



13<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Dear Parents

As you may be aware, Oliver Marshall, one of our Year 2 pupils in Silver Birch class, has Cystic Fibrosis. Many of the children in his year group are aware of this and are used to his health regime. However, the natural inquisitive nature of the children is leading them to ask Oliver more detailed questions about matters relating to his condition.

In order to help the children to understand a little more about Oliver's daily life and to support him, we are going to have a circle time discussion regarding Oliver's health needs. Oliver himself will not be present when the discussions happen, something he has requested, in order that children are able to ask questions with ease. These sessions will happen on Wednesday, and will be led by class teachers.

During these discussions, we intend to cover the following areas:

- Why Oliver takes enzymes (to aid digestion of his food).
- Why Oliver needs to go to the toilet more often than other children (the enzymes don't digest the food as well as our bodies, so more waste is created. This is also why Oliver needs more food).
- Why he needs to have additional snacks, often high in calories (his body has to work much harder than other people's and therefore he needs more food to provide more energy. He also doesn't get all of the energy out of the food he eats).
- Why he tires easily (he wants to run around and play as much as everyone else, but his body has to work hard to help him breathe well, as his lungs don't work as well as other people's do, so he gets tired more easily).
- Why he has an antibiotic port (to give him medicine to stop him from getting infections).
- Why he coughs a lot (to help move or get rid of the phlegm that builds up in his lungs).
- Why Oliver has to spend several days in the office at break times rather than going out to play (to help avoid the risk of infection or germs getting into the port and because he needs to rest and relax when he has a line in his port; when he is taking antibiotics).
- To explain that this is something which Oliver will always have and that it is not contagious.

A couple of weeks after half-term, Oliver will be having a feeding tube fitted and will be absent from school for a week. The children will not be able to see this tube other than possibly during times when children are changing for PE and swimming. The line is so that Oliver can be given an extra feed to boost his calorie intake and will remain for the foreseeable future.

We hope that this will help the children to understand a little more about Oliver's condition and enable Oliver to relax once he knows that his friends know a little more about the ways in which he is special.

If you have any queries regarding the circle time sessions or any of the other information here, please come and talk to me.

With very best wishes

*Melanie Harries*