

25th July 2022

Dear Parents, Guardian, Families and Friends,

I hope that this letter finds you and your families safe and well.

When I wrote to you at this exact time last year we were all hoping that the COVID-19 pandemic was behind us, and that 2021/22 would be far more plain sailing – how wrong we were! Once again, I would like to thank you all for the support that you have shown our school. Our primary school suffered a catastrophic issue with the new roof in the autumn term which meant that a large part of our school was unusable between September 2021 and January 2022. The resilience shown by our pupils was staggering, and the way in which our staff team rallied round, supported each other, and kept the show on the road was something that I am immensely proud of. COVID-19 has lingered around all year and as the last half-term drew to a close numbers of positive cases in and around school were beginning to rise. Staffing has proved an issue all year, and again I would like to show my gratitude for the way our permanent staff have responded, and also to the way in which our young people have responded to having different adults in their class. To top off the list of challenging situations that have been sent to try us over the last few years, we experienced the hottest temperatures in UK history during the last week of the academic year!

We were able to maintain the vast majority of our provisions during all of the times described above and we did our best to keep the disruption to our pupils at a minimum – I am proud of our school, and the manner in which the whole community has conducted itself this year. All of our decisions are made with our children at the centre of our thoughts – sometimes we get things wrong, and of course as Principal I take responsibility for that, however please be assured that we have done, and will continue to do our absolute best for your son or daughter to be educated in a positive, safe and fantastic environment.

Over the last few weeks it has been tremendous to see so many of you at the numerous events that we have held in school – to have our doors fully open again has been brilliant, and I hope that those that attended our GMA Summer Productions, Sports Day and also the Leavers Assembly last Friday enjoyed sharing a special time with us. Leavers Assembly was particularly moving, as for the first time we had a number of Y11 and Y14 pupils leaving us to take up meaningful employment. This is incredible. We always strive to develop the skills required for independence and for adulthood, and to say goodbye to students last week who will now be going in to the world of work and earning a living as a result of our support is truly very special. We wish them all the very best.

As is normal for this time of year we also say goodbye to several colleagues and wish them well in their next adventures. Courtney leaves Cherry Class at Brudenell, Caitlin leaves Owls, Karly leaves Brownlee

Principal – Mr Gavin Hosford

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E. info@greenmeadows.org.uk

T. @GreenMeadowsWAT

along with Reuben, and we also say a fond farewell to Michelle Celino, our Family Support Officer and one of our Safeguarding Leads. All of these colleagues have secured employment in other schools and feel that the time is right for them to move on – so goodbye, and good luck to them all. Many of you will know Michelle Lewis, one of our teachers at Meadows Park (our Benton Park Partnership) – following a period of ill health Michelle has taken the opportunity to retire in order to spend more quality time with her family; again, we all wish Michelle a long and happy retirement. I'd like to thank them all for their work over many, many years.

Joining us, is Ryan Gladwin as Assistant Principal – Ryan joins us from Joseph Norton Academy, another Wellspring school. Ryan has been at JNA for over 10 years, and brings with him a wealth of experience and expertise; Ryan has been responsible for the leadership and development of the JNA curriculum and teaching pedagogy. He also supported the development of the staff team, organising training opportunities based on the needs of the school, the needs of the children and the aspirations of individuals. I am delighted that Ryan is joining us, and I am sure that he will be a real asset to our Leadership Team.

As with last summer, we will continue to see a major investment in the buildings at Green Meadows from Wellspring. The heating and ventilation systems on both of our main sites are being updated and renewed, and this will of course be beneficial for everyone – extremes of hot and cold aren't conducive to good learning opportunities. In order for our staff to be able to deliver high quality engaging lessons new Smart Boards and PCs are being fitted in the classrooms that require updating. This will help all of our staff be able to better meet the needs of our young people and provide our workforce with the tools to be able to do their job – which we have fallen short on in recent years. The car park at the primary school is being resurfaced and made slightly larger, and we will also be installing some electric vehicle charging points. Some of the ugly green metal fencing will be removed (whilst maintaining a secure line of course) and next time you are on site you will see that the estate is barely recognisable from just a couple of years ago. Exciting times for all of us!

Monday 5th and Tuesday 6th will be Staff Training Days – meaning that all pupils will return, to all sites, on Wednesday 7th September. You can find information about our planned Training Days and the school calendar on our website – details below. In short, we will be following the Leeds School Calendar, but we do have Training Days planned for our staff across the year, so please have a look. Please also follow us on Twitter (if you are tech savvy!) as we use our social media platform to publish lots of useful information as well as celebrating the successes of all our young people. You will find us at @GreenMeadowsWAT.

Finally, I would just like to wish you all a amazing summer holiday - please enjoy whatever you do, and we all look forward to seeing everyone again in September.

Take great care, and stay safe and well.

GH

Gavin Hosford, Principal

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