

Emmbrook Junior School Newsletter

Friday 22nd May, 2020

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Letters emailed this week:

- Well Being Wednesday Newsletter
- Letters from the teachers to their classes
- M&S Uniform Flyer
- Year 6 Leaver Hoodies and T-shirts (Year 6 only)
- Excel Remote Learning
- Parent Forum Minutes
- Update from Mr Theobald

Hello



Hello everyone, I can't believe we have got the end of my first half term as Head Teacher of Emmbrook Junior School. This has been an unusual time for all of us and despite the strange circumstances I have been welcomed by everyone that I have met. I am also very grateful for the messages of thanks and encouragement that the school has received from parents over the course of the last few weeks.

First, I must say thank you and goodbye to Mr Theobald. He has been an invaluable member of the senior leadership team and he will be missed not just by me but by everyone here at Emmbrook junior School.

We have all been working hard to plan for a safe return to school for Year 6 after half term. It is important for all parents to understand that while we can try to reduce the risk of transmission, we cannot fully eradicate it. I have decided so that we can fully prepare for the return of Year 6 pupils (and hopefully other year groups) that we will open school on **Tuesday the 2nd of June** for Year 6 children as well as those in the Key Hub Club. Year 6 children will return on a half day basis and all Year 6 parents will receive a separate letter letting them know which session (am or pm) their children have been allocated. We will be open to children in the Key Hub Club only on Monday the 1st of June. I know that some parents will be disappointed that we are only able to bring children back for half days and that we will not be starting until the 2nd of June. Equally there will be many parents that are nervous about sending their children back to school at all. The work the children will do on their return will mirror that set on Teams and will be led by an adult. Our primary focus will be on the well-being of the children. The school will not take or support any action against parents that choose not to send their children back at this time. We will start reintroducing other Year groups when we are confident it is safe enough to do so. I have tried to share as much information with you as I can and I'm afraid I do not have all the answers to your questions.

Please stay safe and stay in touch and have a restful half-term.

Working from Home

A message for the children:

As its half-term next week, we are not setting any learning tasks on Teams in the usual way. This will give all of you a chance for a break and some of you a chance to catch up with some of the activities you have not had a chance to complete yet.

Many of you may be feeling that there is no point in completing the activities as no one will see them or care if you do them or not. It is true that we may not see all the work you are doing but learning is never

a waste of time and those of you that are able to keep up with your learning will benefit in the long run. We imagine there may have been disputes between some parents and children with mums and dads being cast as the pantomime villain for suggesting that children get on with the tasks set. Learning is important and any task that you complete whether they are seen by a teacher or not will help you to become better learners.

Our message has always been to 'do what you can when you can' and this remains but if you are able to access the work then you should. If your interests take you in another direction, then please write about it and share it with your teacher. They are eager to hear from you and want to see what you have been up to.

So please 'Do what you can – when you can!' and remember that at home, the grown-ups are in charge!

Thank you and Farewell!

It is with a very heavy heart and tear-stained faces that we say goodbye to Mr. Theobald, our Assistant Head, who leaves us at the end of this half term to go to be the Head of Alder Grove Primary School. Alder Grove is a brand-new school in Shinfield. It opens its doors to children in Nursery and Foundation Stage in September 2020 and will then subsequently grow year on year until it has 420 pupils with our very own Mr. Theobald at the helm.

What can we say about Philip Theobald? He is one of those very special people who will be irreplaceable once he leaves. He has made such a positive impact on the school since his arrival just two and a half years ago and is greatly respected by staff, pupils, governors and parents alike. Mr. Theobald is highly regarded by all of us for the wide-reaching contributions he has made to whole school life and for his strong inter-personal skills. The children he has taught have responded well to his engaging (and often rather loud) teaching style and the adept and compassionate way that he provides pastoral care. The children also quite like his bad jokes apparently... or at least they say that they are happy to tolerate them!

Whilst at our school, Mr. Theobald has played a major part in rebuilding the wider curriculum, developing independence in children, helping shape the strategic direction of the school and leading on ICT and PSHE. He has also led our school council and run the choir, giving up evenings and weekends for rehearsals. If all of that wasn't enough, he has been our PTA rep and a proactive associate member of our governing body. The governors have greatly valued his input to meetings and to school improvement.

Mr. Theobald's strong moral compass; his high expectations of all children; and his absolute belief providing the best and most rounded education for children has pervaded our school since he arrived in January 2018. He goes over and beyond every day in so many ways. Mr. Theobald is a team player, a 'can-do' kind of person and always willing to lend a hand or support someone who is struggling. It is thanks to his hard work behind the scenes and never-ending patience that we were able to set ourselves up so quickly on Zoom and on Teams during school closure. He has an authoritative presence and a decisive nature, staying cool in a crisis. He's also one of the best multi-taskers we know - effortlessly juggling many different responsibilities whilst wearing a variety of hats – teacher, school leader, governor, chairman of Wokingham FA... not to mention friend, father and husband!

Mr. Theobald – we are exceptionally proud of you for everything that you have achieved in your short time with us and of everything that makes you the special person you are. You are truly irreplaceable. We will miss you as a colleague, as a friend and as a wonderful teacher. Good luck in your new role. They are lucky to have you!

Mrs Edgington – we will miss you!

We are extremely sad to be saying goodbye to Mrs Edgington today, a key member of our wonderful Office team, Mrs Edgington has been a huge part of the school for over 11 years and will be greatly

missed, not only by the staff in school but also by all of the children and parents that she has helped on many occasions. She has seen many changes at Emmbrook Junior School during her time with us and has had the pleasure of watching hundreds of children blossom and grow before they finally spread their wings and head off to Secondary School, including her own two children! Mrs Edgington has been an integral part of the office and we cannot imagine the school without her. I am sure you will join us in wishing her well and sending her our thanks for all she has done for the school. We will truly miss you Mrs Edgington!!!!

Goodbye from Mr. Theobald

This is such a strange way to have to say goodbye! On Thursday I had the opportunity for a final Beech Class assembly where they prepared the most amazing and emotional goodbye and it stuck me that the hardest part of all this is that I'm not able to say goodbye to my colleagues, the children in the school, parents and especially Beech Class in person today. So, I just wanted to take this opportunity to say thank you to you as the parent community for all your support over the last few years.

It has been the most incredible journey and the school is in such a stronger place than it was when I joined. It has been my privilege to have been a senior leader and teacher in this school and hopefully played a small part in that development. The children at this school are a constant credit to your families and everyone always says that it is the caring and nurturing feel of EJS that makes it so special and I completely agree. Your children play a huge part in that. When I met my wife 10 years ago, she was teaching here at EJS and she still talks today about what an incredible community it was then, and I can echo those sentiments just as much today.

Thank you to the governors at the school for their constant support and dedication to the development of this school. They are often the forgotten part of this community but their dedication to this school and being part of that group has helped me develop as a professional on so many levels.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the staff at Emmbrook. We have made widespread, sweeping changes over the last few years to offer the best possible provision for your children and their dedication has been incredible. Rome wasn't built in a day, but the time and effort the staff have put in (something that doesn't often get seen by the wider community,) makes me incredibly proud to have been part of that team. Look after yourselves as we continue to navigate through these unprecedented times. With Mr Usher, Miss Scales and Miss Barnes leading the school, I know that the best plans will be put in place for the safety of your children and the staff.

My kindest regards to you all, good-bye and all the best for the future! I will miss the Emmbrook Junior School!

Mr Theobald

The ever-expanding population of Spoonville

Every day, we find that more and more residents have moved into Spoonville. It is clearly a very desirable part of Emmbrook to live in! Do come and pay the Spoonvillians a visit. You will find Spoonville just in front of the school gate at the top of the drive. If you can spare a wooden spoon, please join in the fun and make your own character to join the rest of the Spoonville crew!



Power Maths Books

We have been made aware that some parents, in their enthusiasm for supporting their children, may have purchased 'Power Maths' books for the current or subsequent year of their child's learning. While we applaud and encourage any additional learning particularly in the current climate, we will be returning to this scheme as a whole school if not this term, then in September. If a child has already worked through a textbook we are using in class this may mean they end up being bored and not engaging with learning back in class. While we cannot stop you doing this we would ask that you support us by perhaps using other resources which we are more than happy to recommend.

PTA Fundraiser

As you know, Mr. Theobald has pledged to run at least 5K a day to raise money for Emmbrook PTA during May! So far, he has not missed a single run! As of the 21st of May he has run an over 131km! He has now raised just under £1900 for the two schools which is a phenomenal amount. Thank you for your generous donations. If you would like to donate, please follow the link below.

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/emmbrookpta?utm_term=V8yY7gbPx

Poem

Jessie in Year 5 wrote this poem about not giving up on dreams. She is very proud of it and we thought it was too good not to share! Well done Jessie.

Life without dreams

Life without dreams
is a boat with a
broken propeller
abandoned in a lonely sea.

Use your tools
to fix the propeller
sail off with eager eyes
and a heart of hope

By Jessie Mayhew

Have a wonderful Bank Holiday Weekend and a restful half term 'staycation'!