



8th June 2020

Dear Parents/Carers,

Firstly, thank you for your support recently and for engaging with the communications from school and home learning activities we have provided. We understand that this can be a daunting time for both parents and children and we are attempting to communicate necessary and helpful information to you at the appropriate time. This is a difficult balancing act and I ask that if there is something you wish to know or if we can improve our communication at all, please do let me know via admin@wintergardensacademy.org or via Class Dojo.

Again, this is a lengthy letter but I hope that it enables you to have all of the information you require at this stage to put your mind at ease as much as is possible.

Current Situation

Currently the government have indicated that they aspire to all children returning to school for one month before the summer holidays, but this has not been confirmed and no plans for this have been shared with schools. Neither has the idea that all children will return from September. I can also confirm we have had no indication at this point that school will be open during the Summer Holidays. We are all in limbo at the moment waiting for government advice to enable us to put the best plan in place for your child.

Obviously, it is not logistically feasible to have all children in all year groups back under current guidelines (bubbles of 15 children maximum in a classroom with 1 or 2 members of staff). Therefore, if more children do return to school under current government guidelines, this may be on a rota system and I warn parents that the current situation in school may have to be adapted to enable us to meet government recommendations. However, for now, school is open for Preschool, Reception and Years 1 and 6 (Preschool and Reception being the children we have been instructed to prioritise for in-school places should staffing capacity be an issue).

Transition

Although we are still in the dark as to how school will look in July and September, we must consider how children will transition to their new year group this summer term ready for the academic year starting September 2020. Now that the in-school provision is up and running smoothly, I can now inform you of the transition arrangements we are putting in place to ensure your child is informed and ready to move to their new year group, whenever that may be. With some children not in school and with some teachers currently unable to come back to school, we will be carrying out transition activities virtually via Class Dojo. Below is an outline of what we will provide to your child to ensure that they become familiar with their new teacher, classroom and what they will be learning.

Part of the





Winter Gardens Academy

Winter Gardens Academy,
Hilton Road, Canvey Island,
Essex SS8 9QA

Tel: 01268 699305

Web: www.wintergardensacademy.org

Headteacher: Catherine Stalham

- **New teacher** – in the week beginning 15th June parents will receive communication from me with regards to your child's new teacher, new class name and new classroom. Your child's new teacher will send a video recording via Class Dojo to introduce themselves to the class.
- **New class/learning** – in the week beginning 29th June parents will receive a second video communication for the children from the teacher explaining which classroom they will be in, discussing the name of the class, which LSAs may be working with them and what Significant Learning Themes they will be covering. Children with Education Health Care Plans will also find out which LSAs will be in their class to support them.
- **Transition Activities** – your child's new teacher will post a transition activity for your child to complete (on Class Dojo). This may be for the teacher to find out more about each child or it may be to help them create a display personal to the children which will go up in the classroom upon their return, or both!
- **Summer holidays** – in the week beginning 13th July parents will receive a third video communication for the children from the teacher telling them what they can be doing over the holidays to get ready for school (if this is indeed when they do return) and to wish them well over the holidays.
- **Home Learning** – all Online Home Learning is focusing on the key learning that children would normally be consolidating or acquiring during the Summer term. Teachers are choosing these activities carefully to ensure key learning is prioritised and that children's wellbeing is also being supported.
- **Recovery Curriculum** – whenever your child returns to school we will implement a 'Recovery Curriculum'. This will ensure learning continues to be personalised to what each child needs and again, will prioritise key learning that they may have missed or that may not have been consolidated. Teachers are very skilled at being able to assess children quickly and cater for different abilities and varying stages of development, so please do not worry about this – it is our job to support the children through the next stage of their education, and please be assured, we will put everything we have into meeting the needs of each child, whether these be social needs, mental health needs or academic needs.
- **In- school support** – children who are currently in school will have the opportunity to talk to adults in school about their new teacher and class. Things are changing very quickly at the moment, so there is of course a possibility that children will return to school quicker than anticipated and that transition activities may be able to happen in school as an addition to the above plan.

For Year 6 children we know this is a very daunting time and transition is looking very different to usual. We will continue to post activities each week on Class Dojo to support your child with transition and these activities will be completed in our school provision also. Please keep looking at your emails for communications from secondary schools regarding their plans. We have contacted



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each secondary school to ask for any further support with transition. If and when we know more, we will be in contact about how to support the children best at this time. Due to social distancing guidelines, we will be unable to hold a Leavers Assembly but please be rest assured there will be an opportunity for the achievements of each child to be celebrated in a different way. We understand there are some other leavers traditions, especially on the last day, that may not be able to happen due to current guidelines. We will be waiting for further guidance from the government this month to investigate if we can adapt any of these traditions to help the children go through this rite of passage.

You will notice that many of our transition activities will be communicated through Class Dojo. If you are not connected or do not engage in Class Dojo regularly, please ensure you start to do this to ensure you do not miss out on transition activities to support your child.

This is a very challenging time for staff as well and I know they have felt thoroughly appreciated, supported and encouraged by your comments. So for this, I thank you. Again, please do not hesitate to ask me any questions that you may have.

Yours sincerely,

Catherine Stalham
Headteacher

