

Spring Terms Newsletter

Dear Parents and Carers

Thank you for all your responses from the recent parent questionnaire; we had an overwhelming response and we are very grateful for your honesty as this allows us to move forward. It was pleasing to see that the vast majority of you feel that your children are happy, well looked after and safe at school. Some key themes came through which we will be taking action on – looking into how the school effectively deals with bullying, lack of school trips and wider opportunities, and how we report on your child's progress and homework.

We are currently reviewing the school curriculum to ensure it not only means your child receives an excellent academic education, but also to supplement the Wow days with meaningful and exciting school trips. The curriculum will continue to be reviewed and developed over the next few years, to ensure we respond to children's interests as well as teaching the National curriculum.

Many parents requested to have greater involvement with their child at school, so we have started this with our highly successful Mothers' Day teas at both schools. Iwade held 5 sessions and Bobbing 3 sessions so we could accommodate as many people as possible. These events have been a huge success and thank you to everyone who gave such positive feedback. I would like to thank all the parents of FoBVS and the Friends at Iwade who gave so freely of their time to make this event such a resounding success.



We are planning on launching a parent forum for both schools. This will be a regular opportunity for the school leaders to meet with a parent representative group to discuss concerns and feedback on matters such as bullying, curriculum and homework. These meetings will take place in the afternoons, before the end of the school day, so please contact us at parentforum@iwade.kent.sch.uk or parentforum@bobbing.kent.sch.uk if you would like to participate. The first meeting will be during the summer term.

We are looking into holding an anti-bullying roadshow for the children, which focusses on being a good friend and managing falling out. We will use feedback from the parent forum to address concerns that some parents have around bullying.

A big thank you to all the parents who had a sort out of clothes and shoes and donated to 'Recycle for Michael' for the Salvation Army; Bobbing collected 77 bags and Iwade 213 which is amazing!



Handwriting

We have reviewed the quality and consistency of handwriting across the Trust and have made a change to when cursive handwriting is introduced. Previously this started at the end of year 1 into year 2, but writing habits have already been formed and can be tricky to change!

Cursive handwriting teaches pupils to join letters in words as a series of continuous flowing movements or patterns. Words can be written without taking the pencil off the page. Continuous style provides a directional left, right movement. This flowing, rhythmical movement aids speed and fluency particularly when practised from Foundation level with the final product being neat and fast. This cursive style also lessens the chance of reversing letters by eliminating the need to lift the pencil between letters. The spaces between words become distinct and distinction between upper and lower case is clearer.

Pupils with specific learning disabilities find continuous cursive useful because the pencil stays on the page throughout every word, thus simplifying the movement. Children learn a series of easy, rhythmical movements, which help to improve gross and fine motor co-ordination. In addition, the motor memory of the child's hand and fingers helps them to spell, as each word becomes one movement rather than many. Ideas, images and descriptions can flow more swiftly if fewer decisions need to be made about where each letter starts and how letters are formed.

Please see our handwriting policy on the Timu website, in the Parents section, then Policies.

Changes to our curriculum

We are beginning the process of reviewing the curriculum we deliver in school and looking at the rationale around what we choose to teach. The curriculum consists of, in part, the National Curriculum and partly the wider values about developing your child holistically, through the vision and ethos of Timu Academy Trust. We will share details of this in due course.

We are hoping to gather views of our curriculum, and enrichment trips from the parents who come forward to join our new parent forum.

Finally, I have certainly enjoyed my first seasonal term in post at Timu a great deal and am looking forward to the future here.

Have an enjoyable Easter break and I look forward to seeing you for the start of the summer terms.

Thank you for your continued support

Kind regards

Mrs Browning

Executive Principal