

MOSSY LEA MESSENGER

8th March 2019 VIII · III · MMXIX

Introduction from Andy Purcell. Executive Headteacher

Hello, let me introduce myself. I'm Andy Purcell, and I'm the Executive Headteacher of Mossy Lea, and St George's Chorley. It's a rather grand title for a normal job, it just means you run more than one school. From September, when Iain returns to his permanent job I will be working at Mossy Lea for part of the week, and at my other school, St George's Chorley for the other half. Both schools, will have a 'Head of School' who will be in charge, offer continuity and be a point of contact in my absence. Let me be honest, I know Mossy Lea has had a bad experience with seconded headteachers recently, please, I beg, don't judge me yet... we will thrive, I promise. Partly because I'm not seconded to Mossy Lea... I'm permanent here, it's 'my' school, it's our school, and with your grit and determination I am determined to return it to the Mighty Oak it used to be. I've not been sent as a caretaker, until someone can be found... I applied for the role, I wanted the role, and I'm delighted to have the role, and that is different.

There have been massive improvements since Iain took over – he's done a great job, and will continue to do so for the rest of this year. Mossy Lea is in great shape. We're going nowhere... it really is time to come back to Mossy Lea.

A little more about me – I'm from Wigan, love Rugby, and love Indian food – you'll find I'll be working at Mossy Lea on Fridays – the curry house next door smells great, and could be an ideal way to start my weekend!

I'll be writing to you every Friday, as will Iain, to keep you up to date with future events, and what's been going on at the school. Inevitably there will be changes, there has to be; some of the changes you will love, some you won't, and some things, perhaps, that we stop doing you will miss. What I ask is that you don't judge the changes individually – give it 12 months... then look back and take a wholistic view of what's gone on.

One of the things I'm proud of at St George's is my relationship with parents. They don't always agree with everything I do, of course they don't, but what they do know is that I will always do my best, that I'm approachable and that, when we disagree, I will listen to you, and not be afraid to change if I believe your argument to be stronger than mine.

Having just read my previous two paragraphs it sounds as though we in for a nightmare doesn't it? We're not. We are in for good times, a lot of fun, and together we will restore Mossy Lea to the delightful little village school it has been; and with Iain's continued effort over the last few months we're well on track.... I cannot wait for OFSTED to visit us again.

We'll manage change carefully, and pace will be steady, consultation will be magnificent, but, we should embrace change, and pace will actually be speedier than I would like, but it has to be, as we're working against the OFSTED timeline

A couple of exciting (in my opinion) developments already.

The staffroom has moved to the former library/Iain's office – it a nicer environment for staff to work and chill in.

My office, and Iain's office, has moved into the former staffroom. Two main reasons for this. I want to be visible to the kids... I'm nosey, I want them to see me, chat to me, share their successes with me...

I want to become a huge, natural part of the school – and quickly. My 2nd reason is, perhaps as people are walking past, they will see me there... sending out a huge signal to the community that we are open; that we are thriving, that we are back... for good.

The small, former heads office... I have a few ideas.... I'll keep you posted.

Chick Chick Chick Chick Chicken....

Easter is on the horizon! Do we have any volunteers to knit a few chickens for us please? We do have a pattern for you to follow should you require! We will of course reimburse any cost to yourself for wool etc! Please, go random with the colours of wool! Just use any colour!

See admin staff for more information! And once again, thank you!

Notice to current year 2 Parents.

It's a tradition now at St George's to take our year 2 kids to Bibby's Farm, a small outward bound place at Rivington. It's great fun, and the kids love it. We do a whole range of activities, all led by teachers, or specialists, and it really is great fun. I am extending an invitation to the current year 2 children at mossy Lea to join us there.... It's a great opportunity, and the kids will be fine... I'll be going, so they will know me, and they'll soon make friends when they're are there. I have attached a bespoke letter to year 2 parents with further details. If you want your child to attend the little residential just return the form to Gill in the office, and I'll sort the rest. I'm in Mossy Lea all day on Monday 11th March if you wanted to pop in/ ring up and ask for further details... I would encourage you to take these wider opportunities, they are a magnificent enhancement to the curriculum.

Notice to current year 5 Parents.

To begin life in year 6 we take the kids on a team building 3 night residential to PGL at Boreatton Park. It's great fun. There's always a great debate about when to do residential – do you do it at the start of the year, as a launch, or the end of the year as a treat. To me its simple. On a residential, memories are made, new friendships are formed, and established friendships strengthened. If you do the residential at the end of the year then the impact is quickly lost as year 6 scamper off to their high schools.... Its far better to go on a residential at the beginning of the year when you can nurture the benefit throughout the year. I would love it if the current year 5 kids joined us on the residential. Again, don't worry about the kids getting swamped, or not knowing anyone etc... I go on all residential, so they know me, and they will quickly make friends and have fun when they are there. If you want your child to attend the little residential just return the form to Gill in the office, and I'll sort the rest. I'm in Mossy Lea all day on Monday 11th March if you wanted to pop in/ ring up and ask for further details... I would encourage you to take these wider opportunities, they are a magnificent enhancement to the curriculum.

Notice to all Parents.

I have secured the twitter account for Mossy Lea – can you follow it please? It will be a great way for sharing videos and activities that are going on at the school. The account is @MossyLea. It's a secure account, so, as you apply to follow, please text my mobile, stating your involvement with the school, so that I know who you are. If you need any help with twitter, call into school and ask Iain. My mobile number, which should only be used in exceptional circumstances, is 07776438866.... Send me a quick text so in know who you are please! The Facebook account is still active, but over time, school will be using twitter as our communication, leaving parents to communicate between each other on which spellings are due this week, when's homework due, and perhaps more relevantly, what on earth did Andy mean this week.... My newsletters are invariably long, apologies for that, and as you get to know me, and gain confidence in me, I won't need to be quite so perfect! In these early days of getting to know each other you'll be watching my every move, and will now be busy spotting my mistakes on this newsletter – My rule I am allowed 3 before anyone can comment! Anyway, let's conclude by remembering the words of Robert Schuller.....

“It's better to do something imperfectly than to do nothing flawlessly”
Have a great weekend everyone, and I genuinely look forward to working with you all,

Over the past few days, it has been brought to my attention that a number of children are discussing, and witnessing the 'Momo Challenge' and its associated images.

If you're not aware of what the 'Momo Challenge' is, I really can't over emphasise how proactive you must be at home to prevent children accessing, seeing, discussing, engaging with, or being frightened of the images, words and the challenges. Its really quite repugnant.

Momo is spread via social media, including whatsapp, and targets kids. It is a form of cyber, and mental abuse. Through it, users can receive graphic images and threats; they are instructed to perform increasingly dangerous tasks, including self harm, and actually worse.

Clearly the firewall in school prevents Momo from getting through, but it wont at home.

Please strengthen your safety at home. Children should only use IT equipment downstairs and supervised by an adult.

I wont be drawing too much attention to it in school, but Iain and Antonella will address the issue with the Junior kids. Please make sure that the children know what to do, what not to do and who to go to should the Momo challenge come their way. Further information is on the school website.

Red Nose Day Friday, 15th March

We are supporting Red Nose Day this year in school. As it is the Comic Relief theme this year, we have decided to have a crazy hair non-uniform day. So, get spraying, crimping, spiking and colouring your hair! A donation of £2 per child would be appreciated.

Trip to MOSI

A last request for any parent that can help with transport to MOSI in Manchester on 20th March. The cheapest coach we can find would cost over £200. This would mean that the trip would cost parents £27.50 per child. Unfortunately, we will have to cancel if I can't find another driver.

Science Club Monday 11th March

Unfortunately, the club has had to be cancelled this week.

World Book Day

The children had an enjoyable day with an expert from Lancashire Library Service. Thank you for your contributions that will allow us to purchase two books for the school library.