



# WOODHALL SCHOOL



[www.woodhall.herts.sch.uk](http://www.woodhall.herts.sch.uk)

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Monday 11<sup>th</sup> July 2022

Dear Parents/Carers,

As we head into our final fortnight of the summer term, we are well underway with end-of-term preparations and we are, of course, readying the children for their move up into their next year group. You can find an overview of how we deliver transition at Woodhall on our website (and it was previously sent out), as this is exciting but can also be a tricky time for children.

This week, the children will spend the first of two sessions with their new teacher. They will spend time getting to know their new class adults as well as having the opportunity to ask questions. As a small school, we are very lucky that most of the children already know all of the adults at school so that there are no ‘unfamiliar’ adults.

Next year, there will be a big change at Woodhall as we will have one mixed-age class; Year 4 & Year 5.

As you know, numbers of children on the estate have been falling, and they are not predicted to rise for the next few years. This has particularly affected us at Woodhall. We serve a relatively small area of the estate, we are ‘hidden’ (there is no need to travel past our school unless you live on Woodhall Lane or already come to us) and additionally, some of our families have been offered housing in other areas of Hertfordshire (or beyond). This has resulted in some low class numbers at the moment. We expect this to change in the future, as new developments are built. We also have a brand-new pre-school opening on site in September (Bluebell Pre-School).

However, whilst we are undergoing a drop in numbers, we will be teaching Year 4/5 as a mixed cohort. They will be in the very capable hands of Mrs Cooper Battersby ('Mrs B') with a curriculum that meets the bespoke needs of all of the children in the class. Whilst I realise that some of you may have concerns regarding mixed-year cohorts, please be reassured by some of the benefits:

- ❖ Children develop a sense of family with their classmates. They become a ‘family of learners’ who support and care for each other. Children are more likely to cooperate than compete. The spirit of cooperation and caring makes it possible for children to help each other as individuals, not see each other as competitors
- ❖ The Year 4/5 curriculum will continue as normal for English/Maths. Other subjects will work on a 2-year rolling programme so that each cohort still take part in the learning that they would have done had the classes been separate.
- ❖ Where children had been in a small cohort, they will now have the opportunity to work with a far wider variety of classmates; form new friendships and learning partnerships which will serve to support their progress and attainment. Many friendships have already been formed in these year groups as they have shared a playground as well as some of their learning days ('wow day' etc.)
- ❖ Older children model more sophisticated approaches to problem solving, and younger children are able to accomplish tasks they could not do without the assistance of older children. This dynamic increases the older child’s level of independence and competence.

Children currently in Year 3 and Year 4 will form our new Year 4/5 class. In July 2023, the Year 5 class will move to Year 6 as usual, and the Year 3 class will move into the Year 4/5 class.

If your child is currently in Year 3 or Year 4 and you have any questions or concerns about the mixed year group, I will be holding a meeting on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> July at 2.30pm where I am happy to discuss these with you. If you cannot attend the meeting, please feel free to get in touch with me via email.

Please do remember, that at Woodhall School, we know the children in our care and the education we offer is already individualised to meet their needs. This will be no different in a mixed-age class. We view all of our children as unique individuals and focus on each child according to their own strengths and needs.

Here are the teachers/support adults from September 2022:

YEAR GROUP	TEACHER	SUPPORT STAFF
<b>Early Years (Nursery/Reception)</b>	Miss N. Jones Mrs E. Roby	Mrs J. Pottinger Mrs L. Keyton Mrs C. Smith
<b>Year 1</b>	Mrs D. Bilenkyj	Mrs M. Cartwright
<b>Year 2</b>	Mr J. Hancock	Miss L. Whitehorn
<b>Year 3</b>	Mr J. Rubeck	Mrs M. Cartwright/Miss L. Whitehorn/Mrs T. Mangan
<b>Year 4/5</b>	Mrs E. Cooper Battersby Mrs L. Biedul	Mrs V. Hills
<b>Year 6</b>	Mrs J. Fitzgerald/Mrs S. Wilde	Mrs T. Mangan
<b>SEND Team</b>	Mrs S. Raithatha/Miss N. Jones	
<b>ROWAN Provision</b>	Mrs T. Payne/Mrs C. Vine-Lott (Family Support Worker)	
<b>Sports' Coach</b>	Coach Chloe	
<b>School Office</b>	Mrs S. Fleming/Mrs N. Gillibrand	
<b>Caretaker</b>	Mr P. Fleming	

As you can see, there will be some changes! The brilliant Mrs. Roby will be taking semi-retirement, which she thoroughly deserves – but we can't let her go completely...she will continue to teach for 2 days per week in EYFS.

Congratulations to Miss Jones, who has recently qualified as a SENCo. From September, she will teach 3 days per week in EYFS and will also be part of our new SEND Team at Woodhall.

We also wish the very best to Miss Barton as she heads into maternity leave, and we look forward to welcoming her back in due course.

We have an amazing and highly-dedicated staff team at Woodhall, who do everything in their power to ensure that children are happy and successful learners. We are all looking forward to all of the exciting learning, events and experiences that next year will hold!

Thank you,

Miss Lake

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