



Monday 25th September 2023

Dear Parents & Carers,

Meet the Teacher and Curriculum Evening

Please see reminder about our Meet the Teacher Curriculum evening next week:

On Tuesday 26th September, we are pleased to invite you to school for a **'Meet the Teacher and Curriculum Evening'**. This is a fantastic opportunity for both teacher and parents, to meet in an informal setting and to gain a full understanding of the things your child will be learning this year. Not only that, if you have questions about homework, reading, spellings etc., then this will be the ideal forum to discuss them.

There are two planned sessions after school on **Tuesday 26th September:**

- **Session 1 – 3:30 – 3:55pm**
- **Session 2 – 4:00 – 4:25pm**

We hope to see you there!

Operation Christmas Child – Shoebox Appeal



Pupils will be bringing home leaflets for the Operation Christmas Child appeal which our school will be supporting again this year.

Operation Christmas Child is a project of Samaritan's Purse, a Christian international relief organisation. Their mission is to provide local partners around the world with shoeboxes filled with small toys, hygiene items, and school supplies as a means of reaching out to children in their own communities with the Good News of Jesus Christ. These simple gifts are shipped outside the United Kingdom to children affected by war, poverty, natural disaster, famine, and disease.

Please return shoeboxes to school by Friday 10th November.

More information can be found here: [Operation Christmas Child \(samaritans-purse.org.uk\)](http://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk)

Pokémon cards

Despite trying to accommodate the use and play with Pokémon cards, they are now causing a lot of unnecessary upset and disruption in school. This is leading to arguments and disputes which are, as well as being time consuming, almost impossible to resolve. **Therefore, Pokémon cards are no longer permitted in school on a daily basis.** However, we do know that many children are very keen on playing and trading with cards. As a compromise, we will seek to facilitate a dedicated time each half term, when children can bring cards in and play as part of supervised 'golden time.' I do hope you can appreciate and understand the reasons why we have had to take such steps and will support us going forward.

Date: Tuesday 26th September 2023
Location: Your child's classroom
Time:
Session 1 3:30 – 3:55pm
Session 2 4:00 – 4:25pm

If you are unable to attend, the PowerPoint will be made available upon request.

Scholastic Book Fair

We are excited to be hosting a book fair in conjunction with Scholastic in the week commencing 9th October. This has been a successful event run at St Stephen's in previous years, although it hasn't taken place since 2019! Keep your eyes peeled for details of some exciting opportunities around books and reading!

School Lunch Fun Day – Thursday 5th October

Our school catering team are planning a special fun day on Thursday 5th October around the theme of Space. School lunch is free to pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 as well as those entitled to free school meals. The revised menu has been updated on Appetite so that orders can be placed.

Birthday Treats

Please note that we aren't able to accept sweet treats e.g. cakes, chocolate or sweets to give out in class for pupils' birthdays. As there is potential for this to happen up to thirty times a year, it doesn't reflect our objectives on promoting healthy eating in school. We are also very mindful of pupils in school who have allergies and not disrupting plans in place to manage these, without some children being excluded. Staff will ensure to celebrate and make a fuss over birthdays if this falls on a school day, without the need for bringing in treats. We thank you for your anticipated understanding and cooperation.

Harvest Festival

We are very excited to hold our Harvest Festival Celebration, in school, on Friday 6th October. This year, we will once again be collecting food donations for The People's Kitchen and ask you to start thinking about the donations you can make.

As always, we are grateful for any donation, great or small. However, due to the generosity of previous donors, (FOOD BANK) has high volumes of some items such as pasta, tea and full-sized boxes of cereal. Therefore, have requested that the following items are donated this year.

- Tinned Meat in Gravy/Chilli/Curry/Stew
- Tinned Meat
- Tinned Pies
- Hot Dogs
- Meatballs
- Tinned Custard
- Tinned Fruit (Peaches etc)
- Tinned Pasta (Spaghetti/Hoops/Macaroni etc)
- Tinned/Package Potatoes
- Long Life Milk
- Rice Pudding
- Sweet Snacks (Chocolate etc)
- Biscuits
- Jam/Spread
- Soup
- Coffee/Tea Bags
- Toiletries (Shower Gel/Soap Bars etc)

As in previous years, our wonderful Agents for Change representatives will visit The People's Kitchen and take along our donations. This is a great opportunity for our pupils to really appreciate how the efforts of our small school community can make a huge impact on those who are in need.

We thank you for your support.



Parent Session – Secondary School Applications

Applications for secondary school places are now open for current year 6 pupils who will be transferring to secondary school next September. There is not a year goes by without disappointment, when pupils do not receive their preferred choice of school. Sometimes this is simply because admissions criteria have not been met. Unfortunately, as was the case last year, it was because applications were submitted late, had information missing and in some cases had not been submitted. This was very distressing for many children and families and made worse by the fact that we are powerless and unable to influence or support the process and outcomes. To avoid this happening this year, we are offering the use of our IT facilities so parents can make sure applications are submitted in a timely and accurate manner. If you have not yet applied, or are unsure of how the process works, we recommend you attend our secondary school admissions evening on **Tuesday 10th October - 3:30- 5pm** where you can access, complete and submit your application for your child's place at secondary school.

First Holy Communion Programme

This year's Year 4 First Holy Communion Programme is going to be facilitated by the parish of St. Aidan's, Benton, as per Diocesan guidelines. Further communication will be sent out by the parish, with regards to dates and times of the sessions, once the catechists have finalised programme details. In the meantime, we are keen to gauge interest in the programme on behalf of the parish, and ask Year 4 parents to complete the following form to express interest:

<https://forms.office.com/e/DVqXHQv0t9>

The first session is expected to be held on Sunday 15th October so please ensure to return the form promptly if you are interested.

Dates for the Diary (as always, dates are subject to change!):

Tuesday 19th September – Mr Taylor Bible Stories
Tuesday 19th September – Tuesday 3rd October - Year 3 Pedestrian Training
Tuesday 19th September - Year 4 Pedestrian Training Session
Tuesday 26th September – Reception Pedestrian Training Session
Tuesday 26th September 3.30-3.55pm/4.00-4.25pm - 'Meet the Teacher Curriculum' Evening
Thursday 5th October – Year 6 at Safetyworks!
Friday 6th October – Harvest Festival Whole School Service
Tuesday 10th October – Year 1/2 Pedestrian Training Assembly
Tuesday 10th October – Parent Session for Secondary School Applications
Thursday 12th September – Flu Immunisations
Friday 20th October – Last day of Half Term
Monday 21st – Friday 27th October - Half Term