



Head of School: Miss Tara Penny  
Executive Headteacher: Mrs Elizabeth Underwood



**Dartmoor**  
MULTI ACADEMY TRUST



17<sup>th</sup> July 2020

Dear Parents,

### **Plans for the New School Year 2020-2021**

As we draw near to the end of term, I would normally have welcomed you into school, to meet with you in person, to share our plans for the year ahead, just as I did last year. My aspirational vision for the school, and my drive to achieve it, remains unchanged as I write to you today.

We are planning for the full return of all pupils from September. We are being supported in developing careful risk assessments and individual school plans to ensure that the school environment remains a safe place for everyone. These documents will be submitted to our Local Academy Committee of Governors next week, before being submitted to the Trustees for approval at the end of August. In the meantime, the plans will be scrutinised by Health and Safety, Estates teams and unions, alongside the Leadership of the Trust. We will ensure that all relevant information for parents is available on our school website in due course.

We are all excited to bring our school family back together and continue our children's learning journey. Teachers' planning will be adapted to take account of individual needs, filling gaps, extending and challenging children as appropriate.

#### **The Three Hares Curriculum**

During lockdown, we took the opportunity to work collaboratively with the Three Hares subject leaders, looking at our curriculum with fresh eyes. We are looking forward to presenting a renewed learning journey to you in the autumn. We have worked hard to identify topics of learning across the range of subjects which are inspiring, work well together, and are carefully sequenced as the children make their journey through the school. We have built in progression in acquisition of knowledge and skills, as well as revisiting areas of prior learning to ensure that nothing is forgotten and learning is embedded in long term memories.

In order to provide the best quality teaching, music, art, French, RE and sport will be delivered by curriculum leaders. This will allow for greater continuity throughout the school with a focus on progression, whilst delivering careful support and challenge.

We have some fantastic events in our planning for next year, to ensure that our children's education and love of learning is ignited within our school environment. As you may know, we are still keen to deliver on our aim to offer a Three Hares residential for Year 6 as well as outdoor learning, trips and workshops. We plan to bring back Showcase Assemblies, as well as introducing 'themed' weeks to enrich our children's learning.

Sara Halsey has been working with the EYFS team to revitalise the Early Years Foundation Stage framework, using the new curriculum and we are confident that children will make the best start in our pre-school and reception class, establishing a firm foundation for their future.

We continue to make the best use of the talents, skills and knowledge of staff across the Three Hares to bring that wealth of experience and ideas into each school.

## **Phonics**

I am pleased to inform you that we have secured some additional funding from the DfE, through engagement with the Cornerstone English Hub. These funds will contribute to the implementation of our brand new approved **phonics programme** called "Read Write Inc." which we will launch alongside training for staff in the autumn. More details will be forthcoming, along with workshop(s) for parents to enable those of you with children in EYFS and KS1 to support your children in learning to read within a carefully structured programme. We will see fresh new resources, books and teaching styles in school and shared at home, while teachers receive coaching and training in the delivery of this new scheme.

This scheme, launched at South Tawton this year, will also be in place at North Tawton in the autumn, enabling staff to collaborate in training and support.

## **The school field and grounds**

As you may be aware, the fencing around the school field has now been removed, and I am delighted to report that the field has now been approved for use from September. Some over-seeding and additional work will take place during the holidays, in addition to regular grounds maintenance, and this provides wonderful opportunities for sport for the year ahead.

Having renewed access to the field, opens up all sorts of plans to make the best use of this space for learning, sports, keeping active, PTA events and so on. We are not forgetting the wonderful 'forest school' space at the end of the field, which we are keen to develop with a team of willing volunteers for use, as from the spring of 2021.

Having our grounds maintenance team established now, we plan to open up new spaces for learning as well as to nurture mental health and well-being. One aspect of this, is to open up the enclosed area containing the wigwam in the autumn.

Beds have been identified for school-based projects to enable children to get involved as well as wild areas to attract insects and wildlife, maintaining these as learning opportunities for our children. Meanwhile, there will be also be a focus on providing a neat, welcoming frontage to the school.

We have amazing grounds at Chagford Primary and it is exciting to be able to make the most of them!

## **Sport**

As from September, funded by the Sport Premium received from the DfE, every class will be taught once a week by a specialist sports coach from Saints, who will work alongside each teacher to deliver a carefully designed programme of sport across the school year. This exciting opportunity will ensure that children develop a wide range of skills across a number of different sports, but this programme also acts as professional development for our staff.

The sports coach will deliver this programme at each of our Three Hares schools. Once risk assessments and government guidance allows, year groups in rotation, will be able to engage in Three Hares inter-school festivals and competitions, on a half termly basis – each based on a given sport being taught. This will enable children to get to know other children in our other schools, with whom they will ultimately be making the transition into secondary school in years to come.

On the day of the week on which the games lessons takes place, we are pleased to also be able to offer a sport-focussed club at the start and end of the day – which will be led by the sports coach and for which parents can pay Saints directly. In the first instance, due to current guidance, it may well be that these clubs will operate for one or two 'class bubbles' at a time. More details will be delivered in the new term.

With the opening up of the school field, we will be operating a 'daily mile' for all children – an opportunity to be active and energetic at the start of the day, to make a great start to energetic learning for the rest of the day. This will take a variety of forms during the year – running, walking briskly, skipping, circuits, relays for example.

All of this, of course, is in addition to our school partnership with OCRA – through which we are able to access competitions and sporting events with schools beyond the Three Hares and DMAT.

We have been disappointed not to have had access to swimming this term, but it is part of our sport programme for the next summer, as you would expect.

### **Computers**

We are keen to prepare for the future and upgrade the devices we have in school, whilst ensuring that our families are well-catered for at home. To this end, I am currently investigating how to fund the replacement of old tablets in school. In addition, the DMAT are working on a project to support all families to have a device for every child at home. I have been working in partnership with the DfE EdTech programme as well as DMAT leaders to establish a Learning Platform in school. Fundamentally, all children will have a school email address and will have access to blended learning at school and at home, via the platform. Of course it will be essential to have this in place, should we have the unfortunate situation of going through another lockdown. Our intention is that our home-learning offer would look and feel quite different, having learned the lessons of this year, which was thrust upon us quite suddenly.

### **Extra-Curricular Clubs**

You will read in Tara Penny's letter that in September we are launching a range of extracurricular clubs which will enable children to develop additional skills and interests beyond their normal curriculum.

### **Sensory Room**

Our sensory room (within the KS1 corridor) is an additional project which will be decorated with a mural, with fresh resources and continue to be a comforting, soothing and welcoming space for children who benefit from some time away from the 'busy-ness' of school life.

### **Funding**

As I hope you appreciate, we continue to be ambitious for our school and to achieve these goals we require your support. Whilst I appreciate that members of our school and wider community may well have experienced financial difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic, should you be able to support us financially, in any way, I would be delighted to speak with you. As you know, our budget is tight but we are not willing for that to inhibit school improvement. Our local academy committee of governors are supporting us in seeking potential sponsors and kind benefactors. We are now able to benefit from Gift Aid, meaning ultimately, any donation to the school is worth 25% more. Rest assured, that any donations will **directly benefit the school**. Should you be interested in making a financial donation to the school, please speak with me directly, Emma Neath, Chair of Governors or Mel Holyoak, Foundation Governor.

So, in summary, please be assured of our continuing drive for school improvement at Chagford CE Primary. **We need all of your children back in September**, in order to maintain this school, as a happy, thriving environment for all our local children. Please continue to support us.

May I take this opportunity to thank Tara Penny for her outstanding commitment and drive throughout this unusual first year in our leadership together. Her tireless enthusiasm and good humour have been wonderful to work with and I know that you have appreciated the time and energy she has dedicated to the Chagford families. In addition, thanks go to the staff for all their hard work as they edge towards a well-deserved holiday.

We will still be in school next week, as we prepare for next year. Please don't hesitate to speak with me or Tara, should you have any questions.

If I don't see you, may I wish you a very happy and restful summer break and I look forward to seeing you in September.

With kindest regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "E. Underwood". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E" and a period at the end.

Elizabeth Underwood  
Executive Headteacher