

STEDHAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Lane, Stedham
Midhurst, West Sussex, GU29 0NY

Telephone (01730) 813522
Fax (01730) 817241
e-mail: office@stedham.w-sussex.sch.uk
www.stedham.w-sussex.sch.uk



Headteacher
Mrs Sally Dreckmann

Tuesday 14th February 2017

Re: School changes for September 2017

Dear Parents,

As many of you have already noted, the number of pupils on roll has recently increased because more families are moving into the Midhurst area and we are also now a school of choice. Eight years ago the Local Authority funded a fourth classroom to be built on site to accommodate the school which was at that time also growing. When our numbers fell in more recent years, in order to maintain a school in the village, we made the decision to reduce to three classes and so Stedham Squirrels made a request to lease our empty room, which they have done since September 2014.

I have recently been notified by the Local Authority that in order to meet the requests for school places across the primary range in the Midhurst area, Stedham Primary needs to go back to operating as a four class school. This very sadly means that I have been asked to give Stedham Squirrels Pre-School notice to vacate the classroom at the end of this academic year.

On learning of this news, we were extremely upset as we have established a mutually beneficial working relationship with the pre-school. We have looked into the possibility of the LA funding a new classroom but they will not do this as the pre-school is independently run, and they will not allow a privately funded classroom to be built on West Sussex owned land. It is therefore the very sad outcome that I have met with Gemma Gabler, manager of Squirrels to hand them notice.

It was our hope that Squirrels would be able to continue running from an alternative site in the village while maintaining a relationship with us, but having made enquiries it is clear that outside of Stedham Primary School, the pre-school is not financially viable. Therefore, today they will be telling their parents of their intention to close in July.

Squirrels of course currently run our wrap around care. We offered them first refusal on continuing this, but they do not feel able to take this on. We are now exploring other options, whether it be the use of an external provider or the employment of new or current staff to run the breakfast and after-school club. I can assure you that there will be no break in breakfast club or after school care; the moment Squirrels can no longer run this, we will take on the responsibility to ensure continued support for all our working parents until we have found a permanent solution.



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While this is a positive time for the school, we wish to acknowledge that this is a very sad and difficult time for the Squirrels community.

As yet, I am unable to answer any questions as to which year groups will be in each class from September. I will need to wait until April when I find out our Reception numbers for September before I begin working on the structure of the school.

Yours sincerely

Sally Dreckmann