COLLIS PRIMARY SCHOOL

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19th December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

End of Term Letter from the Head Teacher – December 2023

As we approach the conclusion of another eventful and fulfilling calendar year, it is time to pause for breath and reflect on the continuing journey we have experienced at Collis School over the past twelve months. This period has been marked by accomplishments, growth, and many cherished moments for our entire Collis community.

Throughout the year, we celebrated a myriad of activities and achievements, including assemblies, the return of swimming, the introduction of free school meals, fireworks displays, fairs, new class cake sales, World Book Day, author visits, sports day, as well as sports successes. We also had numerous school and residential visits, Friday reading afternoons with parents, Forest School sessions, birthday assemblies, guest speakers, a variety of clubs, the opening of the new infant library and music room, and the employment of a music specialist. Not forgetting the curriculum meetings focused on phonics, reading, and mathematics, along with the introduction of OPAL, Year 6 cycling proficiency, the newsletter every Friday, Year 3 safer walking week, parent focus group meetings, school council activities, the playground squad, active participation in the London Maths Hub, and notable achievements such as the BLP Cup and Good Sport Cups, and the delightful Christmas shows.

Staffing News:
As the term comes to an end, we welcome new staff and bid farewell to some members of our staff as they embark on new adventures, take on promotions, or relocate.

Judith Andrew - After an incredible 32 years at Collis, Judith is leaving the school. We express our deep appreciation and gratitude for her dedicated service to Collis Primary School. Judith's commitment and contributions to our school community have been truly exceptional, leaving an indelible mark on all of us, especially through her remarkable work with the younger children.

Sarah Storey - I am delighted to announce that Sarah Storey will be re-joining Collis as our full-time nursery teacher, starting at the beginning of the term in January. Many of you may remember Sarah from her successful tenure as the nursery lead at Collis from January 2021 to July 2023. With Sarah taking on the role of a full-time nursery teacher, this has provided an opportunity for Mrs. Saunders to take on a new role at Collis.

James Loizos - After over a decade of teaching at Collis, Mr. Loizos is leaving for Cardiff. We express our gratitude for his work at Collis, particularly the many sporting successes under his coordination of PE.

Katie Axten - Replacing James in 5L is Miss Katie Axten, who joins us from Laleham C of E (VA) Primary School in Middlesex. Katie brings a wealth of experience and will serve as the PE lead alongside Mr. Laks. Interestingly, Katie's own journey includes competing in acrobatic gymnastics from the age of 8 to 18, culminating in her becoming a world champion at the age of 14 as part of the Great Britain acrobatic gymnastics team.

Rachel Cronin - We also bid farewell to Rachel, who has secured a promotion as a Play Therapy Lecturer at Roehampton University. While we will miss her expertise at Collis, we wish her all the best in this excellent opportunity.

The new Safeguarding Team from January will comprise of Sophie Macartney - Safeguarding Lead; Paul Dowsett, Deputy Safeguarding Lead; Heather Busby-Steers, Safeguarding Support; Susie Lord, Looked After Support; and Kate Petts, Wellbeing Support.

Attendance & Punctuality:
As we commence the new calendar year, it is important to emphasise the direct link between excellent attendance and high academic achievement. Our expectation is that pupils attend school punctually and consistently every day. We made significant progress this year in ensuring that pupils arrived at school on time, and we aim to continue this positive trend.
It is important that attendance levels remain high at 95% or above. If your child's attendance drops below 90%, this is classified as persistent absence. Collis has a legal duty to contact you and update you, helping to identify ways to address the attendance figure.
If your child is unwell, please remember to notify us via the school office. To ensure that pupils are seated in their classrooms by our 8:50 am start time, we will open the school gates earlier at 8:40 am and close them promptly at 8:50 am.

Uniform:
At Collis, we take pride in our school community and maintain high expectations for pupil uniform and conduct. We believe that this is a fundamental aspect of fostering a culture of high expectations and achievement. Therefore, we kindly request that all children wear full Collis School uniform every day. On PE days, pupils can attend school in PE kits.
Regarding jewellery, the only permitted items are a pair of studs. Rings, bracelets, and necklaces should not be worn by students. In terms of footwear, pupils are required to wear black leather school shoes; trainers, canvas shoes, or boots are not permitted (except for Early Years).

Thank Yous:
The Staff: To our dedicated Collis teachers and staff, thank you for your tireless efforts in supporting and guiding our pupils. Your commitment to the school and our children is remarkable and appreciated by the whole Collis community. The staff have been exceptional in their dedication to the cause and have worked tirelessly to support, guide and challenge our pupils in their learning.

CSA: A special thank you goes to Jenny, Nicola, and the Collis Parents Association (CSA) for their unwavering support, dedication, and fundraising efforts. Their contributions enable us to offer exceptional opportunities to our Children. I express gratitude to Jim Smith, Matt Thomas, and Rob Addis for their outstanding artistic and their media contributions.

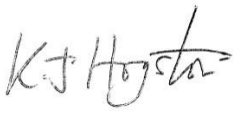
The Collis Parents: I extend my heartfelt gratitude to each one of you for your dedication and active involvement in our school community, which has played a pivotal role in making this year such a success. The huge number of parents attending the Christmas shows, assemblies, parents' evenings, reading afternoons, and events has been incredible and highlights your unwavering support, interest, and commitment to your child and the school. Thank you for being integral members of the Collis family.

2024 Onwards and Upwards:
Next year is going to be a busy and important year for Collis, with our Ofsted inspection probably due in early spring. At Collis, we know the success rate for our pupils is deeply tied to teaching effectively, motivating pupils, and ensuring their safety to secure the best possible outcomes. As we prepare for the upcoming Ofsted and navigate the complexities of educating pupils in an unpredictable and unstable world, I hope that in the election year ahead, *Championing Education* moves to the forefront of the political debate with a clear long-term strategy. With schools now operating at full capacity and facing increasing demands, I sincerely hope that all school staff are truly valued for the incredible and difficult job they are doing.

In Conclusion:
As we approach the Christmas break, I encourage everyone to take a well-deserved rest, reconnect with loved ones, recharge, for when we all return with renewed energy for the new year. Together, we have achieved some proud and significant moments in 2023, there is more to do, and as a school, we will be ready to do our very best for the Collis children and our families in 2024.

I wish you all a very merry Christmas and every happiness for the New Year.

Yours sincerely,



Kevin Hogston