

Friday 18th June 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we approach the end of the academic year, our thoughts are already turning to September, so that we can provide you with information about your child's next steps in their education and provide transition experiences for our children, ensuring they are prepared for any changes they will be facing in the new academic year.

For many schools, including the three primary schools in Rainford, the intake for September is lower than the number each school can accommodate and as our budget is set on the number of children who attend this means our budget for September is significantly less than previous years. Consequently, we have had to make some decisions regarding the structure of the classes and teaching groups. With the expected number on roll for September currently at 156, the school is only able to employ the equivalent of six full time class teachers across the eight-year groups.

This leaves the Governors with decisions to make, based on varying numbers of pupils in each year group and externally enforced factors (such as national limits to infant class sizes) and we are now looking at structuring parts of the school into mixed age classes. This decision has not been taken lightly, but the current financial situation of the school and the low numbers for 2021 across school, mean that this is the next step for the coming academic year.

Mixed aged classes are not a new experience in St Helens, or indeed here at Corpus Christi and in the other schools in Rainford and have been successful. Many schools mix year groups, due to budget pressures, the numbers requiring places in catchment areas and because of the benefits that are seen in allowing children to work across the age groups (for example, a mixed Nursery and Reception class, working as one Foundation Unit, covering a play based curriculum and learning).

Corpus Christi has had mixed year groups in the past and this is not a new experience for the staff here. We have staff with a range of experience, who have worked with, planned for and successfully led, mixed age classes across schools.

Discussions about the new set up are still ongoing, but the Governors are working hard with the Senior Management Team to ensure the best outcome is found. We understand that some parents and carers may have reservations about the mixing of year groups, but please be reassured that the school will continue to provide the best possible education and care for your child.

At Corpus Christi, the staff work hard to ensure the curriculum is differentiated and challenging to all children, planned to suit their needs, areas for development and targets. This will not change. The National Curriculum is designed to allow for mixed classes and the knowledge and skills taught are covered across year groups, with

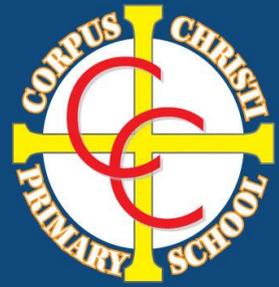
Together we DREAM, Together we Learn

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deepening knowledge and progress already in place in all classes. Objectives are taught, revised, consolidated and extended as children move through the year groups and this will continue as we move forward.

We pride ourselves on an open, honest and welcoming relationship with our families. It is important that we share with you our plans to continue to drive the school forward and develop all of our children, helping them to reach their full potential in all areas of school life.

Once year groups have been arranged into the class groups which best suit the needs of our children, we will inform you of the decision, and continue our open lines of communication about the next steps forward to September.

Yours sincerely

Mr Rob Reynolds
Chair of Governors

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