



Dear Parents and Carers,

This first Newsletter of the year begins with a very warm welcome back to all our parents, carers, staff and children! I do hope you all managed to enjoy a good break from school over the summer holidays and that you now all feel refreshed and ready for a very successful year at Ark Dickens.

This coming year is extremely important for us as a school and as a local community. In order to guarantee that we provide the very best possible education for ALL of our children and in order to guarantee that they can move up the school and out of the school with a high level of knowledge and skills, we have to work very hard this coming year to make that happen.

I know you will agree that we as a team of parents and teachers we ALL want the very best for our children and the OfSTED Inspection team said in June that we were progressing well, but we still had some key things to do together to create a 'really good' school. So these things that the inspectors are telling us to do, we will focus on this year and when they return we will aim for them to see the real difference in the school as a whole. I have made a list for you of the priorities below. To be honest there are no surprises here but we do need to show some improvements really quickly for the sake of the children.

- 1) **Coming to school every day matters:** Our school can never be GOOD unless this gets much better. The National Expectation is at least 97% of the children in schools in England attend every day. Although slowly improving, we are still only at around 95%, far below where we need to be. The inspection team's view was that 'despite all the actions taken by the school' attendance is still an issue which quickly

needs improvement. Parents do need to make certain that their children do come to school every day and every day on time. This year we will be trying again to improve this difficult situation and the expectations we are going to have of you as parents and carers is going to be high; your children need to be at school.

- 2) **Uniform matters:** Our expectations of your children being correctly dressed and ready for school will again be high this year. Our uniform expectations are made clear for you on the website and we will be contacting you if the children are not wearing the correct uniform for school. Smartness really matters as it represents an attitude and a readiness to learn. I have spoken to my staff too, to ensure they dress in a very professional manner and the same therefore applies to the children. Please do make certain your children come to school correctly dressed. As mentioned before, this also means blazers for children in Year 6 and 5. Thank you.

- 3) **Good Behaviour matters:** The OfSTED report was very clear in stating that the behaviour of the vast majority of children across the school was very good; we would agree with that. However, that will not make us a good school; the vast majority is not enough. The report made clear that the poor behaviour of some children was stopping the other children from learning as much as they could or as quickly as they could, and this needs to change rapidly. In order to do this we have made two very clear changes within school.

Firstly we have updated the behaviour policy so that there will be a consistency

of reward and sanction across all classes. It will be made very clear to parents how all the children are expected to behave and the consequences of such if they do not. This will be made clear at the meetings with teachers which are due to be held next week.

Secondly, we have completely changed the curriculum so that the things the children are learning about are much more active, involve the children more aiming to grab their interest very quickly and sustain that interest so that there is not time or desire to think about behaving in a negative way.

- 4) **What we have asked the children to do:** To help the children have a really positive start to the term, we are expecting them to do the following

**Decide to be KIND**

**Decide to WORK HARD**

**Decide to PLAY FAIR**

**THINK before they say anything –  
Is it TRUE? Is it KIND? Is it  
NECESSARY?**

We look forward to seeing you all next week and want to thank you at the start of the term for your active support in making this new school year, the best yet.

Best wishes



**Joy Waelend**  
**Executive Principal**