

The Good Shepherd Catholic Primary School

Kingsland Gardens, Kingsthorpe, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN2 7BH



HEAD TEACHER Mrs Carmel Dodds **DEPUTY HEAD TEACHER** Miss Dominique Smith

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Wednesday 8th September 2021

Dear Parents and carers,

Welcome back!!! We are very excited to welcome the children to nursery today. We were really hoping to have higher nursery numbers this term which would have allowed us to have two separate nursery classes, one being heavily involved with the Reception class. Due to small numbers, and after careful consideration, we have decided to keep all the children in nursery. This should help the children settle quickly and will also reduce the number of close contacts the children have particularly as they settle in term 1.

It is really important that we explain the rationale behind our decision to run Morning and afternoon sessions as opposed to full time. Six years ago, the Good Shepherd accommodated 24 children in the morning sessions and another 24 children in the afternoon. These 48 children, became the intake for our reception cohort which was 60. Five years ago, the government introduced the 30 hour funded option by accommodating a large number of 30 hour places, the school has had to reduce the number of places in nursery from 48 to 27 which in turn has meant that we have had less children coming through in reception. Having spoken to a number of primary schools in a similar position they are now transitioning back to offering Morning or afternoon sessions. Thank you to all of you for being so understanding. By attending part of the day, every day, children will have a consistency in approach, they will quickly establish routines and build up their resilience, ready for when they do begin their full time learning journey with us. With the expertise of Mrs Bonner, Mrs Hancy and Mrs Broughton the children will be well supported in their learning.

We are excited to give parents the option of children wearing a uniform and this was down to a range of feedback overtime from parents and staff including that children begin to feel part of the school, they are getting ready for reception and it also reduces the need for discussions around what they are going to wear in the mornings. We know that this is a big step and some children will be really excited and ready to embrace it whilst others will need to move at their own pace which why it is not compulsory until September 22nd.

I know many of you may be thinking about COVID risk assessments and our latest one is on our website. We would ask all parents to continue to keep up to date with government guidance. We will continue to keep our one way system around school. Children will continue the frequent hand washing routines and we will continue to have staggered breaks and lunchtimes, this was a benefit the children asked to maintain as the playground is less busy at lunch and breaks. Masks can be worn at drop off and pick up this is a personal choice. We realise that a number of our families have CEV family members and may wish to continue wearing their mask at key points in the day when there are large numbers of adults around. We are really looking forward to this new school year and getting to know your children,

Yours Sincerely,

Mrs Carmel Dodds, Head Teacher