

Newsletter No:1

Creativity, Independence and Respect

Dear Parents

Welcome back! I think it's the first time it has rained on the first day of term for the past 10 years! It was wonderful to see staff, children and parents returning to school looking forward to an exciting year ahead. I am sure that you will join with me in welcoming all our new children and staff – Miss Cullen in Year 5 and Mr Raffell in Year 5. I am sure all parents will be delighted that your child is attending a really great school that performs well academically and offers so many enrichment opportunities in so many other areas including Dance, Singing and Sports. We also have a wonderful After School and Breakfast Club. Our Acorns Day Nursery also goes from strength to strength with more children and parents taking advantage of the wonderful facilities that OFSTED consider being outstanding. We see in the media about the importance of SATs tests, Maths and English scores and how OFSTED judges a school. These areas are important but so too is the development of life skills. At St. Stephen's Junior we really value life skill development and make every effort to encourage children to feel good about themselves, have the confidence to succeed and develop the skills of independence, creativity, respect and care. Each month we choose a core value and ask children to record in their weekly planner ways to develop this skill for themselves. This month we have chosen determination – determination to achieve, succeed and to be determined to finish tasks. With this in mind, we ask all parents to help their children and us to provide a really positive learning environment and encourage a positive attitude to learning and the value of education. As part of this we would ask all parents to prepare their child for school by talking to them about their work, the activities they do and their relationships with other children. The more they do this, the more children will enjoy learning - spellings, multiplication tables, Reading, Mathematics and Science. If we, as parents are seen to, value schools and learning, our children will as well. We look forward to working with all our families this year!

Yours faithfully

Mr S. Pywell

Executive Headteacher

School Organisation

- We ask all parents to telephone the school office on the first day of your child's absence and provide a letter to the School Office on their return.
- If you have found any school books over the summer holiday, please return them to school as soon as possible.
- It is essential that **all** children's clothing and equipment is clearly labelled with their name and class – **please label the clothes not the label!**
- We expect all children to be in school by 8.45am each morning.
- PE kits should be kept in school at all times for use during the week. Please remember no earrings should be worn during PE lessons and long hair will need to be tied back. All children should have a House T-shirt, black shorts/track suit bottoms and trainers/plimsolls.
- Could you please ensure your child has a bottle of water for use during the day.
- All children should come equipped with stationery for school. Pens are available to buy in the School Office.

School Dinners

The costs for the term are as follows:- **£2.35 per day/£11.75 per week. If your child has dinners every day and you would prefer to pay a regular monthly amount, you can pay £44.65 every month for 10 months from September to June inclusive which will pay for a school dinner every day of the school year.**

Please note that any days for which you have paid but are asked to provide a packed lunch, or for which your child is absent, will be credited to you and carried forward to the next term. If you are paying monthly, we will look at the account before the end of the year and let you know of any adjustments that need to be made to the final payment.

Payments can be made directly to the bank account: **Lloyds Bank, sort code 30-64-57, account number 40262260, with a payment reference of your child's name and Dinners (this is important so we can allocate the payment correctly).** Cheques are payable to St. Stephen's Junior School.

Please note that if your child has a packed lunch, they should be healthy and contain no fizzy drinks. Please also note the kitchen staff are unable to warm up food from packed lunches.

Free fruit snacks and milk at Break time

We continue to offer free fruit snacks and milk at break times on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. The children can collect their fruit from the dining hall at either 10.30am (Years 3 and 4) or 11.15am (Years 5 and 6).

Nut Allergies

Thank you for your continued cooperation in making our school a "Nut Free" environment. We have a number of children/adults in our school community who have medically recognised allergies for which exposure to nuts can be a life threatening experience.

Messages

We are happy to pass on a message to your child in school but can we please ask that you contact the school by 2.45 in the afternoon to give enough time to be able to communicate the message in time for 3pm. As you are probably aware, this is a very busy time of the day and we sometimes find ourselves unable to reach your child by the time they leave school.

Harvest Festival

Our Harvest celebrations are taking place on Friday 21st October at St. Stephen's Church. Years 5 and 6 will be performing in the church at 10am in the morning and Years 3 and 4 will be performing at 2.00pm in the afternoon. We look forward to seeing you at these celebrations.

School Houses

All children have now been told which house they belong to and are asked to dress in their house colour T Shirt for PE/games and any sports activities during the year.

For your information the House Colours are as follows:-

HALES – BLUE

MANWOOD – GREEN

LANGTON – RED

LORETTA – YELLOW

House T Shirts with the school logo are sold at the office at a cost of £6.00. It is important that all children have their house t-shirt in school at all times.

Access/Parking

We would like to reiterate that parking within school is strictly for staff only. Please note the front gates are shut from: 8.30 – 9.15am and 2.45 – 3.15pm. Access is by the upper and lower side gates, from 8.30am – 9.15am. Can we please ask all parents to consider our neighbours and other people when parking and driving outside the school. We have been specifically approached by the local Londis shop who have been experiencing problems with parents dropping off children at the side of the shop and they are concerned a child may get hurt. They have also had instances where their back fire exit door has been blocked.

Services Children

Can we please ask all parents that if either parent is employed in the Armed Forces, could you please let the school office know as soon as possible.

Library

The library is open every break time and lunch time for children to take out and return any books. It is also open every day after School until 4.00pm for Family Reading from Monday 19th September.

School Annual Contribution

This contribution is £24.00 a year (or £8.00 per long term) and covers your child's extra-curricular activities and a whole range of events such as swimming, Christmas cake making, performing arts shows and some local trips. Forms are available for those wishing to pay by Standing Order and there is also the opportunity to Gift Aid this contribution - please see Mrs Roberts our Bursar. Thank you to all parents who contribute to make all these extra events so worthwhile for our children.

Breakfast Club

You may or may not be aware that we offer a Breakfast Club every morning from 7.30am/8.00am until 8.50am. The children from both the Infant and Junior Schools are offered a good variety of healthy foods for breakfast and enjoy some not too strenuous activities before they start the school day. We have places available and if you are interested, application forms are available from the School Office.

After School Club

Our After School Club continues to go from strength to strength. This runs from 3pm until 6pm, with the children enjoying a wide range of adult led activities and a light tea. We have limited places available on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, Tuesday and Wednesdays are currently full with a waiting list. Application forms are available from the School Office.

After School Activities and Music Clubs

Information about our After School Activities and Music Clubs, which run separately from our After School Club have come home in separate letters.

Parent Mail

If you have yet to receive an invitation to join Parent Mail this will be coming out shortly. It is essential that you join, as the majority of our correspondence is sent home to parents through this mailing system. Thank you for your patience.

Cooking for Children

We are very lucky here at St. Stephen's to have a fantastic kitchen with a great team. We will once again be making our kitchen available to our children to experience cooking. We think this is a valuable life skill to have as well as encouraging them to read recipes and measuring ingredients. A full risk assessment is carried out before children are allowed in the kitchen, however if you prefer your child not take part in this activity please could our approach your child's teacher.

