Response to questions from Headteacher's Coffee Morning – held Wednesday 7th October 2026

1. Is it possible for the children to have more Forest School in the curriculum?

We are always looking at ways to make the best use of our Forest School area and to incorporate outdoor learning into the curriculum wherever possible. Currently, targeted children access outdoor learning each week, and teachers are encouraged to use the Forest School area to support learning across the curriculum whenever opportunities arise.

To offer a more formal Forest School provision, we would need to have a member of staff undertake the appropriate training. This involves a significant investment of both time and money, and unfortunately, this is not something we are currently able to prioritise within our training budget. In the meantime, we will continue to look for opportunities to develop outdoor learning and make the most of the space we have available.

2. What are the expectations on homework?

Our approach to homework is to keep it manageable and purposeful, allowing children plenty of time to enjoy family life, attend clubs and take part in other activities outside school. We work hard with the children throughout the school day, so we want to maintain a healthy balance between learning and having time to relax and enjoy being children.

The most important message re: homework is to read, read and read again! Reading with your child, listening to them read or simply sharing a book together is incredibly valuable. If there is one thing you can do at home to support your child's learning, I would encourage you to make reading part of your daily routine, ideally every evening as part of a positive bedtime routine. The benefits of regular reading are enormous, not only for developing reading skills but also for building vocabulary, comprehension and a love of books. As part of English homework, some year groups will have access to our phonics programme where they can practise sounds and make connections with the phonetical decoded books they take home to read and also their spellings.

Learning times tables is another really valuable way to support your child at home, as a secure knowledge of multiplication facts provides an important foundation for many areas of maths. You should also have login details for Times Tables Rock Stars to help your child practise these skills.

Homework expectations increase as children move through the school, with Year 6 having more regular homework to help prepare them for the transition to secondary school. By this stage, children should be familiar with the routines and expectations and should be encouraged to have a go independently in the first instance.

3. How does the school track children's learning?

We track children's learning in a number of ways to build up a clear picture of how they are progressing and where they may need additional support or challenge.

Teachers continually assess learning throughout the school day, listening to children's contributions in lessons, asking questions, observing how they approach tasks and looking carefully at the work they produce in their books. This ongoing assessment helps teachers to identify what children

understand, what they need to practise further and how best to support their next steps in learning.

We also use **Insight**, our assessment system, to record teacher assessments and track children's progress over time. This information helps us to identify patterns, celebrate progress and spot any children or groups who may need additional support.

Teachers regularly review this information alongside their knowledge of the children and their day-to-day learning. This means we can respond to children's needs, provide appropriate support and challenge, and help every child to make the best possible progress.

4. Is there scope for reading volunteers?

Absolutely! I did put out a plea in a recent newsletter but if you do have any spare time (ha!) then we would love for you to come into school and listen to children read. Please ask at the school office for an application form.

5. What additional language do the children learn?

The children learn French throughout the school as part of our MFL curriculum. We would value any French speakers to come into school and maybe read a short story in French so the children can see the language come alive.

6. How do parents enrol their children for music lessons?

Our peripatetic music teachers will often have available slots for lessons opening up at the end of the academic year to start in the new school year as our Year 6 children leave. Many peri teachers come in and perform concerts in the summer term to garner interest for lessons. I will often advertise available slots, when they open up, in the school newsletter. Ultimately, you can enquire at the school office and we can make you aware of availability. Points to note are that additional music lessons such as these will be funded by you and the majority take place in the school day which will mean that your child will miss 20 minutes of class lesson or break time (if that's when a lesson falls) each week.

7. Is there a possibility of the current Year 4 cohort merging to two classes in Year 5 as last year?

This is always a possibility with any Year group low on numbers. You may be aware that there is a city-wide fall in mainstream pupil numbers over the past few years and this picture continues into the years ahead. Low numbers of pupils has a detrimental effect on school budgets where they can no longer afford the staffing numbers they once had. Therefore, a three-form entry year group where numbers fall below 70, will always mean there will be discussions on whether the year group should move to two classes for the following year.

At the moment, there are no plans to do this as Years 3 and 4 do not have numbers below 70, but it is a changeable picture. What I can say, drawing on the lessons learnt from last year, that any decisions on merging classes will be made by February half term at the latest.

8. Are the children getting their allocated 2 hours of PE every week?

Physical Education (PE) is an important part of the primary school curriculum. Schools within a Multi-Academy Trust currently have greater curriculum freedoms and are not legally required to

follow the National Curriculum in full. However, they must provide a broad and balanced curriculum that promotes children's physical development.

The recommendation that primary schools should aim to provide at least two hours of high-quality PE and sport each week is an expectation and recommendation, rather than a statutory legal minimum for school. While this is not currently a statutory minimum, it is an important expectation for schools to work towards.

The children currently get, on average, 90 minutes of PE each week. Through PE lessons and sporting activities, children develop fundamental movement skills, learn to work as part of a team, take part in competitive activities and understand the importance of leading healthy, active lifestyles.

We recognise the importance of protecting time for PE and ensuring that all children have regular opportunities to be active, develop their skills and enjoy sport.