

Dear Parents and Carers,

Please see the accompanying staff structure document which shows class teachers and locations for September. We hope that you find the information accessible and useful. We very much hope that as a school community you will support your children in making a settled and successful transition. As with many other things, talking positively with children about the benefits of change can go a long way to achieving this.

As in most schools, the end of the academic year is a time when some members of staff move on. **Christine Kingsland** is retiring after a number of loyal years of service to Berrywood pupils and the community. We of course wish were well, especially as she is about to become a grandmother for the first time! Christine will no doubt enjoy a good few more affordable non term time holidays in the coming months and years. For example, we know she has booked a six week trip to Australia this November. We wish her well and will save the more embarrassing anecdotes for the end of year staff party!

Jackie Rapley's maternity cover contract comes to an end and we wish her well in future pursuits. Jackie has worked hard in stepping into the class teacher role mid-year – something that is never easy to do - and we thank her for her efforts in this regard. Jackie intends to continue her teaching career and is currently exploring options for September. **Trudi Terrell** will no longer be with us as a Special Needs Assistant and school ELSA. Trudi has worked so hard and given so much to many pupils over her years of service; and we thank her greatly for this dedication. Fortunately, we will still see Trudi in her capacity as part of the 'Berries' team at both the breakfast and after school clubs.

We have three teachers who will be new (or nearly new) to Berrywood in September. Lauren Phillips will be full-time in Year R having spent some of the summer term working part time in this setting to familiarise herself in the role. Lauren is at the beginning stages of her career and we know that we can support her to develop in becoming a wonderful member of our team. Jamie Beazley will also be a full-time NQT teaching in Year 4 in September. Jamie has worked his way brilliantly through the SCITT programme this year. He is familiar with Berrywood routines and children. We know he will make a passionate and creative contribution in the years ahead.

Also joining us is a teacher of considerable experience and proven quality. Lisa Yeoman will work one day a week in three different year groups. This is an unusual role and has been created in order to support some of the Year Team Leaders to better balance work and home commitments. Lisa is a strong teacher and will quickly get to grips with the demands of this versatile role. We are very much looking forward to having her on board.

We are in the process of recruiting additional support staff to fill our one full time LSA vacancy and a part time SNA vacancy. We will of course pass on the information to the relevant parents once the posts have been filled. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the parent community for the high levels of support that you continue to show members of staff at Berrywood. We know that you will welcome our newcomers warmly and in so doing help them to settle in.

Transition Arrangements

This afternoon your child has spent time in their new classroom with the adults that will be teaching them in September. For children in Year 2 and Year 4 we have, as has been the case for a number of years, mixed the classes (please see below). The vast majority of children take the annual transition to a new class in their stride and quickly form positive relationships with the new teacher and the support staff. Some children take a little longer to find their feet, but we encourage all children to adopt a healthy growth mindset approach towards embracing new opportunities and surroundings. On the rare occasions that a child continues to find it difficult to settle into a new class, specific support is provided and parents are often informed.

Mixing Classes Year 2 & Year 4

As many of you will know, classes at Berrywood are mixed at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Part of the rationale for mixing is that we are a large school and therefore have the opportunity to support and encourage the widening of friendship circles. Additionally, our goal is to help prepare the children for the diversity they are likely to experience in the social communities of the 21st Century. In short, the success of young people will be increasingly dependent on their ability to adapt to change! This very much fits with our growth mindset ethos.

Every year the vast majority of children stride positively through this transition. Our caring staff teams strive hard to ensure that this is the case. Occasionally some difficulties settling do occur and it is in this instance that we seek your support as parents in reinforcing the positive benefits of change. In my years of headship I am yet to experience circumstances that haven't been overcome; normally very quickly. Parents do need to be aware that it is not our policy to yield to requests for children to be moved once the new classes have been established.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chris Reilly', written in a cursive style.

Chris Reilly
Headteacher