

Slimbridge Primary School Annual Health & Safety Report – July 2020

As we look back to the start of the school year in September, little could we have imagined that a Pandemic was lurking around the corner becoming the focus of the world's attention in the New Year and impacting so dramatically on our daily life since then.

In the Autumn term we were eagerly anticipating the completion of the new room being built onto the side of Class 2 for which preparatory work had started just before the school closed for the summer. Once the room was finished, it was kitted out with a Smartboard and units for library books and a donation from the parochial church council has paid for some furniture, a gesture we are extremely grateful for.

In the normal cycle that term, we completed our Health & Safety and Safeguarding Audits. The statutory testing and inspections carried out and routine fire drills for the whole school were all monitored and reported to Governors termly until March.

A few weeks before the Government took the decision to close schools on 20 March to all but vulnerable and key workers children a regime of thorough handwashing was instilled throughout the school and subsequently, an outdoor handwashing station has also been installed.

Weekly, since the beginning of April, the Co-Chairs of Governors have held a remote meeting with Mrs Cooke in addition to the scheduled Full Governing Body meetings held each term. We have ensured Risk Assessments are in place, been updated on any developments and discussed the implications of putting the plethora of government guidelines into effect. The guidelines were often issued at the eleventh hour leaving little time to implement.

Equipment for individual use was purchased, classrooms and staff organised to preserve the "bubbles", signage erected and sufficient supplies of soap and sanitiser are available at all times. The huge amount of effort by Mrs Cooke and her staff resulted in an outwardly seamless transition into the wider reopening of the school to Little Otters, Reception, Years 1 and 6 pupils as well as continuing the key-worker group. I would like to offer a special thanks to Anne who has cleaned the school, not only at the end of each day but constantly during the day to ensure that all children and staff are in a Covid-free environment. In June one adult and one child reported C-19 symptoms, were both tested and negative results returned. All procedures were followed and no further incidents have arisen.

The health & safety of the staff and children is always our priority and a great emphasis is being placed on the wellbeing of the children. Regular enquiries are made about staff and their morale, particularly as there was no Easter or half-term break for them. As we look forward to a full return in September, plans are already in place to ensure a programme of PSHE and Thrive sessions help the children integrate back into school life as they resume their academic journey.

It is expected there will be challenges ahead but all parents can be assured that every possible mitigation is being applied to ensure the safety of their children. We will always be adhering to the latest guidelines and instigating best practice. This will be closely monitored by Governors.

A new Garden Room will be erected in the playground in October providing much needed space for music lessons and group work and we have arranged for the installation of CCTV across the school site to take place during the summer break. This will enhance our security, particularly as we look forward to opening access to the rear of the school (hopefully in the Autumn) by the erection of the long-awaited bridges from the recreation field.

School Policies are being updated and Appendices being added to incorporate Covid-19 requirements, as necessary. The website is regularly updated; hard copies are available from the school office on request.

Appreciation and thanks go to all Parents who already have children back in school, not only for their continued understanding but for co-operating with the restrictions and adhering to the distancing rules. It is likely some of these restrictions will continue for some time and we value your support and compliance which ensures the ongoing safety of the whole school community.