

# ST. JAMES' C.E. PRIMARY SCHOOL, COLDWALTHAM

*with Chuckleberries Pre School*

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**Executive Headteacher: Mrs Lizzie Martin**

**Assistant Executive Head (Operations): Mrs Nicky Kirby**

**Assistant Executive Head (Teaching and Learning): Mr Paul Armitage**



**Learn, Discover, Achieve**

10<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers,

Here we are at the end of the first full week of the new academic year and, I don't know about you, but it feels as though the summer is a very distant memory now! It has been a delight for me to see how the children and staff in school have approached their first week with such enthusiasm, determination and a joyful attitude.

### **May I introduce myself...**

For those of you who may not be aware who I am, my name is Lizzie Martin and I have just taken on the role of Executive Headteacher of the Arun Villages Federation which comprises Amberley CE Primary School and St. James' CE Primary School, Coldwaltham. My previous role was Head of School at St. James', so many of you know me well but I am aware many of you will not.

The first part of my teaching career was spent in East Sussex where I was a class teacher, had a number of senior roles and also worked for the Local Authority as a writing moderator and implementing training programmes for schools on behalf of the LA. I moved to West Sussex where I became Senior Teacher at St. James', followed by Head of School and, somehow, have found myself being appointed as Executive Headteacher!

I feel very privileged to have been appointed to this position and I'm looking forward to the joys, challenges and opportunities that the role will present. Amberley and St. James' are both incredibly special schools with unique characters but united under the same vision and values as a federation. Working with all stakeholders of both communities is going to be an honour; I'm looking forward to developing a strong, honest professional relationship with you as parents/carers to enable your children to flourish, progress and achieve to their highest potential.

### **...and may I introduce the team!**

Working alongside me to form the Senior Leadership Team for the AVF, I am delighted to say I have Mrs. Nicky Kirby (Assistant Executive Head, Operations) and Mr. Paul Armitage (Assistant Executive Head, Teaching and Learning). Again, these names may be familiar to you as Mrs Kirby has been School Business Manager at St. James for many years and Mr Armitage has been a class teacher at Amberley for many years and was Head of School there last year.



This new leadership structure is quite bold and exciting as we have moved away from the traditional structure of there being a specific leader assigned to a specific school. Within this structure, my role is to oversee the direction of both schools and the Assistant Executive Heads have been appointed based on specific skills and expertise to support me in being able to do this. As such, as a Senior Leadership Team, we are committed to seeing both schools in the federation develop, grow and succeed.

### **Who you going to call??**

With the change in leadership structure, this means that there is a change to who parents/carers need to contact regarding certain matters. ***The main point of call in the first instance for the majority of matters will be either your child's class teacher or the Office at the school.*** However, there may be occasions when a senior member of staff needs to become involved and you will need to contact one of us. To support and help you with who you should contact for different matters, we have produced a 'Who's Who' Contact Sheet (sent with this letter) for you to reference when making a decision. Should you contact someone and the matter you raise is someone else's responsibility, they will ensure you are put in contact with the right person.

This will take a little bit of getting used to as many of you will have been used to having a Head of School to go to; as a staff team, we have all been getting used to the workings of it internally! However, by contacting the senior leader named on the 'Who's Who' sheet, your query or issue will be able to be managed much more quickly and efficiently as that person has the skills and expertise to do so. Thank you for your support with this.

### **Notices and reminders**

As we approach the end of the first week, there are inevitably some notices and reminders that we need to give.

### **Friends of St. James' (FOSJ)**

We have a wonderful new committee for our PTA, Friends' of St. James' and they have prepared a 'Meet the Team' information sheet to be given to all of our parents/carers. It has been sent alongside this letter.

As you will see in the information sheet, some WhatsApp groups are potentially being planned in order to help parents/carers support each other. Should you receive an invitation to one of these groups and are unsure how they may have accessed your phone number, may I make it clear that the school will **not** have shared this information; under GDPR regulations, the school are not allowed to do this and we take this responsibility very seriously. Should you be contacted, the number will have been shared from another source, not the school.

### **PE Days**

As I mentioned in my email via ParentPay yesterday, here are the PE Days for each class in the school. ***These are the definitive days; anything that you have been told previously is superseded by this information.*** You do not need to ring the Office to check if there has been a mistake made – these are the definite days.

- **Penguins – Mondays and Fridays** (please note Penguins will not start PE lessons until the week beginning Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September – the children do not need to wear PE Kit next week);
- **Rhinos – Wednesdays and Fridays;**
- **Elephants – Tuesdays and Fridays** (this is a change to what has happened this week; it has changed to facilitate the use of the outdoor areas of the school grounds);
- **Jaguars – Tuesdays and Fridays**

### **Additional Sports Day**

We are aware that parents/carers were very disappointed that they were unable to attend Sports Day at the end of last year. We appreciated your support of this, though, as it did ensure that the school remained free of Covid-19 and able to stay open with no closure of bubbles to the end of the year – we were one of only a few schools to be in this position.

To give you the opportunity to be able to see your child partake in a Sports Day event this calendar year, we will be having an extra Sports Afternoon on **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September**. Whilst this will not be a Sports Day as such, it will be an opportunity for you to see your child run in some races and be able to cheer them on as you would have done at Sports Day.

If the weather is inclement on this day and the event has to be cancelled, we will **not** arrange an alternative. Sports Day will be held in the Summer Term as usual and, Covid-19 allowing, we are looking forward to being able to invite you to this.

### **Secondary School Applications**

Year 6 parents/carers will have been sent the information from the Local Authority regarding applying for secondary school places. Please be aware that the deadline for this is **Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> October** and must be done online. It is crucial that you meet this deadline as, if an application is received late, your child will be placed wherever there is space rather than your preference being taken into account.

### **Art Exhibition**

You may remember that the children took part in an Art Week in the summer term of last year. The theme was 'Summer in Coldwaltham' and the children explored their local environment to inspire them to create artwork.

As a celebration of this artwork, we will be holding an art exhibition on **Friday 24<sup>th</sup> September** after school. Details about this will be coming in a separate letter but I wanted to make you aware so that you can 'Save the Date' in your diary.

### **And finally...**

I appreciate that this letter has a great deal of information in it – there is great deal more that I could give but I think that that would rather overload everyone! I will be continuing to send out Friday Flyers as has been the norm and the first of these will come next Friday. There will be one small change in that Friday Flyers will be sent **every three weeks** rather than fortnightly.

In the meantime, may I thank you for a very positive and enthusiastic start to the new year and wish you a very happy weekend!

Kind regards,



Executive Headteacher, Arun Villages Federation  
Amberley CE Primary School and St. James' CE Primary School, Coldwaltham