



St. Paul's Dorking

Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Newsletter | Friday 4th December 2020 | No. 7

Inspiring Learning, Nurturing Wholeness

Dear Parents and Carers,

I wanted to start my letter this week with a 'Thank you' and a 'Well done'. As a school community we have all, you very much included here, worked together to abide by the very challenging Covid-19 restrictions in order to keep everyone safe. I know that this has meant a lot of adjustments and rearrangements but to date this has made a huge difference. We have not had any positive cases this term and have remained fully open throughout. I want to share the head lines of our attendance data with you as we are achieving significantly better than other primary schools nationwide. Our attendance is 97.3% compared to 91.5% for similar primary schools across the country. This is a remarkable achievement - so thank you for all you are doing to help all of us stay fit and well.

I wrote to you earlier in the week to explain how we are going to be delivering our Christmas service this year. I know it is disappointing that it can't be like normal but I think we will all agree we are currently a long way away from 'normal' at the moment. We hope to have the service, with every child taking part, with you during the last week of term. When we send that to you we will also include some guidance about sharing it beyond the school community.

We have two key 'Christmas' days in school this year. We have a special day next week (Wednesday 9th December) where the children can wear their Christmas jumpers if they wish (please send a donation into school) and we will all be enjoying our Christmas dinner, with crackers kindly donated by FOSPA. These will again be different to normal as they will have to be served in classrooms, but we will still endeavour to have our usual festive cheer and staff and children will enjoy eating their special meal together. We are also having another special day on Wednesday 16th December where the children can come into school with festive hair (see the note below). We will also be doing some Christmas activities throughout the day. You will also notice in the next week or so that the children are working on a range of projects for our Christmas displays - the theme this year is 'Winter Light' and not only will the children's work be filling the display boards in the corridor, we will also display some on their classroom windows so that you too can enjoy their artwork from afar. This worked well for our Remembrance Day displays so we thought we would do something similar so you can see their lovely creations too.

I want to thank Mrs Cruickshank and Miss Palmer for helping their children in Sycamore class to create a piece of 3D art for Guildford Cathedral. We have again taken part in their 'Angelic Hosts' project sending in an angel along with a large number of other angels from other schools across the diocese. If you are near the Cathedral I would highly recommend a visit and you can see if you can spot our St Paul's NHS angel.

Thank you to the parents who joined us on our webinar for RSE last week. It was lovely to have so many of you attending- we had more than 30 screens joining. The presentation is on the website and please do speak to your child's class teacher if you would like any further details about the content of these lessons. Thank you to Mrs Read for leading this session.

Each week we are continuing to have 'Star of the Week' and 'Value Awards' and are celebrating children's achievements. However, we have had no one bringing in awards to share for our St Paul's Superstar board. This board is to celebrate achievements out of school. We appreciate a large number of clubs are paused at present but if your child has passed a music exam or reached a key milestone in another extra curricular activity (moved up a belt in Judo for instance) please send in a photo and a little bit of context so we can celebrate this in school and put it up on the board for everyone to enjoy.

Wishing you a restful weekend, Best wishes, Mrs Alden

Christmas Festive Hair Day and Christmas Jumper (and lunch) Day



We are having two fund raising events in school towards the end of term. On the **9th December** come in your festive jumper and donate £1 or more. It is also our Christmas lunch day. Then on **16th December** come to school with a festive hair do and bring a donation. The funds raised will be shared equally between FOSPA and Save the Children. (Please note change of day)





Year 3 Victorian Day

Year 3 were transported back in time to the Victorian era as part of their topic about the history of Dorking. During the

day, the children took part in Drill (PE), chanted their times tables and learned about the 'mighty' British Empire, as well as experiencing what a Victorian school was like by writing in chalk.

When asked whether they would prefer to go to school now or in Victorian times, most agreed 2020 is far better.

Alice from Willow class wrote, 'I would prefer to go to school now because in the Victorian times teachers were harsh.' Charlie from Willow wrote afterwards, 'I like going to school now as the teachers are very, very kind but the teachers in Victorian times were so strict.'

It's good to talk!

This week in their classes children watched a video called 'Talking Mental Health' and discussed how it can help to share thoughts and feelings. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oz1S66_pYTw

We reminded all children that they have daily access to a drop in session known as 'TalkTime'. It is a quiet space to talk to an adult about anything that is worrying them or that they'd like to ask for help with, and also a chance to share and celebrate any good news and achievements.



TalkTime is held from 12.15-12.55 in the SEN Room and staffed by a trained Mental Health First Aider.

TIER 2 INFORMATION

We have attached a useful poster from the Department for Education with guidance around Covid-19 Tier 2 restrictions.

Dates for Autumn & Spring Term (new in red)

- **8th Dec - Y4 Egyptian Day**
- **9th Dec - Christmas Jumper Day and Christmas lunch (note date change)**
- **16th December - Christmas activities and Festive hair Day**
- **16th Dec - Y5 Greek Food Day**
- **18th December - End of Term, early finish (see attachment for timings)**
- **4th January 2021 - INSET Day**
- **5th January 2021 - First Day of Term**
- **15-18th Feb - Half Term**

ANGELIC HOSTS

Sycamore, along with help from Mrs Cruickshank and Miss Palmer, have been very busy. They have designed and made a piece of 3D art. They have created an angelic sculpture to be displayed in Guildford Cathedral. Our NHS Angel is part of a display of well over 100 angels in the cathedral. Below are details

from the Cathedral website about how you can go and see them.

Advent Angels and Tour Guides at Guildford Cathedral

ADVENT ANGELS

Around the cathedral, you will find a heavenly host of angels, hand-crafted by pupils from church and affiliated schools around the Diocese of Guildford.

The schools have made figures to represent the angels of 2020. People who brought God's message of love, peace, and hope into their school this year. People who showed kindness in the community.

Before you visit, please download the floor plan so that you know where all the angels have come from, and why not download the Angel Trail Quiz for younger visitors to do when they are here. When you get home, please check



your answers for the Angel Trail.

We are committed to following the government guidelines with regards to making the Cathedral safe for you to visit under the current Covid-19 conditions.

We are being encouraged not to give out leaflets, but there are many interesting things to learn about the Cathedral, so here are downloadable versions of some of our leaflets.

https://www.guildford-cathedral.org/visit/Tour_Guides

YEAR 6 BIKEABILITY

For the last two weeks, children in Year 6 have been completing level 2 Bikeability. This training has helped them develop skills for cycling on single-lane roads with simple junctions and moderate traffic and has included lots of work on safe and responsible cycling. All the children have shown an excellent attitude to this training even when it has rained heavily and they have got very wet. We are grateful to the instructors for providing this training and helping our children to be able to ride their bikes to school in a sensible and responsible way.

St Paul's Cathedral Virtual flash mob

We're very excited to be joining St. Paul's Cathedral's virtual hymn flashmob this Christmas. One class will be performing a Christmas carol, and two Year 6 pupils will be announcing it. This will be filmed next week and viewable on the school's social media pages for all to enjoy very soon. This virtual event is part of the Church of England's 'Comfort and Joy' campaign, helping those who may be especially lonely during this time of crisis. Hopefully, seeing our Christmas carol performance will fill their hearts with a sense of hope for the future and solace for the present.

