

Iron Acton CEVC Primary School
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Headteacher: Mike Riches



23rd October 2020

Message of thanks

As we come to the end of the first term, I would like to say thank you to all families for your understanding and support over recent weeks. There have been a lot of Covid related changes to get used to and many of our normal systems and routines have changed completely. It really has been a massive challenge for us and we are exhausted! Without the understanding and support we have received from you all, things would have been even more challenging.

I would also like to say a huge thank you to the staff team – you have been amazing! Every single member of the team has adapted incredibly well and has done everything possible to keep everyone in school safe whilst continuing to provide a high standard of education. At times we have needed to change things unavoidably and at short notice; I apologise for the times that this may have made things more difficult for families.

We will continue with the majority of our Covid secure routines for the next term and continue to review them on an ongoing basis. We will continue to look at whether we can invite volunteers into school to listen to readers. Until that decision is made, the teachers and teaching assistants will continue to teach children to read through guided reading sessions which take place throughout the week. Those who need additional support with their reading will continue to work with Mrs Shaw who is currently working for an additional day each week.

This end of term newsletter will also provide a round-up of some of the other changes we have made at school this term and the improvements we continue to see as a school.

Please do continue to speak to us before and after school if you have any questions. Teachers continue to be outside and available to talk when they can. If you are unable to find the teacher you need, please contact the school office who will make arrangements for the teacher to call you at a mutually convenient time. Over half term, please keep us updated on any COVID related illness by email on enquiries@ironactonprimaryschool.co.uk.

Mike Riches

Parent teaching meetings

These will take place on **Monday 9th November** and **Wednesday 11th November**. You will receive your appointment day and time by the end of this week. You will receive a Teams invitation by email – this will be on the Friday before if your appointment is on Monday and on the Tuesday if your appointment is on the Wednesday. **Please do not** click 'accept this meeting' but leave it in your inbox so that you can easily click on the link as soon as your appointment is due to start.

Teachers will need to keep strictly to each 10 minute time slot and have been asked to end every meeting promptly. If you feel you have more to discuss and your meeting is coming to an end, please make alternative arrangements to continue discussions on an alternative mutually convenient date.

HSE inspection

This week we received a spot check visit from the Health and Safety Executive which is carrying out inspections of 1000 schools across the country all of which are selected at random. We were pleased with the way the inspection went and were reassured that we have all the correct measures in place to keep everyone safe.

We will continue with the current measures and will keep reviewing these over the next term. Any changes will be communicated to you with as much notice as possible.

Curriculum

As part of our continual cycle of school improvement, we spent some time last year reflecting on our current curriculum and the way that it is organised to meet the needs of the children at Iron Acton. As you will have seen in an earlier newsletter this term, we decided to adopt an enquiry based approach called Curious-City. On Wednesday of this week, a link was sent out (<https://youtu.be/ellOuu5XoyY>) to a video the teachers recently put together to provide more information about this approach. We hope you have managed to get the chance to look at this video and that you now know more about enquiry based learning and the states of being that the children will now be using to describe their learning.

So far, we have been impressed with the way the children have taken on board this new approach and we are also confident that we have a curriculum which is organised appropriately and which will result in children being more secure in their learning. If you have any further questions about how this works please do ask your child's class teacher.

Behaviour project

We are confident that, on the whole, behaviour is a real strength of our school. Having said that, we know that things can go wrong from time to time and we look to address any issues that do arise in a timely manner with the support of families. This year we made the decision to take part in a local authority wide project which is designed to improve behaviour from a school's individual starting point.

The project is based on a book that the staff read called 'When the adults change everything changes'. The book contains a range of strategies which have been researched, tried and tested. This is why we have implemented some new approaches to managing behaviour and stopped using other strategies which have limited impact.

You may have begun to hear the children talk about the recognition boards in their classrooms. This system replaces the happy and sad faces. You may also have heard them talk about our three rules: Be ready, Be respectful, Be safe. We have also been sending home a small number of positive notes which children have to really work hard to receive – the idea is for us to encourage children to go 'above and beyond'.

We will continue to keep you updated and will share our 'behaviour blueprint' next term – a document which summarises the main strategies we use to manage behaviour positively and effectively.

Remembrance

Unfortunately this year we will be unable to sell poppies in school. We hope that you will be able to purchase poppies and other merchandise locally or online to make a valued donation to support the Royal British Legion charity.