



Thursday 29th June 2023

Dear Parents and Carers

Staffing for and transition to the academic year 2023-24

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing to provide you with some important information regarding the next academic year and how we will support children in their transition to a new class and teacher.

At Barrow Hedges, we understand the importance of supporting children as they move through the school. Hopefully you will have read our Inclusion Quality Mark report, sent to you on Monday 26th June, and seen the following statement: *“effective transition processes are in place for all children; not just when they move key stages but between year groups. Transitions are well planned for, especially for those with additional needs.”* We pride ourselves on building on our successes, reviewing and reflecting on our systems and processes and feel that we could further improve our arrangements for when children leave one class/year group and move to the next. We are ever mindful of the need to prioritise children’s mental health and wellbeing and recognise that, for some children, change is challenging. As such, we have revised our transition arrangements to give children more opportunity to familiarise themselves with their new teacher and classroom environment before the summer holidays.

I am also conscious that given the continued industrial action impacting on schools and press coverage of the recruitment and retention crisis schools face, parents may appreciate knowing our staffing arrangements for 2023-24. While we are still in the process of recruiting and finalising our Teaching Assistant (TA) deployment, I am pleased to be able to confirm that we are fully staffed for the new academic year in respect of class teachers.

Our revised arrangements mean that I am informing parents of your child’s class teacher a few weeks earlier than in previous years. Sharing this information with you, and with the children, at this stage means that we can begin our transition programme next week. Examples of activities planned to support the children include the teachers reading a story to their new class and children visiting their new classrooms. The children are being told today who will be teaching them next year.

Attached with this letter is a table confirming our class and teacher deployment for 2023-24.

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At this time of year, it is usual to say farewell to some members of staff:

Miss Katie Lucas will be leaving at the end of the academic year. After nine years of teaching at Barrow Hedges, Miss Lucas has taken the decision to set up her own business, 'Project Me', supporting children's mental health and wellbeing. We know that this area of her work is something that Miss Lucas is so passionate about and I am sure you will join me in wishing her all the very best with this new venture.

Mrs Glenda Banks and Mrs Elaine Keller (Teaching Assistants) will both be retiring at the end of this year after working at Barrow Hedges for 30 years and 21 years respectively. Both have worked across a variety of year groups during their time at the school and we extend our thanks to both for their hard work and commitment, wishing them all the best for new adventures ahead. Ms Sara Foulsham, (Reception Senior Teaching Assistant), will also be leaving us at the end of term. She has worked in Early Years for the past five years and has decided that it is time to explore other avenues. We wish her all the very best and thank her for her work in supporting our youngest children.

We say goodbye to Mrs Vittoria Murtaza, whose one-year maternity contract comes to an end. Mrs Tina Bennett will be returning to Barrow Hedges, teaching once again in Reception, on a full-time basis. Thank you to Mrs Murtaza and we wish you all the very best as you move abroad to teach.

We thank Miss Emma Finn for stepping in to teach Otter class this half term and wish her all the very best for the future. Miss Finn has been a great asset to the Year 1 team. Miss Doble had a baby boy yesterday and she and baby (name to follow!) are doing really well. Congratulations to Miss Doble at this special time.

For your information, Mrs Covey is reverting to her maiden name and will be known as Ms Whittle in the new academic year. We wanted to confirm this to avoid any confusion!

We are delighted to be welcoming two new teachers to our school to take up posts in September:

Mrs Sam Wallder will be joining the Year 1 team. Mrs Wallder is an experienced teacher who has taught locally and further afield. Ms Kate Webb will be joining the Year 5 team, again as an experienced teacher. Both teachers will be coming into Barrow Hedges on Thursday 13th July and will be present at our Exhibition Evening (further details on this to follow).

A thorough induction will ensure that our new staff quickly settle into Barrow Hedges and understand our ethos, vision and values and policies and procedures so that they can support your child(ren) to be the best that they can be. I am sure that parents will join us in making these new members of staff feel really welcome.

Thank you for your ongoing support to the school and its community.

Kind regards



Mrs Louise Wood
Headteacher