15th May 2018

Dear Parents, Carers and Guardians,

**Re: Summer 1 update**

As we fast approach summer half-term, it is timely I keep you up to date with the progress that we have been making along with a range of updates. This year has been a very busy year implementing a wide range of new initiatives that underpin the fundamentals of what we believe in; ‘Learning, achieving and enjoying together’.

**School Website**

The school website now has a fresh new look. The opening ‘splashpage’ has a rolling sequence of photographs from throughout the year and are much more visible than before. Please do let us know if your child appears here if you are unhappy with the photograph as we can easily take it down. Our home page has removed links to the year groups as these are more easily accessible from the drop down menu and replaced with links to our ‘Learning Partnership Trust’ and partner schools in Hatfield Heath and Roseacres. A link to our new parent’s survey has also been added here to. Further updates planned for next year include a better link to our calendar and any upcoming events, along with increasing the examples of children’s learning from their lessons.

Please visit [www.takeley-pri.essex.sch.uk](http://www.takeley-pri.essex.sch.uk) to view.

**Behaviour**

A thoroughly reviewed behaviour policy is further being embedded and has helped to bring about significant improvements in behaviour right across the school this year; catching children being good and holding poor behaviour to account through a series of consequences has helped to establish much clearer boundaries for all the children. I am happy to report that overall behaviour from the spring term remains as consistently ‘good’ from that viewed as ‘poor’ in the early autumn term. Well done to all and thank you for all of your support.

**Curriculum**

Our new school curriculum is evolving well. Long term project based plans directly linked to the new, well 2014, national curriculum have been published on our website for the summer term and soon to be for the upcoming autumn term. These plans are supported by a wide range of medium term plans that break the children’s learning down into steps to be covered over the course of that term. If all things go well I know a number of year groups are planning to invite parents in to share the outcomes of some of their projects. The autumn term will see a focus on planning for the spring term to complete the year cycle and complete our school curriculum, well version 1 at least!

**Key Stage 1 and 2 SATs**

Very well done to all our Year 2 and Year 6 children who have been taking their end of key stage SATs tests. Regardless of how well they have done we know the children have given it their ‘best shot’ and we are suitably proud of all their endeavours. Year 2 SAT results will go out with their end of year reports on Friday 6th July. Unfortunately, the Key Stage 2 results for Year 6 are not released to schools until Tuesday 10th July, which is later than normal. Rather than delaying the release of the children’s end of year reports we will release a separate SATs report for our Year 6 children on Wednesday 11th July.

**Assessment**

Assessment has also been a key focus this year to ensure that teachers are both teaching and assessing against the statutory national curriculum statements. Our assessment tool ‘Target Tracker’ is one of the best, if not the best, pieces of software available nationally to keep records of children’s achievements. We used, for the first time, ‘Target Tracker’ to provide a broad assessment summary for you as a record of achievement at our mid-year parent consultation evening. Target Tracker provides a different format for the end of year parent reports that we will be using for all year teams for this years’ reports. Teachers throughout the year have been engaging in moderation and standardisation activities, one of which in writing with our partner schools Hatfield Heath and Roseacres, to help ensure our judgements are accurate and reliable.

**Financial Planning**

Behind the scenes we have introduced new financial planning software to give us a 5-year long term financial plan to help ensure in these difficult financial times that the school will not fall into a deficit budget, but can spend its money effectively and where it is most needed. Our subject leaders are currently developing spending plans to put in bids for funding next year to better support our curriculum developments. This in turn will lead to an enhanced allocation of funding for our school curriculum in the new budget year for 2018-19. More details will be shared in the autumn term once our governors have approved our new budget.

**Performance related appraisal**

New staff appraisal has been introduced for leaders, teachers and learning support assistants to help ensure accountability and to recognise success in this challenging time of change. All teachers will have been observed and received feedback including points for action on three occasions over the year. Termly pupil progress meetings have checked on how well the children have been doing and in what areas improvements need to be made, including more effective use of teaching strategies. Teachers effective use of marking and feedback has been monitored over the spring and summer terms to look at the impact on children improving their learning within and between lessons. We have also monitored English and Mathematics short term (day to day) planning across the school and put in place ready for the next academic year one common format in each of those two areas to ensure consistency of practice.

**School Self-Evaluation**

Deeper and more meaningful school self-evaluation has begun which aims to seek a much wider stakeholder view. A parent survey at [www.seplus.org/school/survey/0A848.html](http://www.seplus.org/school/survey/0A848.html) is available from the 18th May until Friday 13 July that will gather and analyse your collective views. We will shortly be e-mailing out a direct link to you and it is also posted on the home page of our developing school website. We do strongly urge all to have your say, the more parents that contribute the more reliable the findings will be. These results will be used to inform our revised school improvements plan which will be shared with you in the autumn term.

**Staffing**

On our staffing front, we will be sadly saying farewell to Mrs Chamberlain who has served the school tirelessly since 2004 devoting 14 years to the education and well-being of many many children. It is with our very best wishes that she leaves to take up new challenges in teaching and developing ‘Art & Design’ in a Cambridgeshire school. Mrs Platten leaves us after 3 years to take up her ambition of working with children with severe special educational needs and Miss Keeble, after two years, is off to explore the world before settling down into her career. We wish all well and thank them for their contribution in moving Takeley forward enthusiastically and passionately in all their years with us.

We welcome on board Miss Chivers into Reception, Mrs Payne to Year 1 and Mr Purser into Year 3 all with great strengths to bring to our team. A full staffing list, who will be teaching each class next year and the new middle leadership structure will be released later in June following any final staff changes.

**Dates for your diary**

As always the final half of the summer term is a busy one. Please see below a list of key dates for your diary:-

Monday 4th June INSET day – School closed.

Tuesday 5th June Children return to school.

Thursdays 7th and 14th June New Reception Class Induction afternoon.

Monday 11th to Friday 15th June Yr 3 to Yr 5 NFER test week.

Yr 1 and Yr 2 Phonics test week.

Thursday 14th June Parents Association Fathers’ Day event.

Monday 25th to Friday 29th June Sports week.

Friday 29th June Sports Day.

Sunday 1st July Parents Association Circus event.

Friday 6th July School Parent Reports due out including Key Stage 1 SAT

Results for Year 2.

Tuesday 10th July Key Stage 2 SATS results due to schools.

Wednesday 11th July Year 6 Key Stage 2 Parent SATs reports due out.

Wednesday 11th July Moving up morning: children meet their new teachers.

To be confirmed Year 6 production.

Friday 20th July Last Day of term. 3:20pm finish as normal.

Tuesday 4th September INSET day – School closed

Wednesday 5th September Children return to school to their new classrooms

Wednesday 5th to 7th September Reception Teachers do home visits for their new children

Monday 10th to 14th September Reception children start part-time; 8:45am to 12:45 pm

Monday 17th September Reception children start full-time timetable.

Please also note that from Monday 9th July you will also have the option and opportunity to discuss your child’s report with their class teacher before the end of term should you wish to.

**…and finally**

It is with great thanks to you all in supporting us through these changing times. Next year with the key foundations for behaviour, curriculum planning, assessing learning, financial planning, performance related appraisal and school self-evaluation embedding we will be able to have a clearer, consistent and more explicit focus on teaching and learning strategies as opposed to the systems that support them.

I look forward to next half-term announcing the new staff line-up and which class they will be teaching. A few parents have asked if we will be mixing classes; the simple answer is ‘No’ as this just spreads any issues rather than solve them. The key is to get to the route of any problem and change the beliefs and behaviours that cause them, to face them head on rather than run away from them.

Wishing you all a relaxing half term break and I look forward to welcoming you all back on Tuesday 5th June.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Andy Cosslett (Headteacher)