Frieth Governors' News

Developing potential without limitations

Issue 17, March 2017

End of the Spring Term…

As another busy term draws to a close we would like to thank the children, staff and parents for all of their hard work.

The children returned to school in January to the exciting topic of Island Hopping. Many fun events have taken part in school and the display boards are looking amazing. We have had a couple of snow showers this term, but thankfully nothing that has led us to having to close the school- just enough for the children to enjoy.

Mrs Reid and Mrs Tyzack took school choir to 'Young Voices 2017' at the Birmingham Genting Arena. It gave the children the opportunity to sing with a massed choir of over 6000 primary school children which is an awesome event in itself, as well as working alongside some well-known performers such as Natalie Williams, Urban Strides and the Beatbox Collective.

The cross country team have also been busy competing and we also celebrated world book day.

Thank you for your ongoing support.

Wow, our new play ground!

The new Gross Motor Control play area looks fantastic. The governors would like to expressly thank the anonymous donor who helped to fund the play area refurbishment. We are also hugely appreciative of the time that Alex Brown and all of the parent volunteers have put into repainting and repairing the area. The Hunt family have also provided the children with a marvelous bespoke mud kitchen, which the children love. Thank you all.

How do we organize our class structures?

At Frieth we pride ourselves on being a rural, village, Church of England School which may be small in size, but big on aspirations and achievement. Due to our numbers on roll and the differing sizes of our classrooms, we review our class structures on a yearly basis to enable the funding we receive to provide the best learning environment for the children. Please read the article overleaf to see how Mrs Reid and her staff look at how to provide the best teaching and learning structure for the children.

What about the Academy question?

The governing board continues to research the various options open to us as we think about moving towards Academy status.

<u>Thank you, thank you</u>

To all of you who have given your time, help and your financial support to the PTA, we are hugely grateful. With your generosity we are able to make the school, and its facilities, the best that they can be. We would particularly like to thank the chair Emma Wharfe.

Frieth School Class and Teaching Planning

How is the school funded?

The school receives funding for every child who is registered on the roll on a specific date early in the September term. If pupils leave us after that date, we retain the funding for them, but if pupils join us from other schools then we don't receive any funding for them until the next census date. The school also receives extra funding for pupils who have specific extra needs, but this is often paid some months late, while we have to carry the cost of any extra staff needed to provide the care and support required for these children as soon as these needs are identified. The statutory funding only covers the essential needs of the school for salaries and services and is continually under threat of being reduced; it is for this reason that the governors ask parents to contribute financially to the school so that extra items can be provided. In recent years the donation fund and financial assistance from the PTA has helped to provide a substantial up –grade in IT facilities, as well as contributing to other projects such as the new library and the Gross Motor Control area in the playground.

Why does the number of children in the school influence the number of teachers we have?

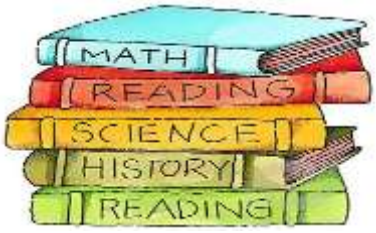
The majority of the funding received by the school is spent on salaries and essentials such as electricity and other services. The school budget cannot afford to pay a teacher for each year group unless there are nearer thirty children per year group rather than twenty. At this point in time, the school cannot physically accommodate a larger number than our cohorts of 20 in EYFS and KS1 and 22 in KS2, given the size and number of the classrooms in the school.

Why does Frieth have mixed age classes?

As the number on the school role does not financially support separate year groups for every year from Reception to year 6, and we do not have enough classrooms we teach in mixed age classes. Depending on the numbers in each year group it may be best to have mixed age classes at some or all stages in the school. This can vary from year to year depending on the numbers moving through the school.

Will Frieth consider discrete year group teaching for the future?

Yes, dependent on numbers of pupils in each cohort throughout the school and government budgetary funding available.





What is currently being considered for 2017/18?

Recently we have had unusually small cohorts in the upper age ranges at Frieth and the best solution has been to have mixed age teaching. The school aims to arrange the class sizes so that, as far as possible, each child gets a fair share of a teacher's time and attention. We are currently predicting an increase in the numbers of pupils in KS2 for September 2017, as the smaller cohorts have worked their way through the school. Therefore we are considering the possibility of having discrete year groups for KS2 from September 2017. However this decision cannot be taken until later in the summer term when we should have a more secure idea of pupil numbers, and it is also dependent on securing suitable staffing to support this arrangement. It is for this reason that the school is advertising for teachers at the present time.

Why would KS1 still remain as 2 classes?

As already explained, we do not have enough classrooms for every year to be in a separate room, nor is this financially possible. The infant classes currently are the largest classrooms in the building and therefore can accommodate the primary infant class size of 30.

Is individual year group teaching in KS2 forever or just for this year?

Decisions about discrete or mixed age teaching will be made each year, depending on cohort numbers and staff resources available. The aim of Mrs Reid and her staff, with the support of the governors, will always be to make arrangements to give every child the best possible education, given the physical constraints of our school and the financial constraints of our budget. The same principles will inform the governors' decision with respect to whether, how and when we become an Academy in due course.

What are the benefits to either mixed age or discrete teaching structures?

Research demonstrates that there are benefits to both systems. However, the most relevant factors to pupil progress and outcomes include a smaller ratio of children to teachers and adults in class, the expertise of the class teacher, and the strength of the planning and differentiation based on an in-depth knowledge of each and every individual child in the class and school. We always strive to provide the smallest possible class sizes and therefore the smallest possible ratios of pupils to adults within our financial abilities; and the remaining factors are all strengths of Frieth CEC School. This will continue to be the case regardless of class structure decisions owing to the care, dedication, and phenomenal hard work demonstrated by all the staff here at Frieth.

