



Marden Primary School

Mrs T Thomas

Headteacher

Tel/ans: 01622 831393

Fax: 01622 832058

Email: headteacher@marden.kent.sch.uk

Goudhurst Road

Marden

Tonbridge

Kent

TN12 9JX

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we edge forwards to a “new normal” and move out of lockdown we are writing to update you about how we are working closely with our hugely committed teaching and support team at Marden Primary School. Our aim is to bring our children back into school as safely, quickly and seamlessly as possible.

It has been a very difficult time for all of us over the last few months, not least for our teaching staff who have worked tirelessly to deliver as comprehensive a curriculum as they can whilst recognising the strain parents have had to shoulder to support our children’s learning. In addition to this they have been supporting all children, particularly those who have had more difficulty accessing the work set, whilst responding to considerable wider pastoral issues. This has been in the context of keeping themselves up to date with advice and direction (that changes almost daily) from the Department of Education, Public Health England, Kent County Council and HM Government.

Despite this, they have managed to organise successful and fun theme days such as Star Wars day to infuse the children with a sense of community and love of learning.

As Governors, we are keen to recognise, celebrate and thank them for their extraordinary efforts.

Over the next few weeks Marden Primary School will have to adapt to simultaneous physical and virtual learning and as Governors we are working closely with Mrs Thomas and her team to make this as rich a learning programme as we can. Mrs Thomas has already written to you explaining how children will be grouped into smaller pods for the foreseeable future. Specific staff members will be allocated to each group to limit any potential virus exposure. We have supported the teacher’s proposal to stagger the school day to reduce congestion at drop off and pick up times, as well as create vital time for an enhanced cleaning regime at the end of each day. This will help reduce, as far as we can, any potential risk.

In order to give our teachers the space to ensure they can deliver excellent virtual learning for those children in year groups not yet in school we have supported Mrs Thomas’s proposal to group the teacher’s planning time on a Friday afternoon. All of the team will work together to set the learning programme for the following week as well as reflect on the challenges experienced. We appreciate that this will reduce the children’s time in school but feel that it offers us the opportunity to deliver the highest quality teaching to all pupils in these difficult circumstances.

Throughout all of this we have been in continuous contact with the Leigh Academy Trust, who we are still hoping to join in the new academic year. This move will help us draw from the wider experience of the Trust and its schools, to ensure we are following best practice in delivering education and support to our children in these unprecedented times. LAT has already provided invaluable support for the school and has begun to crystalize the benefits of being part of an Academy Trust.

We would also like to thank you as parents for all you are doing to support the school and know we can count on your continued support as we return to a more recognisable routine. If you have any concerns at all during this time please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Thomas or ourselves.

Yours faithfully,

James Sawle and Andy Puncher

Co-Chairs of Marden Primary School's Governing Body