect Merits for following the school values and working hard. Merits collected, will go towards a Bronze (25 merits), Silver (50 merits) or Gold (100 merits) ticket. The children will then be able to take their ticket to the Merit Shop where they will be able to exchange the ticket for a gift from the corresponding section. As the children earn more merits the gift gets slightly larger. The Merit Shop will be run by the school council, ensuring the children become fully involved. Merits are not awarded for expected behaviour but for going above and beyond in school and striving to do the very best that you can. For example:

* Perseverance with something they find difficult
* Helping somebody else in their class
* Showing exemplary manners
* Doing extra jobs around the school
* Improving their class work

Hand in hand with this, the children will receive sanctions for unacceptable behaviour too. We will still be using our Good to be Green policy (Please see attached Good to be Green sheet).

**How Can You Help Your Child?**

* Encourage independence
* Read to your children regularly
* Listen to your children read
* Encourage them to do homework independently
* Keep us informed of any changes in your child’s routine
* Ensure your children are in school on time
* Ensure they are equipped for school (book bag, lunch, water bottle)
* Let your child go into school on their own

**LITTLE REMINDERS/CHANGES**

As is always the case at this time of year, we wanted to remind everyone of some of the expectations:

* Parents **should not** be driving their cars into the staff car park at any time
* Remember that dogs are **not** permitted on school grounds and must be kept behind the blue fencing of the school at all times
* Please keep your ParentMail account topped up if you would like your child to have a school dinner. Charges will be made on a weekly basis.
* The school is **not** able to authorise any holiday during the school term
* Newsletters will be written on an ‘as and when’ basis rather than every week. However we hope to celebrate all that is happening at the school
* Children cycling to school should always wear a cycling helmet
* Children **are not** permitted to play on the trim trail before or after school **(this includes siblings)**
* Any medicines to be taken in school need to come to the office where a medical form will need to be completed.
* We are not able to administer medication on a long-term basis without a prescription or letter from a doctor.

**Security and Safeguarding**

Can I please ask that if you need to come into the school for anything that you please use the front entrance and sign in? The school doors onto the playground are for the children to come out of only, unless you are with a member of staff. We do encourage our children to be independent so hanging up coats and bringing things in for them will not promote this. However, more importantly, we need to know who is inside the building at all times, not only in case of a fire but also to ensure the safety of your children. The front and back gates will be open at the beginning of the day and at the end of the day only. If you need to come into school at any other time, you must use the front entrance. Your help with this would be much appreciated.

**OSSA**

Thank you to those of you that have emailed to show an interest in helping with OSSA. Any help with raising funds for the school are really appreciated. If you still have not contacted OSSA and you would like to help please do not hesitate to contact the school office and we will pass your contact details onto the relevant people.

**The School App**

If you have not already downloaded the new school App onto your mobile device, please do so. If you do have the App make sure it is updated regularly. This will be our main way of contacting parents and sending notices. Letters and notices will also be available from the school App. The calendar on the school App will be updated regularly and already has key dates noted. Our school App can be downloaded from the App Store. It is called ‘School Jotter’. Once loaded scroll through to find Old Stratford Primary School.

**ParentMail**

This fantastic tool enables us to keep parents informed without the use of paper. We can now send almost all of our communications digitally, bringing with it considerable time and cost savings. All payments will also be made through ParentMail reducing the amount of money held on site. If you have not been able to register with ParentMail yet, please speak to the school office and check that we have your current email address.

**Energy Kidz**

Unfortunately, Energy Kidz have given notice that as of October half-term they will no longer be running a Breakfast or After School Club. This is down to the lack of children who attend the after school provision. Sometimes there are only a handful of children at the club, making the viability of employing staff impossible. Fortunately we have been able to source a replacement Breakfast Club quite quickly but are still struggling to source an after school club with such little interest from parents. However, we will endeavour to put on as many clubs as we can to help provide some provision after school. Nevertheless, I must stress that again these clubs will only run if the numbers are viable. More information on the new Breakfast Club and how to book will follow shortly.

**ATTENDANCE**

The Grand Union Trust are working in partnership with parents to improve school attendance.   **We would like to congratulate the many parents who make sure their children attend school regularly and get here on time.** The Grand Union Partnership abide by a strict Attendance Policy, which will be enforced if the following guidelines are not followed.

It is a parent’s legal responsibility to ensure their children receive appropriate education.  Failing to send your child to school regularly without good reason is a criminal offence.

Absence disrupts the education of the individual pupil and the whole class. Are you aware that children who do not attend regularly:

* do not achieve well in exams and can fall behind their peers
* find it difficult to maintain friendships
* are more likely to become involved in disruptive behaviour
* miss out on opportunities in further education

Absence can only be authorised by the Head Teacher**,**within the boundaries set by the Education (Pupil Registrations) (England) Regulations 2006.

***You may be aware that Head Teachers may not authorise leave during term time except where the circumstances are exceptional.  If your child takes leave that has not been authorised by the Head Teacher, it will result in the absence being recorded as unauthorised and legal action may be taken.***

Please remember that parental illness, going shopping, visiting family, holidays or not wanting to go to school, are not acceptable reasons to be absent. All of these will be recorded as unauthorised absence, **including if your child arrives at school after the close of registration.** Children should arrive at school at 8.55am and register closes at 9.05am.

Family emergencies need careful consideration. It is not always appropriate or in the best interests of the child to miss school for emergencies which are being dealt with by adult family members. Being at school, friendship with peers and support from staff can provide children with stability. The routine of school offers a safe and familiar background during times of uncertainty.

**Legal action that may be taken include:**

* **Issuing penalty notices**: Each parent receives a penalty notice for each child who has unauthorised absence. The penalty is £60 or £120 depending on how soon payment is made.  So, if there are two parents and two children the total penalties could be up to £480. Failure to pay may result in prosecution.

Please be aware that the Trust’s policy on this matter is that if a child has more than 5 unauthorised days a penalty will be enforced.

Please use the regularly updated school App to check the school calendar for important dates for your diary.