



Ribbon Academy Trust
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Murton
Co Durham
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Mrs A Sheridan (Head teacher)
www.ribbonacademy.co.uk

Tuesday 5th September 2023

Welcome Back Letter 2023

Dear Parent/Carer,

On behalf of myself and all staff at Ribbon Academy, I would like to welcome you (existing and new parents/carers) to the new academic year! I hope that you and your family had a relaxing summer break and are eager to start the new school year at Ribbon. It has been lovely to see the children again; so keen to share tales from their summer holiday and very excited to see their new teacher and friends. It is an absolute delight to work with the children; they make Ribbon such a special place to be.

Summer Developments at Ribbon

One of many reasons that the Ribbon continues to be so successful is that new developments and improvements are happening all the time. Over the summer break, Mr Murray and the Site Team have been incredibly busy working on a range of new projects. Over the next week, I will share information about new projects on Class Dojo.

Staffing

To further strengthen the team at Ribbon we welcome; Mrs Cartwright (Nursery teacher), Ms Hedley (Reception teacher), Mrs Cottrell (Year 5 teacher), Mr Lowerson (Sports Specialist), and Mr Gillson (Music Specialist). Each day, I will share introductory postcards about each new member of staff.

General 'House Keeping' at Ribbon

Now that the new academic year has begun, please **take time to read the following information** to ensure school runs smoothly and offers the best environment for your child's education.

School Day

Entry & Exit Arrangements

We have three permanent gates for entry and exit to Ribbon. This accommodates the large number of children, of different ages, who enter/exit the site every day.

Entry & Exit Points

Gate 1 – (Bottom of Toft Crescent) Years 1, 2 & 3

Gate 2 – (Next to Murton Library) - Day-care, Nursery & Reception

Gate 3 - (Opposite main reception) - Years 4, 5 & 6

Drop-off

* All gates open at 8.45am when all children can make their way into school (year group time restrictions have been removed in line with government guidelines).

* Older siblings can enter at the same gate as their younger siblings.

* Each morning, parents/carers leave their children at the gate (as happens now) which ensures a prompt start to learning for our children.

Collection

- * Gate 2 opens at 3.15pm for the collection of Nursery and Reception children.
- * Gates 1 & 3 open at 3.25pm for collection of children (in Years 1 to 6) @ 3.30pm. We invite parents/carers to meet their children on the playground in front of their classroom doors.
- * We have parental permission for some children in Years 4, 5 & 6 to walk home themselves; this is fine if we have written consent.
- * If you have children at different collection points, we will ensure that they leave from the same classroom (older children will leave with younger siblings).

After School Clubs

A full complement of after school clubs (including Funtasia) will resume on Tuesday 5th September operating from 3.30pm > 4.30pm daily. Booking and payment for Funtasia or any other after school clubs must be made in advance at the start of each half term. After school clubs are popular; places are allocated via the online payment system, SCOPAY, (we believe this is the fairest way of allocating places). If you are unsuccessful in securing a place (in the first instance), your child's name will be placed on a waiting list, and you will be informed when a place becomes available. Your child must be collected promptly at 4.30pm (failure to do so will result in suspension from the club).

Attendance

Excellent attendance is essential for your child's education development. If your child is unable to attend school because they are ill or for any other reason, please contact the school by telephone between **8.00am and 9.00am** on **each day** of absence or via a direct message to either Mrs Ball or Mrs Maddison on Class Dojo. If you can't speak to a member of the Admin Team, please leave a voice message. Where there are unexplained pupil absences, Mrs Maddison (Family Support Advisor) will always contact parents/carers to ascertain the reason for absence. If your child is absent from school due to sickness or diarrhoea, please note that your child cannot return to school until they have been clear (of sickness or diarrhoea) for **48 hours**; to stop the spread of infection. Thank you for your continued support in maintaining a healthy school environment.

Taking your child out of school for appointments

If your child requires an urgent medical/dental appointment, they may be collected from main reception during the day however, routine appointments such as dental check – ups should **not** be made during the school day. If your child has a hospital appointment or a course of appointments such as Speech and Language, they may be collected from main reception during the day. **You must provide written evidence of these appointments prior to collecting your child.**

Bicycles and Scooters

Children arriving at school on bicycles or scooters are welcome to leave them on site until the end of the day. Bikes & scooters must be **secured** in the purpose-built shelter (at the entrance of the KS1 playground). Please understand that school cannot accept responsibility for bicycles or scooters left at school.

Breakfast Club

Breakfast Club is open each morning from 8.00 > 8.45am - we cannot permit access before 8.00am. Places can be booked online via ScoPay (£2.00 per session). Please note that places can only be booked once payment has been received. 100 places are available per day, unfortunately we cannot exceed this number due to health and safety regulations, and therefore we ask that places are booked the previous week. Places can be booked as far in advance as you require so long as your account is in credit. Children can choose from a variety of breakfast items, followed by games and activities.

Celebration Assemblies

Celebration assemblies take place every Friday at 9.15am. If your child has been chosen as 'Star of the Week', you will receive an invitation via phone call during the week before the assembly. Children and staff very much appreciate your support during these special assemblies.

Contact Information

It is essential that parents/carers provide school with up-to-date contact numbers, so you can be notified if your child becomes ill during the school day, or it is necessary to contact you for any other reason. If your details change during the year, it is **vital** that you contact main reception and complete a 'change of details' form. If you have not yet completed a contact details form, please contact the main reception immediately.

Educational Visits

Our school curriculum places great importance on educational visits. Your child will take part in x1 educational visit each half term to places of interest that will support their learning in class (x6 per academic year).

Information Sharing

Ribbon continues to encourage pupils to be responsible for their environment and one part of this is the schools use of Facebook, Class Dojo and website to send general correspondence to parents/carers. If you have any issues accessing Facebook, Class Dojo or the school website, please contact Main Reception.

Jewellery, Acrylic Nails and Hair Styles

No jewellery (including earrings) or acrylic nails are to be worn at school **at any time** for health and safety reasons; this is part of our uniform policy. Please note, staff are not permitted to remove earrings or cover earrings with plasters. Children must **not** have hairstyles fitting the following descriptions:

- Lines of patterns shaved into the hair.
- Hairstyles which are extreme including the use of hair dye.

Mobile phones

We do not encourage children to bring mobile phones to school however, if your child does need to bring a phone to school (normally for their journey to and from school), they must switch it off on entry to school and hand it to their class teacher who will store the phone securely until home time.

Paying Online

Our online payments system is called Scopay. This enables you to safely pay for lunches, as well as book into and pay for Breakfast Club, After-school clubs, and visits. It also provides an immediate record of your payments, visible to you at any time. If you have not yet accessed your child's online record, letters will be issued next week which will enable you to set up your confidential account. This service is entirely free of charge to users.

P.E

Every child at Ribbon participates in P.E. Please ensure your child brings their full school P.E kit and clothing suitable for the weather conditions every Monday. Kit is taken home on a Friday to be washed ready for the following week. In addition to P.E, there are a number of other sporting events

that your child may take part in, and you will receive additional written notification to inform you as necessary.

Pencil Cases/Stationary

There is no need to send your children into school with pencil cases full of resources; everything they need is provided by school.

School Meals

The Academy has a fantastic kitchen on site which has been awarded a 5-star rating. The menus are available on our website at www.ribbonacademy.co.uk, a copy can also be obtained from main reception. Children in Reception, Years 1 & 2 currently receive free school meals as part of the governments universal free school meal offer. For children in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6 meals are £2.50 per day for the 2023/24 academic year, and **this must be paid in advance**. The price has increased slightly this year and is in line with other schools in County Durham. Each month we offer a special themed menu; watch out for details. **Parents/carers who wish to change to or from school meals must give 24-hour notice.** Please note that to protect children, staff and visitors suffering from serious nut allergies, Ribbon is a nut-free site. **Please do not send your child into school with any food products containing nuts.**

Snacks

Children in Reception to Year 2 receive a free piece of fruit each day as part of a government funded initiative. We encourage children in Years 3 to 6 to bring a healthy snack from home. Alternatively, a healthy snack can be purchased from school (fruit, raisins, cheese, water). Each item costs 50p and can be purchased at morning break.

Uniform

We expect that all children always wear the correct full school uniform. Please note our uniform includes **black shoes and not trainers**. You can purchase uniform specific to our school via our supplier, S&N Workwear, and details of this are available on our website. Should you require assistance with school uniform, we have a HUGE stock of nearly new uniform in school (please contact Kathryn Maddison for further information).

- www.ribbonacademy.co.uk
- Click on 'Parents'
- Scroll down to 'School Uniform'

Scroll down to the bottom of the uniform page until you see the link to the S&N website - this will open the order form and you can begin your order.

Contact with Staff

We have a tiered approach to contacting staff regarding any queries or concerns you may have. In the first instance, you should contact your child's class teacher (after 3.30pm). If your child's class teacher is unavailable, you have the option of speaking to an Assistant Head Teacher (by making contact through Main Reception):

- Early Years (Nursery > Reception) Mr Houghton (Miss Hammond from January 2024)
- Lower School (Years 2 > 3) – Mrs Lowes
- Upper School (Years 4 & 6) – Miss Thorne
- SENDCO/Inclusion – Mrs Richardson

All Assistant Heads are classroom-based on a full-time basis apart from Mrs Richardson, who is available each morning between 9.00am > 12.00pm. If the concern requires immediate attention, then please contact main reception who will arrange an appointment with either Mr Houghton (Deputy Head Teacher) or myself.

School life remains very busy indeed! We hope to deliver an exciting schedule of events and activities this term; Harvest celebrations, Halloween discos, parent meetings & workshops, Christmas shows and parties as well as an extensive range of clubs, visits, and visitors to school (details of which will be shared in due course and are dependent of Covid restrictions at the time).

Finally, thank you for your continued support and co-operation with all the above information which ensures Ribbon always runs smoothly and safely. Should you require any further information regarding any aspect of school life, please contact main reception.

Warmest regards,

Mrs A Sheridan (Head teacher), Mr Houghton (Deputy Head teacher) and the Ribbon Team