



PRIESTLEY SMITH SPECIALIST SCHOOL

(For Blind and Partially Sighted Students)

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Headteacher: Mrs J. L. Garvey



2/9/2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to school from all the staff at Priestley Smith School. We are very much looking forward to seeing the Children on Tuesday 6th September. Thank you, as ever, for your efforts in ensuring that they are smart and in full school uniform appropriate footwear. Please make sure they are also coming in with a coat each day due to the usual changeable weather, even if they are on transport, as, if the vehicle breaks down the heating may not work. Could you please make sure that the children's clothes have been labelled (an indelible marker with their initials on the label is enough).

Staffing news -Miss Cardinal starts in the primary Department teaching Upper Juniors. Miss Cardinal is a very experienced primary teacher and is a Qualified Teacher for Vision Impairment. Mr Aaron starts too as our new Music teacher across both the Primary to the Secondary departments. He is a talented musician as well as having been a peripatetic music teacher for many years. Mrs Broderick moves from the Primary to the Secondary department as a TA. Mrs Coyle will be running a new Nurture group in the primary department, similar to the ALG in secondary. We have renamed all the groups now to reflect our aspirations for the students, so in addition to Nurture, we have Thrive in KS3 and Aspire in KS4/5.

Mr Wijesinghe and Mrs Weston have had a change of roles. Both will now be Progress Leaders, Mr Wijesinghe will be focusing on the progress of KS3 students and their transition from Primary to Secondary, and Mrs Weston will be responsible for the progress of KS4/5 students and their transition, including to the world of work/further education.

Miss Lottie Hickie is joining the Habilitation Team. She will introduce herself to you if she takes over the habilitation support for your child.

We have a very experienced body of staff at Priestley Smith and I am very proud of the highly skilled teachers, teaching assistants, habilitation and specialist staff who have a daily input into your child's education.

Learning - As in previous years, we will continue to have a big drive on English and Maths skills and we would appreciate your support with this as we strive to ensure that the children have a focus on spelling, punctuation, grammar and reading as well as counting and calculation skills. Phonics in Primary, as well as Thrive and Aspire, will be a bigger focus this year with a reformatted curriculum. The Secondary curriculum continues to be reviewed in line with pupils needs and the Primary curriculum this year will have a thematic approach.

Communication - Please continue to check the website for updates and publication of any correspondence sent out to you. Please also check your child's bag for letters, comments in home/school diaries and homework diaries as well as text messages for communications from school. Please also ensure all contact details at school are up to date and that you have given us at least two emergency contact numbers other than parents/carers.



European Award for Language



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Attendance - Attendance has been an issue over the last 2 years with Covid and isolation periods. As we move forward the Local Authority are having a renewed focus on attendance of statutory school age children and it is vitally important that your child is in school every day.

If they are unwell, please ensure you phone the school office before 8.30 am, sooner or we need to contact transport. Please note – messages from guides are not acceptable and school must be contacted directly by a parent or carer. Please also see the separate letter regarding term time holidays. This is directly from the Local Authority who will be clamping down on term time holidays and issuing fines.

Transport- we have been advised that parents should have received written confirmation of transport arrangements. If you still have any concerns, Jo Shale will be in the Habilitation Office 9.30 to 2pm on Monday 5th to deal with any queries. You can call direct on 0121 325 3904.

Thank you all in anticipation of your support for the forthcoming year.

Kindest regards,



Joanna Garvey
Headteacher
Priestley Smith Specialist School