



The Palmer Academy
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Executive Headteacher: Mr Aaron Wanford
Head of School: Miss Libby Thomassen

Friday, 2nd September 2022

Start of Term Arrangements

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the new academic year! I hope everybody has had a good summer break, and that this hasn't been interrupted by isolations, or even cases of COVID. With the beautiful weather we experienced (although perhaps too hot at times), I do hope it has given everyone the chance to catch-up, refresh and be ready for the start of another year.

Firstly, I would like to give a warm welcome to all our new families that have joined us at Palmer this September. We have lots of new children in Nursery, as well as 60 new children in Reception and lots of other children who have joined us across the school as places have become available. We are delighted that your child has joined us at Palmer, and hope that you and your child will be very happy here.

We are equally as excited to welcome our new teachers who you were introduced to at the end of last academic year. As an update, myself and Mr. Wanford are continuing in our roles at Palmer for the time being while recruitment continues for the permanent post of Headteacher. We will keep you updated through the year as to when an appointment is made, and when they will be able to join us.

As is tradition, I thought it might be helpful just to give you a short update as the term starts, which sets out some useful information and immediate dates that you may need to be aware of.

Communication Procedures and Who to Contact

We try to remain as eco-friendly as we can and therefore all correspondence is sent electronically so please do keep a close eye on your email inbox. We endeavour, wherever we can, to limit our communications to you to a Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, to ensure that parents/carers are not overwhelmed by daily communications, such as letters about trips, or reminders etc. Please also take the time to keep up to date with our weekly newsletters which are sent to parents/carers every Friday afternoon.

Should you have any queries, questions, or concerns, please email one of the following accounts for support:

General queries: admin@thepalmeracademy.com
Year group/class teacher queries: yearX@thepalmeracademy.com
(e.g. Year4@thepalmeracademy.com OR reception@thepalmeracademy.com)

Start and Finish Times

A reminder of our start and finish times can be found over the page (be aware these were slightly amended at the end of the summer term following our consultation). Please do familiarise yourself with the timings and locations as they may have changed or been updated:

Year group	Location drop off	Drop-off window/time	School starts	Location pick up	School finishes
Nursery am	Nursery front door	8.45-8.50am	8.50am	Nursery front door	11.45am
Nursery pm	Nursery front door	12.30-12.40pm	12.30pm	Nursery front door	3.30pm
YR	Classroom door	8.40-8.50am	8.50am	Classroom door	3.20pm
Y1	Classroom door	8.40-8.50am	8.50am	Classroom door	3.20pm
Y2	Classroom door	8.40-8.50am	8.50am	Classroom door	3.20pm
Y3	Classroom door	8.45-8.50am	8.50am	Classroom door	3.20pm
Y4	Edible Playground door	8.45-8.50am	8.50am	Edible Playground door	3.20pm
Y5	Playground back door (under the clock)	8.45-8.50am	8.50am	Playground back door (under the clock)	3.20pm
Y6	Front office	8.45-8.50am	8.50am	Front office	3.20pm

PE Arrangements

This year we are returning to children changing for PE whilst the children are in school. Therefore, please see the days below where your child will be doing PE. The children will bring a backpack/bag with their PE kit in on these days or can leave their PE kit on their peg for the week before taking home for a wash at the weekend. Children will be given time to change before their PE session starts and will put their uniform back on before coming back home.

Year group	Days for PE
YR	Monday
Y1	Thursday and Friday
Y2	Tuesday and Wednesday
Y3	Monday and Tuesday
Y4	Monday and Wednesday
Y5	Tuesday and Friday
Y6	Thursday and Friday

Pupil Absence Procedures

Our Assistant Headteacher, Miss. Druce, leads on attendance and supports families to ensure their attendance is at least 97% or better for the year. As a reminder, so that we can be more efficient in dealing with pupil absences, we ask that if your child is going to be absent from nursery or school, that you call the school on 0118 9375481, and press the option to report an absence before 8.40am every day that your child is absent. This will give you the opportunity to leave a voicemail with the reason for absence.

Request for Leave of Absence

If you wish to request your child is absent from nursery or school due to a holiday, religious celebration or any other exceptional circumstance, you must complete a request of absence form in advance. Please contact the nursery or school office and they will arrange for a form to be sent home with your child. Once completed, please return to the main school office for Miss. Druce to consider.

The form ensures that parents/carers are aware of the implications of removing your child from school, and the potential fines which can be given for doing so. Please note that authorising absences are only

done in exceptional circumstances, and family holidays are not deemed 'exceptional'. We really want all children in school, every day, unless there are exceptional reasons, or they are too unwell.

Lateness (drop-off)

We kindly ask that you try to let us know in advance if your child will be late to nursery/school. A brief voicemail or email will suffice, but it is beneficial if we know that your child is going to be late before the start of the school day. Please note that if your child arrives after 8.50am then they will be classed as 'late', but if they arrive after 9.10am then they will be classed as missing the whole morning session and this will be an unauthorised absence for which you can be fined by the local authority if this persistently occurs.

Lateness (pick-up)

If you find that you are going to be late collecting your child from nursery/school, please inform us as soon as possible. A meeting will be called with the senior leadership team if persistent late collections are occurring after 3.30pm. GoBeanies (our afterschool provision) must be booked with plenty of notice and cannot be added on the day if parents/carers are running late. Please speak to the office if you would like further information about GoBeanies provision before and after school.

Medical Appointments

If your child has a medical appointment, please let the office know via email as soon as possible and provide us with an appointment card or letter. If your child has a medical appointment early in the morning and will not be in for morning registration, please contact the school office before 9.00am to inform us. Please try to avoid booking medical appointments in school time.

Medication

All medication was sent home with your child at the end of term and will need to be returned via the nursery/school office as a matter of urgency if not already done so. Medication is **not** to be sent in with children as it is to be stored securely and relevant forms are to be completed prior.

Parent Pay App

Parents/carers new to the school will need to set up their Parent Pay account which is used to pay for trips, clubs and activities as well as school lunches. An activation letter will be sent home with your child within the first few days of term.

Lunch Menu, Dietary Requirements and Balances

Our current menu can be found on our website [here](#) which is valid until October half-term. We will send out the new menu for after half-term as soon as we have received it from Caterlink.

Please remember to inform the school office if your child has any specific medical dietary requirements. Allergy forms have been circulated to new parents and need to be returned to the office before any school meals can be provided.

If you provide your child with a packed lunch, we encourage you to provide a healthy, balanced lunch in a sealed lunchbox/container which is clearly named. Please remember that there is strictly to be no fizzy drinks, glass bottles, confectionary/sweets or **nut-based products**.

Please also remember to send your child in to school with a named water bottle which they can refill if necessary. We ask for you to provide a water bottle for reasons of hygiene as well as convenience, practicality and because we do not have sufficient cups or washing facilities to provide each child with an individual cup each day.

Children in Year Three and above who are not entitled to Free School Meals* can opt to have a lunch in school rather than bringing a packed lunch. However, these meals are payable at £2.30 (with a potential increase to £2.40) per meal and the school is not able to give credit to parents/carers. Therefore, if you would like your child to order lunches in school, please ensure that you book dinners (before 9pm the night before) and ensure there is enough money on the ParentPay app to pay for these meals.

Please be aware that outstanding balances are monitored, and you may be refused access to ordering lunches if your balance is not cleared. **Please contact the school office if you think you may meet the criteria for Free School Meals eligibility shown [here](#), or if you are having trouble clearing your outstanding balance.* NB. All children in Reception, Year One and Two are eligible for UIFSM (Universal Infant Free School Meals).

This year we are **unable** to order school lunches on the day as the kitchen order their supplies based on booked meal and therefore, we will ask you to bring in a packed lunch if you have not booked lunches the evening before.

COVID

Although we appreciate that things are heading in the direction of returning to normal with regards to COVID, the guidance is that children who have had a positive PCR or LFT should isolate for 2 days and then can return to school if they are feeling well enough.

Key Dates for the Academic Year

We have been busy collating all the dates for the academic year which parents/carers need to be aware of, from Christmas productions to Parent Consultations. We will be sending this document out to you in the next week or so for you to refer to. These dates can also be found on our website, and we have a section within our weekly newsletter where we remind parents/carers of things that are happening the following week.

Travelling Safely and Sustainably and Parking

As always, we continue to ask for your support on travelling safely and sustainably to and from school. Where possible, please walk, cycle or scoot. We have lots of bike/scooter stands for this very reason! This encourages a healthy lifestyle as well as keeping the road free of cars. The car park at the front of school is for staff only and cannot be used by parents at any time. Please refrain from parking in front of the green gates as this is not a safe place to park as children will be crossing the road.

Safeguarding

If you are concerned about the welfare or safety of a child or would like to speak to a Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in the school, please ask or email the office who will put you in touch with one of our DSLs (Miss Thomassen, Mr. Wanford, Miss. Druce and Miss. Bryant).

Meet the Teacher Meetings

I will be sending out a letter next week to notify you about times and arrangements for the Meet the Teacher Meetings which will be taking place within the next few weeks. Please do look out for this.

Final thought...

We are really excited to start another academic year at Palmer and look forward to getting back on with some of our events and plans that have been halted by COVID over the last few years. As ever, we are always around each day on the playground and gates if you ever want to chat or ask a question. Here's to an amazing year at Palmer!

Yours faithfully,



Mr A. Wanford
Executive Headteacher



Miss L. Thomassen
Head of School

