



Hanley St Luke's C of E (Aided) Primary

Head Teacher: Mrs L Williamson

Telephone: 01782 234390/1 Email: office@hanleystlukes.com

Website: www.hanleystlukes.com

20th January 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

As you would expect, I have spent time since my arrival working alongside staff and looking at the standards of work across the school. I have been very impressed by the staff's dedication to ensuring your children are making the best academic progress possible. I am also impressed by their willingness to look for ways to make things even better, which is so important in this time of higher expectations since the introduction of the New Primary Curriculum 2014 and its related assessments.

You will be aware that last year's Year 2 and Year 6 children across England were the first cohort to be tested under the new curriculum and assessment framework with updated and much tougher SATS tests. As such, schools throughout this academic year and beyond will be looking at their results and scrutinising their existing practices to see if they will deliver the new standards, or whether any changes are needed. This is no different for Hanley St Luke's and so in my discussions with staff, a few changes are being introduced which will help your children better meet the new expectations and have a richer educational experience.

So, by the start of next half term the vast majority of children in school will be taught in their own class for English and Maths rather than moving to different sets. There are a couple of exceptions to this: Y6 will retain Maths sets, having a third teacher to facilitate this, and Y2 will also have an additional teacher to offer flexible support across all ability levels. Children will continue to be ability grouped for regular daily phonics sessions across Reception and KS1. Each year group will be adopting this system at the most sensible point for their curriculum planning over the next few weeks, but all classes will be operating this way by the start of next half term.

Having class teachers teach their class for the vast majority of the time means that no time is lost moving from one class to another and work taught in the morning can more readily be reinforced in the afternoons. Learning support staff will, as now, be targeted to support children who require additional input and alternative arrangements will continue to be in place for children with significant Special Educational Needs or who require support learning English.

This approach is fully in line with the Mastery expectations of the new National Curriculum, where children should be offered learning opportunities to deepen their knowledge through exploring and problem solving across a range of contexts and subjects so their knowledge is really embedded. It is the way I developed my previous school's curriculum, which was rated Outstanding by OFSTED and supported above average attainment in many areas. I am confident that your children will also benefit from this approach too having a skilled and dedicated teaching team committed to serving your children in the best ways possible. Should you have any questions please do not hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher or to me.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs L Williamson
Head Teacher