

July 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

I am glad that so many of you could come along to Parents' Evening last week even though I myself was unable to on this occasion.

I know that many of you visited the new wing of the building and that you were as impressed with it as we are. We are very grateful to Mr Donoghue, the Chair of the Site and Buildings, and all members of the Site and Buildings Committee of the Governing Body for overseeing this project from inception to completion. The staff are delighted to have so much extra space and the children are very excited about the new facilities.

Mr Donoghue has always been willing to carry out additional duties on behalf of and for the benefit of the school whenever the need arises and this year that has included attendance at a number of building progress meetings. He has visited the school at regular intervals throughout the year to monitor the impact of the building work on school life. Whilst staff and pupils have clearly been aware of the work going on it has all been done in a very considerate and efficient way so as to cause as little disruption as possible to the normal operation of the school. We thank Mr Donoghue for all the work he does on behalf of the school which helps to improve the school site and buildings for everyone's benefit.

Mr Donoghue also met many of you at Parents' Evening to show you the plans for the alterations to the existing school building that are scheduled to be carried out over the summer holiday. I know he answered various questions that were raised about those plans and about the new build itself. These are set out at the end of this letter for your information.

May I wish you all a happy and restful summer break.

Yours sincerely,

Penny Conway
Chair of the Governing Body

Questions and Answers about the Building Works

1. What does this extension provide to the school?
*This extension provides 7 new classrooms, 3 group rooms, toilets, storage rooms and paved outside areas including the covered outdoor classroom; when all the work is complete the school will have 14 classrooms - 2 per year group.
It will allow the school to increase to 2 Form Entry (up to 60 pupils per year). From Sept 2017 we will be running two classes in all years except Year 6. Provided pupil numbers increase, an additional Year 6 class will open in 2018.*
2. How many pupils will there be in September? And how many when the school is full?
There are currently 316 pupils registered to be at Little Paxton school in September 2017, this may change over the summer if more people move into the area and want to transfer to our school. When full, we will be able to accommodate 420 pupils.
3. Will the school be able to expand further?
We do not believe so. The site is limited and any further expansion would remove playing field area from the school.
4. Why hasn't the School Hall been made larger?
Our Current hall was enlarged during the building of the community wing in 2008; it is in fact already larger than is generally provided for a school of 420 pupils.
5. What about School Meals?
The school already operates 'split-meal times' for Reception, KS1 & 2. The Head Teacher and her staff will keep mealtimes under review and make changes if required.
6. What about Pre-school & Swifts Out-of-School Club?
These are both provided by external organisations who rent space in the Community Rooms. The Governing Body would be pleased to consider proposals for expanding the space available for both the pre-school and the out-of-school club; however, the school has no budget for this. We have been considering and discussing options with County, but no alternative solution to creating more space has yet been found.
7. What about Car-Parking?
The car park is provided for the use of staff and official visitors only. After the contractors have left there will be a total of 42 spaces, including 3 disabled spaces, for all our members of staff (including teaching, admin, kitchen, pre-school & Swifts there are over 60 who may be onsite at any one time). The school's travel plan, required by the Government, expects members of staff who live locally to walk to school where possible. The school cannot be held responsible for parking alongside local roads; any complaints of inconsiderate or illegal parking should be directed to the Police to follow up.

8. Will the existing school buildings be modernised?
As part of the current plans, some areas of the existing school buildings will be re-modelled over the summer. A new staff room, storerooms and group rooms will be provided in the main school, one classroom will be converted to a studio-hall and the old art room will be extended to close up the 'gap' between the two classrooms alongside the playground. Other classrooms have already been provided with new cupboard & sink facilities and room doors. Those areas not modernised during this work will be refurbished and redecorated in due course.
9. When will all the building work inside the existing building be finished?
It should be finished by the end of August. There are contingency plans should there be any unexpected delay.
10. What will happen to the area that the Mobile was located in?
This area will be cleared and become part of the main playground, which must be expanded to cater for the up to 420 pupils planned for the school.
11. Why are the cubicle doors in the new toilets so short?
This was a mistake. They will be replaced by the contractor when new doors are available.
12. Is the cladding on the new build compliant with building regulations?
Yes. All materials used are in accordance with the latest requirements. Clearly there are flammable materials, such as wood, used in the construction but they have not been used in such a way as to pose a fire hazard.
13. Why are there going to be Three 'Teacher's Training Days' at the start of term?
There are 2 INSET days (in service training days) as normal to allow for staff training and updates at the start of the year. In addition the Local Authority has granted a closure day. This is normal working day for all staff, including the cleaning staff, to ensure that they have time to prepare the new building and the refurbished parts of the existing building for the pupils.