



PARENTS NEWSLETTER JUNE 2017

Since our successful Ofsted inspection school has embraced several new challenges and preparation for September is well under way. We are growing quickly and for the first time since we opened we are likely to be full across the school from September; usually we keep some capacity for in year admissions.

This newsletter is focussed on keeping you up to date with staff and class changes so that you can make the best parent evening choices for your child. We have moved some children internally within each key stage for September as well as welcoming our new pupils: this will ensure the best possible peer mixes for learning in the New Year. An individual slip regarding your child's class teacher will come out later this week as part of the parent evening letter.

For 10 years I have been blessed by teachers who have stayed consistent, in some cases well beyond usual retirement ages. Granta has traditionally had very little turn over in teachers. This year, a few teachers have decided to move on at the same time. Whilst this has proved a challenge it will provide a small group of new teachers in September, bringing fresh skills and views. I look forward to welcoming them.

Changes are summarised below. Also a reminder that each summer term, school council choose the theme for secondary school class names. This really does enable students to feel that new class groups in September are a fresh start and it is an important job that school council advises on. This year they have chosen gem stones as the theme and so classes in KS3 and KS4 from September will be named after gem stones. Primary class names remain the same.

Early Years

Alison Goodfellow has decided to retire after 11 years at Granta and Kelly Hall will take over as lead teacher. Many of you will know Kelly as a higher level assistant and leader of After School Club. Kelly has a specialist qualification in Early Years Practice and stays on with a wealth of experience and talent. Her colleague Stephani Woodley in KS1 will become Key Stage Manager. They are already planning and preparing together.

Key Stage 2:

Eirini Papageorgopoulou has been a supply teacher leading Penguin class this year. I am delighted that Eirini has agreed to stay on at Granta. In order for her to pursue a specialist masters degree she will teach part time and Penguin class will be shared between herself and Jenny Newman, who has taught here in KS2 for 4 years.

Jenny has historically shared Badger class with Cath Harris, also an experienced part time teacher who has been teaching here for 10 years. Cath will continue in Badger class and will be partnered by Jasmine Wharmby. Jasmine trained at Cambridge University and is returning to complete her masters degree.

Key Stage 3

Claire Wilkinson has resigned in order to return to full time higher education from September and to take up an alternative career path. Claire will be missed as a successful teacher here since January 2009. I am delighted that she will be followed by Kate Eastell-Fletcher who will be teaching full time. Kate has relevant additional needs experience as well as a successful mainstream background.

Key Stage 4

Emily Willis will be leaving us this term and her tutor group responsibilities will be met by Sharon Capon, who has been leading lessons in KS3 and KS2 since September 2013 as a higher level teaching assistant. Over the years Sharon has built a considerable specialism and rapport with students at EL1 and EL2 level. She will be a welcome addition to the teaching team in KS4.

Helen Norris (current KS4 tutor and science teacher) will increase her teaching days to 4 and continue to be main tutor for Topaz (currently Crusoe class). The team will also be joined by Amanda Kilgour for 2 days per week. Amanda has previously taught at Granta in KS2.

6th Form

After several years of postponement, Helen Simms has finally succumbed to the temptations of retirement. She will be replaced by Helen Pearson. Helen has significant experience teaching in a special needs school and has a particular strength in English.

Internal organisation

We are lucky to have 2 very experienced teachers at Granta supporting pupils with the most profound and complex learning needs including multi sensory impairment: Emma Stubbings and Penny Newman. Previous to joining Granta Penny has worked in a specialist school and Emma holds a specialist masters degree in multi-sensory impairment and regularly carries out advisory work for other schools. This year they have worked very closely with Zebra (primary) and Fitzwilliam (secondary) classes. This year will formalise that natural process by linking the classes as Fitzebra, a specialist department with a specifically skilled and trained team across the age range.

I hope this letter will give you a context for your child's individual class slips so that you can begin to talk to them about any September changes. The new class names in secondary are:

Ruby (currently Inca class: Claire Wilkinson)
Emerald (currently Liberty class: Sharon Collins)
Sapphire (currently Rainbow class: Lucinda Billington)
Diamond (currently Riverside: Emily Willis)
Topaz (currently Crusoe: Chris Cole and Helen Norris)
Fitzebra (currently Fitzwilliam and Zebra classes)

Best wishes
Lucie