

July 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

What a year it has been! I do not think any of us could have foreseen the global situation we have found ourselves in. Together as a school community we have overcome many obstacles to get to where we are today, have learnt many new skills quickly in order to engage with one another and learning in a different way, and have embraced these challenges and changes wholeheartedly with the Swift resolve and community spirit that we have worked hard to cultivate over the last few years. Thank you for your support and understanding during these exceptional circumstances.

Summer Holiday Boxes

We are delighted to provide every child with a summer holiday box. Contained within are resources that your child's current class teachers have chosen. Hopefully, there will be much that your children will enjoy doing during the summer holiday. The boxes have been kindly provided by the Governing Body of Ark Swift.

Included within the summer holiday boxes are stamped addressed postcards addressed to your child's new teacher. Please encourage your child to write to their new teacher during the holiday – the teachers will be looking forward to reading them!

End of Year Report

Please find enclosed your child's report for 2019-20. The format has been heavily revised this year to reflect the situation we have found ourselves in since March.

The reports include general comments about your child's time in their year group as well as comments about their personal, social and emotional development. There are also grades for attendance, behaviour and effort.

There are no attainment grades as it would be inappropriate and inaccurate to provide these given the length of time the school has been closed. As you will be aware, the following statutory assessments were cancelled this year:

- The Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (Reception)
- The Phonics Screening Check (Year 1)
- Key Stage 1 Tests and Teacher Assessment
- The Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check
- Key Stage 2 Tests (SATs) and Teacher Assessment

In addition, the report contains attendance information up to and including the 20th March 2020 when school closed due to COVID-19. An attendance rate of 96% and above is very good and means that your child's attendance is at or above the national average. Anything less than 96% signals a need for improvement next year.

Classes for Next Year

Current Class	New Class	New Teacher
	Nursery Lancaster	Mrs Prince
Nursery Lancaster	Year R Bath	Miss Venzal
Year R Bath	Year 1 York	Miss Lopez
Year 1 Bristol	Year 2 London	Mr Knight
Year 2 Manchester	Year 3 Warwick	Miss Sadowitz
Year 3 Exeter	Year 4 Worcester	Mr Vallat
Year 4 Sheffield	Year 5 Oxford	Miss Herron & Miss Naeem
Year 5 Warwick	Year 6 Bristol	Miss Stefanik
Year 5 Worcester	Year 6 Sheffield	Miss Joannou

Please visit the Ark Swift You Tube channel where every teacher has recorded a welcome message for their new class:

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvgMoz-knFkJJA96TeaYsGA/videos>

A full staff list will be issued at the beginning of next term.

Goodbye to some much-valued members of our Swift Team

At the end of this term, we will say goodbye to some of our wonderful staff:

Miss Leach – *is moving to Hampshire*

Miss Pullinger – *is moving a little further afield – to Zambia!*

Miss Cristalli – *is moving to Amsterdam*

Miss McDonald – *is moving to one of our sister schools, Ark Globe in South London*

Miss Mardenborough – *after a temporary role working with Year 6 since January, moving on to other leadership challenges in London*

Mr Ranentheran – *is starting teacher training. Good luck!*

Mrs Haynes – *after the birth of her daughter, has relocated to Hull*

Miss Millar – *after the birth of her daughter, has relocated to Cheshire*

I would like to thank these members of staff for the hard work and commitment they have given to Swift. The children have benefited immensely from all they have done, and I am sure you will join me in wishing them all the best for very successful future careers in education.

Goodbye Year 6

We wish our cohort of Year 6 children every success as they make the transition to secondary school and congratulate them on their achievements. We very much look forward to hearing how they get on in their new schools.

Goodbye to some of our Swift Families

We also say goodbye to some of our families as they move to other parts of London and further afield or start their Reception year in other local primary schools having attended our Nursery. We wish them all the best for their future education and look forward to hearing of their successes. We thank you for being part of our school community and wish you well.

Baby News

Congratulations to Mrs White and Miss Mowbray. Mrs White had a baby girl and Miss Mowbray a baby boy during lockdown. All are doing well.

Black Lives Matter

The shocking events in America and around the world last month remind us as a school community of the crucial role we play in educating children about the importance of tackling racism and promoting equality. This work is never done and as educators, we have the power and responsibility to shape young minds about how they view the world and those around them. We know already that our curriculum will be changing in the future to take account of the disruption due to COVID 19; please be reassured that we will be thinking carefully about how we can further incorporate themes around equality and diversity into our curriculum going forward.

Some areas that we are keen to revisit include:

- Updating our Anti-Racism Policy
- Continue upgrading our reading stock to ensure it is more representative of the community we serve and to look at revisiting aspects of our curriculum to check that language is appropriate and that the topics we cover are more representative.
- Consider racism in the context of safeguarding
- Explore the idea of drop-down days to focus on key themes relating to diversity and equality

Parent Questionnaire

Please find enclosed a parent questionnaire. I would be grateful if you would spend a few minutes completing and returning to the school office in September. Despite this being an unusual year with most children not having been in school since 20th March, your views are very important to us as we continually strive to improve Swift.

The Return to School in September

As you will be aware, the Department of Education has published the guidance for full school return in September. Each school is different, and this will influence how the guidance is implemented on a local level. The government has announced attendance will be mandatory from September following the relaxing of the rules this term. A small number of pupils may still be unable to attend if they are self-isolating. Subject to a continuing decline in infection rates, shielding advice will pause from 1st August.

We will write to families in the week before the start of term which commences on Monday 7th September (other than for Nursery and Reception). This communication will set-out the decisions we have taken to ensure the safe return of all pupils.

Amongst other things, you can expect:

- Staggered arrival and departure times
- No after school clubs. This will be reviewed at October half-term
- The resumption of breakfast club but with a revised system for booking a place to ensure we can safely meet requirements
- No trips or swimming. This will be reviewed at the end of the autumn term.
- A full lunch service will be offered

Term Dates 2020-21

Please find enclosed a copy of the finalised term dates for the 2020-21 academic year. Nursery and Reception will have a later start to the autumn term and this has already been communicated to relevant families.

Purchasing Uniform

School will be open on Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th September from 9:30am-3:00pm for the purchase of Ark Swift branded uniform.

Children will be expected to return to school wearing full school uniform. The most up to date copy of our uniform policy, along with prices for Ark Swift branded items can be found on our website:

<https://arkswift.org/policies/uniform-policy>

Registering for Free School Meals

It is important that you are aware of the support available to you during this difficult time. Please continue to register for free school meals, particularly if you have not done so before.

Find out if you're eligible for free school meals here: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-free-school-meals>



Ark Swift Primary Academy

Find out more about the qualifying benefits for free school meals eligibility and how to claim them by visiting:

- Citizens Advice: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/>
- The Money Advice Service: <https://www.moneyadviceservice.org.uk/en/categories/benefits>
- Gov.uk: <https://www.gov.uk/browse/benefits>

Remember, you can speak to one of our office team for any support with registering for free school meals.

If you need help with your EdenRed vouchers during the summer holiday:

- EdenRed guidance for parents on how and where they can use their free school meal vouchers:
https://www.edenred.co.uk/Documents/DfE/DfE_FreeSchoolMeals_ParentCarerFAQs.pdf
- Parents and carers can contact EdenRed via freeschoolmealsparentscarers@edenred.com with any queries regarding their vouchers.

Finally, I wish every child, parent and staff member of the school a peaceful holiday with their families. Take the time to reflect on your own achievements and set yourself aspirations you wish to fulfil next school year.

Thank you for your support and understanding during these exceptional circumstances. If we can do anything more to help your family, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours ever,

Daniel Upfield
Principal