

“When we are no longer able to change a situation, we are challenged to change ourselves.”

Viktor Frankl



Barley Lane School

Ready, Respectful, Safe.



Dear Parents & Carers,

October 2023

Thanks for all your support this half term. We have had a busy half term! Our students have had a fantastic start back to school and have been working hard. We are delighted with our new pupils and our relationships with them are gathering positive momentum, although it takes time to build trust, rapport and relationships, we are as confident as always of their incremental happiness here.

We have also been lucky enough to have **4 new members of teaching staff join us this term**; Mr. Norton is the new teacher of one of our Key Stage 3 classes, Mr. Clotworthy is a new Key Stage 4 teacher, Ms. Ball is teaching PSHE across the school and Mr. Halse is our new PE teacher for the whole school. We also had some movement in staff following the retirement of Mrs. Burnard; Miss. Aksoy moved to teaching the Upper KS2 boys in the Primary Unit and we currently have Rosie working in reception following our usual Receptionist starting her maternity leave. They are all doing an amazing job.

Staff have been working behind the scenes **to review the curriculum across the school** and we are currently building 'Pathways' for each of our students to tailor their learning to their individual needs and abilities. We will share more about this with you after half term and the website will be updated as soon as this work has been completed. Our main this year is about improving upon what the children learn, why we think it's important and best to deliver it to them, so that they take the relevance of their learning into adult-hood.

We all remember our favourite teachers and if we reflect upon why, it is because they cared for their subject, they delivered it with enthusiasm and they cared about us as people to give us the knowledge we need to thrive, be independent, successful and happy. They took time to get to know us, **see our strengths**, help with our areas for development and demonstrate and communicate that they were on our side – **they wanted the best for us** and those kindnesses and core values are abundant within the team at Barley Lane.

College courses have started again for our Key Stage 3 & 4 students, we have had the Careers Southwest staff in to meet with Key Stage 4 to start to discuss pathways post-16 and we have all been settling into our new classes. Key Stage 3 boys have a football match against Southbrook on Monday, which they are all very excited about, and we wish them the best of luck!

Key Stage 2 have had quite a few new students this year and they are finding their feet and settling into their new school. **There have been learning trips to Haven banks for our Upper Key Stage 2 students** and **swimming sessions** have been happening weekly for them also. Once the Lower Key Stage 2 students are settled, we will work on getting them out on some trips to support their learning and for rewards.

In Maths across the school we have been learning about number and Place Value. After the half term break, we will be learning about Fractions in various formats and at varying levels.

We have been developing our creative writing in English in Key Stage 3 and in Key Stage 2, we have been learning about **'Magic & Mystery'** and **'Crime and Punishment'**. After half term, in English, we will be learning about 'Dreams and Desires' in Lower Key Stage 2 and 'Power vs Principles' in Upper Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 3, we will read 'The Boy in the Striped Pyjamas' and 'Friend or Foe'. We will continue this theme in Key Stage 3 through our topic work where we will be learning about elements of WWII and are hoping to get out to Tiverton Museum.

Exeter EX4 1TA 01392 430774. admin@barleylane.devon.sch.uk www.barleylaneschool.org.uk

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Please support reading at home, the benefits are huge and as quotes ‘reading for the brain is as good as exercise is for the body’. We are purchasing a fantastic resource called accelerated reader and students can access books they enjoy on their phones or tablets at home, including audio books. We are launching this next half term.

We are also developing our **school Library**. The room has been purpose-built by Jason, our hard-working Site Manager, and we are in the process of buying new books to stock it. We are also implementing a new Library system, which will be up and running by the end of the next half term. We are keen to encourage our students to read but, more importantly, to enjoy what they are reading. We will keep you updated with progress.

With warm wishes, *Mr Jones and the Barley Lane Family*

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