

# Raleigh Headlines

Issue 9 Summer Term — 25th June 2020

## Year 5 offer at Ripley Primary School sadly withdrawn. Letter sent to Year 5 parents today.



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25th June 2020

Dear Parents,

It is with deep regret that I must inform you that we are now not able to welcome back the 60 Year 5 children on Monday.

As you know we had intended to use Ripley School as a venue at the kind invitation of the Ripley School Trust and through their agents, Friends of Ripley School. We have undertaken a full risk assessment, made detailed plans and Surrey County Council very kindly agreed to mow the field for our use (even leaving a wildflower area for the children to enjoy). Julie Iles (County Councillor) was in favour as indeed was Paul Beresford MP and Jeremy Hunt MP. South Farnham Educational Trust and the Raleigh Local Governing Body both worked tirelessly to make it happen. However, we received an email from Mr Alex Tear (Diocesan Director of Education) on Monday of this week expressing concerns, this was followed up by an email from Bishop Jo Wells of Dorking in which she threatened legal action if we proceeded.

Mr Jeremy Hunt MP has spoken to Bishop Jo Wells and Alex Tear and they reaffirmed their position stating that it was illegal to use the school as it was closed and, therefore, not an 'educational facility'. Our advice (via the DfE Coronavirus hotline) is that it is permissible. Ripley School has been used by an OFSTED registered pre-school for many years and throughout the past two years. This is a Surrey funded pre-school (with charitable status). The use of the building by this group has been deemed by one DfE official as not qualifying as educational use. Our advice differs.

I do not want to go into the minute details but I think it is accurate to say that if there was a will for the school to be used, then it would go ahead successfully.

Everyone connected with the school has strained every sinew in their bodies to make it happen. Mr Tear and Bishop Jo clearly do not and have intervened to prevent it. I have written to Bishop Jo to ask her to help to find a solution (which clearly exists) and I look forward to her positive reply.

Clearly the purpose of our efforts is to support the community and its children at this time of national need. We read constantly that children are having difficulties during the pandemic and our use of Ripley School (for just three weeks) would make a valuable contribution. Addressing their mental health through being back with their friends and beginning to close any educational gaps are paramount. This is the mission of the South Farnham Educational Trust, The Raleigh School and, I would have hoped, the Diocese of Guildford.

In short, we cannot start on Monday. However, we ask you to support us in trying to make it happen. We can start using Ripley as soon as we get the green light. If you support the use of Ripley, please lobby the Diocese and The Right Honourable Gavin Williamson CBE MP Secretary of State for Education so we can move in the Government's clear direction of travel, aiming to get as many children back to school by the end of term.

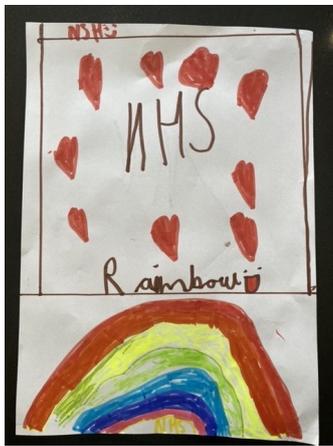
Good people doing good things can make a difference. Let's all work together to make this happen.

Best wishes,

Sir Andrew Carter, KBE

This week's news from Mrs O'Neill

- I love to say hello to you and your children every morning and especially enjoy having a quick chat with siblings in years 2-5 who have come along for the ride. We really miss you all....
- The heat and direct sun today triggered keeping the children in the shade as much as possible during the lunch hour. The children must have a hat with them daily please as well as a freshly-filled water bottle and pre-applied sun cream.
- Parents, please avoid congregating at the gate—I know you love to see your friends but you must social distance. Also the 'Bubbles' are for school, so the children can have friends for playing and learning while they are here, but they are not intended for you to organise weekend parties around. Please observe the Government guidelines for social distancing.
- Do please continue to encourage your children to read especially if they are not attending school. Surrey Libraries have launched their Summer Reading Challenge 2020 so just click [here](#) to find out more.
- Mrs Claire Hope has joined the Raleigh staff as Finance Manager. She starts next week—welcome to her...
- I hope you find time to watch my assembly with your children. Just click on this link. <https://www.loom.com/share/c697895c8c1343f1ab5f362b1b3b7a0a>
- Now click on this link to listen to Lucy's story. The theme is that it is OK to have a blue day... <https://www.assemblies.org.uk/pri/3557/pause-for-thought-lockdown>.
- Click on this link for some great ideas for Lockdown... <https://www.vervemagazine.co.nz/lockdown-activities-for-the-kids/>



Some more of our children have been fundraising for the NHS. Lexi & Joshy in years 3 and 4 raised £140 by holding a toy sale outside their drive so a very, very big thank you to them.  
Well done Lexi & Joshy!

