

SEE THE GRAPEVINE

MONDAY 29 June 2020 XV· VI · MMXX

Well, the time is probably about right, ish, to return to plans for next year! Here's a reminder as to who is teaching where....We'll hopefully have a lot of laughs, make a few mistakes of course, but get most things spot on to the benefit of all, enjoy ourselves and thrive. I suppose most of all I hope we're back! We continue to filter through changes still—you know that, not just following our small expansion, that's easy, more the 2 intakes of 40, following lost appeals! A few years back. We will be sending you out a text today informing you which class your kids are in. (there are a couple of changes to the previous version I sent out before Covid.... If you can recall that!?)

Classes 1 & 2 Reception kids—our new children. Welcome!

Siobhan Horder and Michelle Yates (Assistant Head for SENCO & Curriculum lead)

Located in the current reception base. Although 2 classes, they will very much work as one!

Class 3 30 Year 1 Children (See next page for more info)

Louise Darlington. Assistant Headteacher & Assessment Lead, Located in the green room along the promenade

Class 4 Year 1/2 Children (15 of each) (See next page for more info)

Emma Smith (am) and Jenny Leap (pm) will be teaching you in the orange room based along the promenade

Class 5 30 Year 2 kids (See next page for more info)

Nicola Cook (Assistant Head for SENCO & Curriculum lead) based in the promenade purple room.

Class 6 30 Year 3 kids

One of our new teachers, Beth Makinson, will be teaching you. You will be upstairs, located in Emma and Jenny's current classroom, the current year 5 classroom.

Class 7 30 Year 3/4 kids

Angela Makepeace will be teaching you. Located in Tom Norris's current room—upstairs

Class 8 30 Year 4/5 kids

Tom Norris. You already know Tom, and he'll be teaching you in the blue classroom along the promenade

Class 9 Year 5 kids

One of our new teachers, Charlotte Greaves will be teaching you. You will be downstairs in Siobhan's current classroom. That may take some of you back in time to when you were in year 1! But don't worry... it will be very different! I have a beautiful plan!

Class 10 20 Year 6 kids

You will be taught by Georgina Berry and she is staying in her current classroom

And finally Class 11 will be the other 20 year 6 Kids., and you will be based in Mr Horne's current classroom, where Rob Horne will be teaching you.

Anne Fothergill will continue teaching in all classes

Naomi Harrison joins Anne in teaching all classes. Naomi will be working 3 days at St George's and 1 day at Mossy Lea. A new job for Naomi as she balances being a mum, with her career! It will be ace to have Naomi back! We really have missed her

Rachel Steel I'm, err "delighted" to inform that that Rachel, and her partner Gabe, are expecting their 1st child! Rachel will be enjoying the longest maternity possible I think. Should things have been normal, Rachel will have left us at Summer, but things have changed haven't they! In any event, Rachel will be returning to us around Easter 2021 will be helping teachers with Intervention classes, and giving them release time for their subject leadership, before resuming work full time from September 2021. I'm sure you join me in wishing Rachel, and Gabe all the very best

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Questions re school structure

Let me go into a little more detail about the class organising—I'll try and pre-empt your thoughts. Questions normally surround mixed aged classes, and friendship groups. Firstly, let me reassure you, mixed aged classes are normal. St George's has always had them—always. No child is advanced a year. No child is held back a year. The work will not be harder in one class, or easier in another. Every child will cover their age appropriate curriculum. Mixed aged classes will be much easier to manage now.... We're up year 3 being full at 45, which means that kids now, upto year 3 are grouped into mini groups of 15. This mean that even though they rotate around a bit, it also means that they have the security of always being with the same group of 15 kids. This way kids get the best of both worlds.... They are find their security and confidence from being with the same 15, yet over the years make great friends with all 45 kids in their year group, and that gives them oodles of confidence for when they move onto high school.

I often get we asked how we organise the mini groups of 15. We do this in reception. It's purely based on age. Nothing else. Occasionally, if needed we will adjust the groups if for example there isn't a appropriate proportion of boys and girls. And when necessary we take into account parent requests. Please note we only take this into account for exceptional circumstances i.e. circumstances that are peculiar to a particular child, rather than parents requests for friendship groups. If we did the latter, we would potentially lose the overall belief of a random group of kids... it would become selective. And that's not right.

My 2nd main point, is that of friendship groups. Over 2 years children will be with every child in the year group, so they will meet everyone. Furthermore, kids will always have break time, lunch with everyone from their class, and key stage, go on trips with them, and indeed will probably have maths with them etc.... So they are not separate. Not at all. Of course, during lessons, the kids may not be with their "best friends" - but very often this term is used because parents are "friends" and the reality of it is, the kids don't play together at school, it's just that the parents want them to! That said, we do ensure that children are with their friends in school—I don't want any kids to lose the confidence that having a friend brings, but it is also good for children to mix with all children in their 45.... Having a social circle of 45 is far better than a social circle of 1 or 2.... So please don't worry if your child isn't always with their "best friends" of the time—they have plenty of time to be with them I promise!

This year, we are splitting year 3, in class 6 up. This division has been done on age.

Year 5 kids—you're either in the blue promenade room, or the newly modified Siobhan's room. You're going to have a door knocked through from the promenade, so that you can scamper in to the blue room for a chat with your year 5 friends! It will be very exciting!

And current year 5—can I thank you for your patience, understanding and conversation throughout the years, in particular those of you in the current class 8. You have really worked with me, and we can now do what you have wanted—put the kids back with their peers as 2 small year 6 classes. You'll have the time of your life with Rob and Georgina.

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In other news, as we begin to creep a little more forward in a controlled way, and pick up the pieces of the past, there's a lot outstanding isn't there. Don't worry.... It will all get sorted I promise. Let's not rush to pick up the pieces of the past, there are some I don't want to pick back up.

Bibby's farm visit for the current year 2 is certainly something I want to pick that back up! Let's just carry that forward, and we'll go when we can.... Hopefully in Spring, when you're in year 3, in which case, we'll keep the trip in year 3. The reason we did it in year 2 previously was for social reasons, as the mixed aged classes in the infants became one larger class again in the Juniors..... That need has now gone. So, to summarise, we will be going.... I promise you that.... Just not yet!

Similarly the 2020 PGL trip. Again, we will be going, but not in September. Neither, I, the staff, governors, and probably the parents will have the appetite, nor confidence to go in September. If we can, we'll go in Spring 2021, but if that's not possible, we'll take what we can anytime after February 2021. So yes, the trip will go ahead, but not in the Autumn term.

Day Stay Over Summer. Unless there is an instruction from Central Government St George's will be closed over the summer holiday. The main reason we stayed open over Easter and Half term was to enable those Key Workers to go to work... with NHS capacity thankfully now returning to more normal levels there is less pressure on schools to remain open. I do however want to say a massive well done to all NHS staff..... I've no idea how you've managed, how tough it's been, or how tired you are..... I can only base my answers relative to me.... And I've had it no where near as tough as you. So, not that it is my place to thank you, but please accept my thanks, gratitude and appreciation for all that you have done. One of the mental thoughts that kept me sane throughout the Covid Crises was that the NHS always had capacity should I need it.... And for that, I'm massively grateful. Thank you x

Over the summer closure we will, hopefully, be having 3 bijou building projects done. We will return to the Infant Yard, and continue with plans there.... It should, should we be able to get it done, be amazing for the kids to return to. We're having the Infant and one Junior Toilet Block refurbished.... Much needed, and will be great. And, we're having a new door way put into a classroom... but I'll not tell you which one... kids... it'll be a surprise when I bounce in on that 1st day back!