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Headteacher: Mr Iain Horner

4<sup>th</sup> February 2020

Dear Parents,

I am writing to inform you that the school's long-awaited building project is due to commence on the 10<sup>th</sup> February. The project, which will provide two additional classrooms, an extension to the school kitchen, an expansion of the Maple classroom and a replacement play trail, has been in the planning and development process since Autumn 2015. You may have been aware of the proposals through newsletter communications, displayed notices and drawings, or the official planning application to Oxfordshire County Council.

Our contractors – Kier – have now been given the approval to begin the 'build' phase of the project. Neil Thomson, Project Manager, has written separately to parents and residents and will continue to do so throughout the project. The majority of the project is due to be completed by the end of August 2020, with the final phase finishing in October 2020.

This will be the first building development at Chesterton School in over 20 years; the Governors believe that it will enhance the school, whilst still maintaining the values for which it is known. The village of Chesterton has grown in recent years and we need to increase our provision for children living in our catchment area, which also includes Middleton Stoney, Wendlebury and Weston-on-the-Green. Oxfordshire County Council and The Diocese of Oxford are pleased to be able to help us improve our offer to children and their families. The plans will allow us to move towards one-year group per class and eventually towards being a 'one-form entry' school. Pupil numbers **will not** suddenly increase; rather they will develop over a few years. At this stage, it is impossible to predict at what point we will need to open all seven classes. In the meantime, the extra indoor space will allow much greater flexibility for our existing pupils.

As you will know if you've ever undertaken any major building work in your own homes, there is inevitable disruption meaning that compromises and sacrifices have to be made. We have been working hard behind the scenes alongside the team from Kier to finalise a programme that minimises the impact on the day to day running of the school and, more importantly, the children's education. I have great confidence in the adaptability of the school staff and our pupils and I am sure that any short term inconvenience will be outweighed by the future benefits to the whole school community. I would also ask for your patience and understanding while the work takes place, but if you have any concerns regarding safety, please raise them at the earliest possible opportunity with the school office.

The major impact will be accommodating the large building compound that will occupy a significant section of the school playground and part of the school field. However, this will be completely secure and inaccessible to pupils, with any movement of vehicles or contractors conducted away from the children. The fact that the majority of the work will

take place during the (hopefully!) warmer and drier months should enable us to make maximum use of the school field and minimise the impact of losing playground space. I will be liaising with our project manager on a regular basis to ensure that we make appropriate alternative arrangements when necessary as the build progresses. Teachers will also be talking to their classes about any changes that might affect the pupils. There will also be a period of time when the school kitchen is not in use, but we have already looked closely at plans for this and will notify you of further details nearer the time.

We understand that there may also be some concerns around traffic and parking in the roads surrounding the school. During the build, and as the school expands, the Governors and I will continue to explore as many ways as possible to mitigate the congestion at the beginning and end of the school day, although this issue is common to almost every school. Chesterton's wrap-around care is steadily increasing in popularity, meaning more and more 'drop-offs' and 'pick-ups' are outside of peak times. Through our 'Walk to School' initiatives, we are also constantly looking to support parents with finding alternatives to arriving at school by car. We would ask parents to be especially mindful of considerate parking during the building work to avoid any unnecessary disruption to our neighbours.

We will of course keep you informed as and when we have progress updates.

Yours,

Mr I. Horner (Headteacher)



**Chesterton CE Primary School**  
Generosity Integrity Humility Compassion Respect Resilience