



Brighstone C.E Aided Primary School

Headteacher – Mrs Rebecca Lennon

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Friday 23rd July 2021

Dear parents, carers and guardians,

We now find ourselves on the last day of this academic year, and what a year it has been. It has continued to bring a number of challenges for our whole school community. While we were able to welcome all pupils back into school last September, we still had the restrictions that continued to influence and restrict our everyday lives, both in and out of school. Despite this, we ensured that life in school continued as best it could do under the circumstances. However, there was the constant worry of contracting and spreading Covid, and we had a few families and staff members who were, and continue to be, directly or indirectly affected by it. While Test and Trace remains in place, and Covid is still prevalent, we will continue to be careful in school and in the wider community.

I would like to acknowledge the resolve and spirit of our children, who have experienced and taken in their stride a range of circumstances, including online learning, being away from friends and family and adhering to the strict set of safety procedures in school. Their tenacity and fortitude is a testament to their commitment to and enjoyment of school. Throughout it all, they have remained upbeat with smiles and laughter.

My heartfelt thanks to all our families for the tremendous support you have shown the school and to each other during these very difficult times. I am aware of the impact that the last 18 months have had, and would like to acknowledge the hurdles that you have personally faced. Many have had to balance work commitments with supporting family while carving out time and energy supporting children with their home learning during the lockdown in January and February, as well as through periods of self-isolation. We recognise how difficult this was and are grateful for your support. I would also like to thank you for your understanding with the many restrictions and routines that we had to put in place.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the members of staff who have shown such determination and commitment to ensuring that the children's life in school, both academically and pastorally, was not adversely affected by this pandemic. Despite the many restrictions, they still ensured that children continued to access high quality learning, both in school and at home (the challenges of which involved a steep learning curve for everyone!). When we were able to, they also endeavoured to provide a wider school experience for the children, including school trips, residential, sports day, Zoom calls with visitors and more. They have gone above and beyond the usual reverts of the job, and for this we are extremely grateful.

This is the time of year when we say goodbye to members of staff: Mrs Brear (who is going on maternity leave), Mr Wilson (who is emigrating to teach in an international school), Mrs Littler (who is retiring to spend more time with her grandchildren), Mrs Alexander (who kindly did extra cleaning for us this year) and Mr Williams (who has stepped down from his role as caretaker/cleaner, but who has kindly offered to help out with jobs as and when needed). We are very sad to see them go, but we wish them all the very best on their new adventures!

This is also the time of year when we offer a warm welcome to new members of staff: Miss Goddard (Reception/Y1 LSA), Miss Hancott (Y2 teacher), Miss Newman (Y3/4 teacher), Miss Smith (Y4/5 teacher) and Mr Freeman (caretaker/cleaner). Welcome to the Brighstone team!

At the time of writing, schools have been advised to resume 'normal' school life in September without any bubbles or other restrictions, although there are still some recommendations to follow. Towards the start of the year I will

send out a revised risk assessment and information about the arrangements to be in place, so it reflects the guidance at that time.

Once again, I would like to say a huge thank you to all the parents and families for all your support this year, and I hope you all have a restful, fun and safe summer.

With very best wishes,

Mrs Rebecca Lennon
Headteacher