

1st September 2026

Dear Parents/Carers,

It hardly seems possible that the summer holidays are already at an end and we are preparing to welcome the children back for another new school year! I hope that you have all had a wonderful summer, enjoyed some special time together as families and that the children are as excited about returning to school on **Thursday 3 September** as we are about seeing them.

The staff have been back in school this week completing our annual safeguarding training, preparing classrooms and getting everything ready for the year ahead. There is always a lovely sense of excitement at this time of year and everyone is looking forward to welcoming their new classes and getting started.

A particularly warm welcome goes to all of the new children and families joining the Shobnall family this September, whether your child is beginning their school journey with us in Nursery or Reception or joining us in another year group. Starting somewhere new can feel daunting, but please be assured that we will do everything we can to help both children and families settle quickly and feel part of our school community. We also have some new faces joining our staff team this year – Miss Hodge, our Year 4 Class Teacher who will be covering Miss Lord's Maternity Leave and Mrs Akhtar, who has replaced Mrs Foster in the school office. I know that our families will make them feel just as welcome as our children and staff will.

As always, the summer holidays have given us an opportunity to make some improvements to the school environment. Those of you returning to us will notice that the children's toilets in the main school building have been completely refurbished over the summer. They were certainly ready for some attention, and we are delighted with the transformation! We will, of course, continue to develop our outdoor provision this year following the fantastic progress we have made through OPAL. Achieving the OPAL Platinum Award at the end of last year was a wonderful recognition of how far our play provision has come, but we certainly don't see Platinum as the end of the journey. We have plenty more ideas!

Our PFA also raised an incredible £3,000 last year, and I would again like to thank everyone who supported their events. This year, their fundraising focus will include our planned library revamp, which is another project we are very excited to get started on. Our PFA is always delighted to welcome new members and volunteers. There is no expectation that you have to attend every meeting or help at every event. Whether you can give a little time, share an idea, help at one event or become more regularly involved, every contribution is valued. Getting involved is also a great way to meet other parents and carers, become more involved in school life and help shape future events and fundraising projects. If you would like to find out more about the PFA or would be interested in getting involved, please contact the school office. We would love to hear from you!

One of our continued priorities this year will be ensuring that every child has the best possible **attendance** and **arrives at school on time**. Regular attendance and punctuality are amongst the most important factors in a child's success at school. Children who attend consistently benefit not only academically, but also from the routines, friendships, relationships and wider experiences that being part of school provides. Frequent absence and lateness can interrupt learning and can also affect children's social development and sense of belonging.

We want to work **with** our families on attendance. We fully appreciate that children become ill and

that families can experience circumstances which make attendance more challenging. If you are experiencing difficulties, please speak to us early. Our aim will always be to understand what is happening and identify how we can support you.

As we begin the new year, I would therefore like to remind everyone of some of our key expectations. Parents and carers should:

- ensure children attend school **every day and on time** unless there is a statutory reason for absence;
- notify school as soon as possible when a child is unexpectedly absent, for example through illness;
- request leave of absence only in **exceptional circumstances** and in advance;
- wherever possible, arrange medical appointments outside the school day;
- ensure that school has accurate, up-to-date contact details and **more than one emergency contact**;
- remain in contact with school during periods of absence; and
- contact us if attendance or punctuality is becoming difficult so that we can work together to support your child.

We will be asking families to support our **Attendance and Punctuality Agreement** this year as part of our shared commitment to giving every child the best possible opportunity to succeed. Attendance isn't simply about achieving a percentage – **every day in school is an opportunity to learn, belong, participate and achieve.**

As we start a fresh year, I would also like to remind everyone about the importance of our school uniform. We continue to have very high expectations because uniform promotes pride, belonging and equality across our school community – and our children always look incredibly smart!

Full details of our uniform, including PE kit requirements, can be found on the school website. Children should continue to attend school wearing their PE kit on their designated PE days. Please check your child's class page on the school website if you are unsure about PE days or any of the routines and expectations for their new year group.

Good communication between home and school continues to be incredibly important to us. As I said last year, our communication channels are always open and we ask that all communication between members of our school community continues to be given and received with kindness and respect. Our weekly newsletter will continue to be the main place for important information, dates, celebrations and reminders, while our social media will give you a glimpse of some of the fantastic things happening in school each week. More urgent messages and reminders will be sent directly, so please make sure the school office has your most up-to-date contact details.

Please also remember that if you have a question, worry or concern during the year, talk to us. Your child's class teacher should normally be your first port of call, and we will always do our best to resolve things quickly and work constructively with you.

The school's Breakfast Club will resume from 7.30am on Thursday. If your child has not yet been booked in, please do so via the link [here](#). Mrs Danks and I will be on hand in the morning on the gate from 8.45am to receive any important messages and guide the children to their new classrooms, where all the staff will be waiting in readiness to greet them and support them with the transition to their new routines.

There is a lot happening in education over the coming year and, as always, there will be new things for us to navigate. What won't change is our determination to provide the very best education, care and opportunities for every child at Shobnall. We achieved so much together last year and I am incredibly proud of our children, staff and wider school community. I am equally excited about what

the year ahead will bring.

For now, enjoy the very last bit of the summer holidays! The staff and I cannot wait to open the gates, see those smiling faces again and hear all about the children's summer adventures.

Here's to a happy, successful and exciting academic year!

Kindest regards,



David Adams
Headteacher
Shobnall Primary & Nursery School