**ARCHBISHOP RUNCIE CHURCH of ENGLAND (VA) FIRST SCHOOL**

**Year 4 Newsletter 3rd September 2019**

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school! I hope you had an excellent summer in the beautiful weather (most of the time!).

I have had the pleasure of meeting some of you and of course I got the opportunity to teach your wonderful children back in July. I am Jonathan Booth, the class teacher as well as new Deputy Headteacher.

Whilst I am very much looking forward to working alongside Mrs Massey at this very exciting time in the school’s journey, I am first and foremost your child’s class teacher. Teaching is ultimately my passion and Year 4 is, in my opinion, one of the best years to teach as a teacher; best of all, I have it on very good authority that I am getting a lovely class so I am beyond excited to get cracking.

I will be working alongside Miss Burns and we will be sharing Mrs Armstrong with Year 3. I hope you will agree that your children will be getting the best of both worlds: the experience of staff who know the school well and I will bring the knowledge I have of preparing children for the incredibly important middle years of their education.

We have a very exciting term ahead of us. There is of course the small matter of the residential in a few weeks! More information will be coming out very soon, particularly at our **Welcome Meeting (9am and 5pm, Thursday 12th September)** where I will run through the curriculum in more detail, discuss a new parent communications system that Year 4 will be trialling called Seesaw, and go through the year ahead.

This term, the topic is ‘Go Green’, particularly pertinent in a time of fires in the Amazon rainforest and an ever-tempestuous climate closer to home. We will be getting a visit from Newcastle City Council to discuss the importance of recycling at the start of term and we will be working towards a performance to parents about the importance of looking after our environment (Wednesday 23rd October, 2:30pm). This is a topic that allows us to both look at the bigger picture, examining the changing climate of the world and the effect this has, as well as looking closer to home to the children’s roles as future citizens and stewards of God’s Earth. In terms of things you can do at home, any research into climate change; understanding the concept of natural resources, both renewable and fossil; or the notion of changing conditions for animals and humans will be helpful!

This focus on the children becoming future citizens links well to our aims for this year as a whole, which is to improve the children’s independence and resilience ahead of their big school move. I hope your children are thrilled to become the school’s role models! Alongside this pastoral development, we are going to make a big push on their writing skills across the curriculum, both in their English lessons and cross-curricular in the afternoons, and the children’s times tables (up to 12) as they will be taking a new statutory test in June next year. Further details will be given at the Welcome Meeting.

Children will continue to choose their own reading books in Year 4. Please remember to write a short note in your child’s Reading Record book (daily where possible) so we know how your child is reading at home. I helped develop home reading skills with parents at my previous school and would be happy to advise anyone unsure about how to maximise reading time. Of all the things parents can do with their children, reading is proven to have the highest educational impact and, best of all, it’s enjoyable!

Homework stickers will continue to be given out every Thursday so that the children can complete this and hand them back in on Tuesday. We would be grateful if parents could mark their child's work and return it to school every Tuesday. This gives me an opportunity to look at each child's book on a Tuesday evening and set appropriate tasks for the following week – I will be giving them the first week off, though!

PE will be taught on a Friday by Mr Renny, with a shorter second session (led by me) on Wednesday afternoons. PE kits should be left in school and should contain **a pair of named, well-fitting plimsolls/trainers for outdoor lessons. Please ensure that they only have laced shoes if they can tie them!** It would be very helpful if any child with long hair could have their hair tied up in a ponytail on this day too.

As ever, children can bring in **fruit or vegetables** as a snack for morning break time. They will continue to bring their recorders into school, with Music being on Fridays also. Please contact the school office if you need to organise purchasing a recorder through school. Children **may also bring in water bottles (no juice please)** which we will send home on Fridays for washing.

May we also remind children that they should not be bringing in pencil cases or their own stationery – we provide enough for children in school – and please no keyrings on bags or coats.

As always, there is lots to do in school… If you have a regular slot of spare time and would like to help, we would be extremely grateful! If you have DBS clearance, and are interested in helping out, please speak to one of us! Year 4 are in particular need of some reading buddies; if you know a relative/neighbour who might be willing to volunteer please ask them to contact school.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to catch me at the end of the school day. You can also email me at jonathan.booth@archbishop.newcastle.sch.uk.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Booth

**Some key Y4 dates:**

**(Trips beyond Christmas are subject to change as trips are still being organised - please check the newsletter for further date updates.)**

Y4 Welcome Meeting and Residential Information – 9am and 5pm, 12th September

Residential – 25th & 26th September

Y4-led Macmillan Coffee Morning – 27th September

Parents’ Evening – 7th and 8th October

Y4 ‘Go Green’ Performance – 2:30pm, 23rd October

Parent drop ins for Operation Encompass – 3 to 4pm, 24th October

KS2 Nativity – 1:30pm, 16th December & 6:30pm, 17th December

Parents’ Evening – 10th and 11th February 2020

Lent worship led by Y4 – 25th February 2020

Trip to Durham University (Ancient Greece topic) – 23rd March 2020

Pentecost Worship led by Y4 – 2:30pm, 2nd June 2020

Vindolanda visit – 26th June 2020

Y4 Leavers’ Service – 17th July 2020