



MALCOLM SARGENT PRIMARY SCHOOL

Love To Learn

30 April 2019

Dear Parents/Carers

BUILDING WORKS

I am writing to provide further details of the building work taking place on the school site around your child's classroom. I have spoken to a number of parents already about the impact of the building work and have given assurances about the classroom conditions and noise. I have also spoken about the positive impact these new spaces will provide to the children at the school once the works are completed at the end of the summer holidays. I wanted to share with you my response to the questions that have been raised.

Yesterday, building work took place that produced an unacceptable level of noise and fumes. Our site manager was not alerted to this and classes decided to work outside away from the noise. This should not have occurred and I will be making apology to the children for this disruption.

Our site manager had previously been liaising with the building site manager about ensuring no such incident occurred. I have now met with all concerned myself to ensure that all future building work which involves a significant noise and/or fumes is restricted to the following times wherever possible:

- Prior to 8.40am
- During the morning break-time for Year 3/4
- Between 11.45am and 12.45pm when children will be on the school field or in the lunchhall
- After 3.20pm

The building site manager liaises daily with our site manager to review the ongoing building program and also to look ahead to help manage how the construction process fits the activities which are planned in the neighbouring classrooms. We are also keen to involve the children in the building process as much as possible by providing them with learning opportunities about how the construction process works.

I am sure you can appreciate that building works on school sites are never ideal. Schools need to plan for how best to undertake the building work with the project managers to ensure timescales are swift and yet ensure that the work does not impact on teaching and learning. Prior to work starting, we planned carefully for the new classroom builds to cause the minimum impact when faced with a number of different options and scenarios. Unfortunately, the timescale for building a classroom is a lengthy one and so works have needed to overlap with school term times. Health and safety is the most important aspect of such planning. Windows have needed to be boarded to prevent the risk of damage. The perimeter of the site needs to be large enough to ensure safety, and has therefore encroached on the playground space and the class door to 3W. Whilst not ideal, these measures have to be taken as the priority as health and safety must come first and foremost for both the children and adults on site. The building times were planned for the summer months, as the children use the school field during

this time, reducing the impact of the playground space being used by the building contractors, and attempting to reduce the risk of the building work being slowed down by inclement winter weather.

The light into classrooms has been assessed, and I am satisfied, having spent a lot of time in the classrooms myself, that the natural light conditions are good and are of no detriment to the children's learning. Additional skylights to those already present are planned for Y3W which will further the natural light into that classroom. An additional window opening has also been installed next to the new fire door in Y3W, which we will open as soon as it is safe to do so.

Heat in classrooms has been reduced due to the boarding of windows. Most heat generated in the summer months came from sunlight hitting the glass windows in these classrooms. Teachers will ensure doors and existing windows are opened to allow ventilation during the warmest days, as they would do ordinarily.

Whilst it is not possible to eliminate all noise from the building works, the amount of noise produced has been my largest concern, and one which needs to be carefully planned, monitored and addressed should it become disruptive. Teachers need to be vigilant and report any concerns immediately. Work will need to cease should the noise it produces be distracting. Major works which produce significant noise need to be planned for those times when children are not working in the classrooms. This has been discussed more robustly with the contractors following the events of yesterday.

The new classrooms will be completed over the summer holiday, ready for use in September. I am pleased that this will offer all the children in our school an improved space to work. It will enable us to open the classroom space occupied by children in Y4B back into Y4P, creating a much larger space. It will enable Mrs Mills an improved music space to facilitate choir, band and music lessons and the continued growth and development of music at our school. It will enable us to continue to accommodate the bulge year currently in the Foundation Stage, on their journey through the school. On this, I can confirm our intake for next year is back to 90 children.

Creating a better school is never easy, and I hope that you will support this development, remaining mindful of the investment we have taken into minimising the possible impact it could have had in the last ten weeks of the school year, together with the continued monitoring and adjustments we will make throughout this period of time, to continue to reduce the impact as far as possible.

Yours sincerely

Tim Cox
Vice Principal, Upper School