



12th September 2017

Newsletter 1

Dear Parents/Carers,

What a great start to the school year last week has been! The children have been a credit to you all; they have come in with confidence, a can-do attitude and big smiles – well done everyone! We are already busy getting on with our learning.



Summer holidays

As always, during the summer break, lots of work was completed at school. We have had a new server installed to keep our IT systems up to date; classrooms and corridors were redecorated; carpets steam cleaned; windows cleaned; hall floor polished; hedges and branches cut back; the mobile building has had a facelift and the bike racks relocated to the front of school. Our site manager, Mr Pickin, has been very busy! The school is looking great and teaching staff have ensured that the learning environments are colourful, well equipped and organised.

A few reminders...

Please can we remind you of some of the things which help our school run smoothly?

- Pupils should not play on any equipment before or after school;
- Any late/leaving early pupils should be signed in/out using the touchscreen in the office area;
- School cannot authorise pupil absence in term time except in exceptional circumstances (please note that Cheshire

East will be issuing fixed penalty notices for unauthorised absence);

- Please drive and park with care and consideration; to keep our children safe and to respect our neighbours;
- Excalibur is a healthy school; please try to send only healthy snacks into school – no sweets/chocolate bars;
- Our website has lots of useful information, school news and updates;
- School office hours are 8.30am – 4pm each day;
- Pupil absence should be reported using the dedicated absence telephone line please;
- Please ensure that your child's PE kit is in school every day and that they also have a waterproof coat every day as we will go out to play in the drizzle!
- If you haven't already done so, labelled outdoor shoes/wellies can be brought in and placed in the welly stores so that your child can access our field at lunchtimes;
- We encourage water bottles to be brought in daily (water only please).



Free School Meals

Since September 2014, all pupils in Reception, Y1 and Y2 have been eligible for a free school meal, but some children may be eligible for extra funding through the pupil premium.

It is worth registering for Free School Meals anyway because if you register:

- ***School receives a 'pupil premium' – an extra payment which can be spent on useful services;***
- ***Registering your child may also get you financial help for extra things.***

Whether a child is entitled to pupil premium is confidential between your family, the class teacher and the senior leadership team. The rest of the school community (including governors) can only see anonymous data.

Please see Mrs Hilditch in the office or visit www.cheshireeast.gov.uk/fsm or call 0300 123 5012 to see if your child is entitled or to make an application.

Academy status – important information from our Governing Body

Excalibur Primary is currently a foundation school. Approximately 18 months ago the Governing Body started to think about the benefits of conversion to academy status and began to consult with key stakeholders.

We now believe that not only is it the right time to convert the school's status, it is indeed necessary in order to safeguard the identity, ethos and success of the school. Due to the political agenda that all schools will become an academy, we feel that we need to take action now in order to allow us to be in control of the future of the school.

As an academy our funding would change slightly as it would come directly from the DfE, rather than through the local authority. We would be in a better position to manage the school in the way that we want and the way we need so that we continue to provide a nurture based education with a rich, relevant curriculum with the absolute best value-added learning experiences possible. Equally important to consider is the real risk of not converting and being ultimately forced to join another academy chain or Multi Academy Trust (MAT); one who more than likely does not share our values and ethos. The only way Excalibur Primary School is currently able to convert is to join or create a MAT of our choosing.

After a process in which several existing Multi Academy Trusts were visited and considered by the governing body, we have decided that the best available opportunity for Excalibur Primary School is to create our own MAT, initially with Pikemere Primary School. Excalibur Primary School would establish

'Chancery Multi Academy Trust' as an equal partner with Pikemere Primary School.

Part of the academy conversion process is for us to consult with you as parents. We want to hear your support, suggestions and opinions. Please visit the school's website at www.excalibur.cheshire.sch.uk where you'll find an academy conversion consultation paper and a frequently asked questions document. Please can we ask you to read these and, if you want to comment, write to the school marked academy consultation or email admin@excalibur.cheshire.sch.uk as soon as possible? Consultation closes on Monday 26th September.

In order to ensure that Excalibur Primary School continues its current ethos and is able to remain as a community school for all our children both now and in the future, we firmly believe that conversion to academy status as part of a Multi Academy Trust represents the best course of action for our school.

Vicky Alsop
Chair of Governors
For and on behalf of the Governing Body of Excalibur Primary School



New Faces

We warmly welcome Miss Lewington (welfare assistant) to the EYFS team and Mr Rogers (schools direct associate teacher) who will be working alongside Mrs Bailey in Year 3 until Christmas.

And finally

Excalibur operates an 'open door' policy which means that we endeavour to speak with you and support families in any way that we can. Please arrange to speak to a member of the team should you have any questions or concerns. If you are a working parent, we can be contacted via notes, by telephone or email

and we will reply to messages as soon as possible.

Please remember that teachers are with their classes from 8.50am to 3.15pm and should you need to speak with a class teacher, a time after school is preferable and provides a better quality opportunity to support.

If you need to speak with me or Mrs Tomkinson (Deputy Head), we will always try our best to do so as soon as we can.

We look forward to working in partnership with you this year and thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes
Mrs Lise Houldsworth
Head Teacher

Diary Dates

A list of dates currently in the school diary.
New dates are added in **bold**.

20,21,22-09-17 Y6 residential to Laches Wood
05-10-17 Book Fair delivered
06-10-17 Infants harvest assembly 9.15am
09,10,11-10-17 Life Education Van
12-10-17 Parent/carers teacher meetings 4-7pm
14-10-17 Alsager One World Festival – Y4 (details to follow)
17-10-17 Parent/carers teacher meetings 3.30-6pm
18-10-17 Reception Welly Walk (details to follow)
19-10-17 Y3 visit to Chester (details to follow)
20-10-17 School closes

31-10-17 School opens
07-11-17 Academy photos - individuals
08-11-17 Governors meeting – Resources & Personnel 5pm
29-11-17 Governors meeting – Standards & Curriculum 5pm
05-12-17 FLUENZ – details to follow from school nurse team
06-12-17 Full Governors meeting 5pm
22-12-17 School closes

09-01-18 School opens
07-02-18 Governors meeting – Resources & Personnel 5pm
16-02-18 School closes