



## Gooderstone Church of England Primary Academy

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Sarah Godbold

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Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Dear Parent/Carer,

At the moment the financial landscape in education is a very challenging one and small schools are often hit hardest due to little amounts of funding. Small schools like Gooderstone are very vulnerable and we have worked hard over the last few years to look at creative ways to keep our numbers growing and ensure our three class sustainability. We have been successful in doing this in our lower year groups which has been a real benefit to the school. The Federation also plays a large part in the sustainability of Gooderstone, it helps it financially in many different ways including allowing both schools to share one Headteacher role.

I felt it important to share the current picture with you as it is that time of year again where we turn our sights to September and begin thinking about the class structure for 2024. As I have already mentioned, we have been looking at growing our numbers enough to enable us to move to four classes when finances would permit. Part of this was adding the Nursery back to Gooderstone, which has worked really well to increase our numbers and our EYFS and Year 1 classes are either at our pupil admissions number or over it. As a result of that we had to change the structure of the classes last year to our current system. This coming academic year we will be changing the structure of them once again due to our larger numbers down the lower end of the school. Our proposed class structure will look like this:

- **Owls:**  
**Nursery:** 6 Pupils (this intake grows throughout the year as more children turn 3 so numbers will increase)  
**Reception:** 10 pupils.  
**Total number of pupils in Owls: 16**
- **Skylarks:**  
**Year 1:** 14 pupils  
**Year 2:** 4 pupils  
**Total number of pupils in Skylarks: 18**
- **Kestrels:**  
**Year 3:** 5 pupils

**Year 4:** 8 pupils  
**Year 5:** 5 pupils  
**Year 6:** 3 pupils  
**Total number of pupils in Kestrels: 21**

All but one of our Keystage 2 year groups have very low numbers and we have made the decision to bring them together rather than split them across two classes. As well as numbers of children being balanced across the school, this structure has other benefits. It means that we are not splitting Keystages across year groups, which makes planning and sequencing work easier and it aligns much better with Mundford when it comes to trips, residentials and sporting competitions. Although there are many advantages to the above class restructuring, the biggest is that it will allow us to employ a part time teacher to teach our 13 Year 3 & 4 pupils Maths and English separately 3 mornings a week. Miss Stanley will spend these 3 mornings working with our 8 Year 5 & 6 pupils. On the other two mornings and afternoons the children will come back together and be taught as normal.

As and when numbers grow, we hope to increase this split structure to 5 mornings a week and in time continue our move to four classes. An advert will be going out for the teacher over the next few weeks and we will update you as and when we have more information on this.

I appreciate that these sorts of changes are difficult for both parents and children but I hope that you can see the value in what we are trying to achieve and how it will benefit all the pupils in the school now and in the future.

Best wishes,



Mrs Godbold