



St. Paul's Dorking

Church of England (Aided) Primary School

Newsletter | Friday 22nd September 2023 | No. 2

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have had a busy fortnight since the last newsletter and there is plenty to share.

The Reception children have settled very well and are already getting into class routines, including daily phonics and maths learning. Clubs have also resumed and thank you to the parents who have returned their permission slips for these. We have a wide range of activities on offer and the we had a record number of children attending Cross Country on Wednesday!

Year 6 have also written letters of application for leadership roles in school and the new prefects have been selected and are wearing their badges with pride and fulfilling their roles in a positive and respectful manner.

During the summer we have made some material improvements to school and as part of this we have replaced classroom furniture in a further three classes and all classrooms now have ergonomically supportive chairs, which are designed to improve children's posture and concentration span. The outdoor area in Reception has also had a make-over, using money from the trust fund, with staff purchasing a wide range of equipment, including a maths and literacy working shed, more tuff spots and a wider range of outdoor equipment. Reception are clearly really enjoying learning in this space. Thank you to Mrs Van Calenberg and Mrs Watkins for the developments they have initiated. The Year 1 outdoor space has also been developed by the Year 1 team, with ample learning opportunities available for the children both inside and outside, making their transition from Reception a very smooth one.

I wanted share to some of our successes from last year—the teaching of phonics was highly effective. We saw a 22% improvement in the number of Yr 1 children who passed their phonics screening (88%) and we saw 90% of those taking it in Year 2 also passing. Well done to Mrs Van Calenberg (our Early Reading Leader) and all of the Reception and KS 1 staff who worked tirelessly to make this happen. This has set the children up so well to read. We also saw that all children made very good progress with their reading and we are accrediting this partly to the use of Accelerated Reader (FOSPA's generous donation enabled us to purchase this for five years). We saw a rise in attainment in the large majority of year groups and 92% of Year 6 made the expected standard (with 52% gaining greater depth), this is 19% higher than national results!

We will continue to focus on this effective teaching of reading this year, but we are also prioritising writing. Following Covid, writing has seen a marked impact across the country, and we have seen it too here. We are developing our strategies around 'talk for writing' to help children to become more confident to speak so that they can generate and then write more complex sentences

It was lovely to see so many of you at 'Meet the teacher' and please do make a note in your diaries for the up-coming reading meeting (Reception) and parents' evenings in a few weeks' time.

Wishing you a restful weekend, Mrs Alden

Harvest Festival at St Paul's Church

All are invited to St Paul's Church Harvest Festival Celebration
on

Sunday 1st October.

Our 10.30am Service is especially family-friendly and we would
love to invite all school families.

There is the opportunity to contribute food/non food items to
Dorking Food Bank during the service (optional)

NB We are having our harvest service and receiving donations
to the food bank if you wish, on Friday 20th October

Thank you to everyone who has
signed up for the FOSPA Bike Ride this
weekend.

We wish you well and thank you for
raising money for the school through
your keen activity!



FOSPA AGM & Quiz

Tickets are now available for the FOSPA Quiz evening on
Thursday 5th October at 19.30 for an 20.00 start

<https://www.pta-events.co.uk/fospa>



Year 2 have been learning about two-digit numbers. They can show the number using base ten apparatus and can compare the numbers using greater than and less than symbols.

We have loved reading the story 'Toys in Space' by Mini Grey as part of our English. We have been producing super writing about it in class. We have been reading another story by her called 'Traction Man'. It is worth looking for more books by her in the library or on Google.



If you remember, we request that you send in a box of tissues at some point through the year, to help reduce this cost. Thank you to those who have brought one in. We are very grateful for these donations.



Collective Worship Themes for this term

We are looking at the narrative of St Paul's life in the Acts of the Apostles. Our theme is called 'Life can be Rubbish' where we are looking at some less helpful attributes that we may have and how we can 'recycle' them into something good. This week we have looked at arrogance and how we can turn this into self confidence and respect for others.

We are also looking at our school value of Respect.

Swift Assembly

On the 15th September Sarah Relf from the Manda Slater Memorial Fund came into school and ran two assemblies one for KS1 and Reception and the other for KS2. The assemblies were about the 'swift'. The children were really amazed by some of the facts about swifts. Such as the distance and the height they fly at and that swifts only land to breed - to build their nest, lay, incubate eggs, and feed and incubate young.

At St. Paul's we have two swift nest boxes at the front of the school and if anyone would like to buy a swift nest box, they are available from the Manda Slater Memorial Fund for £35. This includes what is paid to Dorking Men's Shed for materials and their

time, plus a £10 donation to Manda Slater Memorial Fund so they can continue supporting the charity. You can find and contact them via Manda Slater memorial Fund on Facebook or email them



at hello@mandaslater.org.

A super start!

What an incredible start Y1 have had! We are so thrilled with the attitude and enthusiasm that the children have demonstrated during this transition. They are loving their new outdoor area, especially the large community blocks, where we have seen some quality imaginative play. We are very proud of how much they are enjoying being in the Big Playground, with older children during breaktimes. Equally, they have also been working hard on using adjectives to describe and have completed some challenging maths activities. We are now looking forward to a very promising year ahead. Well done Y1!



Reception's first few weeks...

Reception have settled really well into school-life and are already familiar with routines.

The children are enjoying their new classroom and outdoor area and have been working hard to form new friendships.

We are really proud of the children for trying so hard to learn new school rules.

It's great to see so many smiley faces come into school each morning!



Bike and scooter storage

It is great to see so many children riding bikes or scooters to school!

If your child is in Years 1, 3, 4 5 or 6, then they are to park their bikes/scooters in the new bike shelter inside the pupil entrance. If your child is in Year R or Year 2, they are to park them outside the hall.

Please can you remind your children that if they are riding to school, they need to walk it once they have come through the school gates. Thank you

If your child is on a bike or scooter, please encourage them to wear a helmet!



Governor Corner:

We have two new governors who have recently joined the Board—Will Blake (Parent Governor) and Sam Fry (Foundation Governor). Please have a read of their background, and do come and say hello to Will as he is the new parent governor, along with Michelle Vellacott.

Will became a parent governor in May 2023. He has one daughter at the school and his youngest daughter is at St Paul's Nursery.

In his spare time, he and his family enjoy going to watch Dorking Wanderers. Will also runs a youth team for Dorking Wanderers, is a keen golfer and still enjoys playing video games.

This is Will's first experience in school governance but he has nearly 20 years' experience in the city with a career in data governance. Will loves to see children thrive and follow their passions.



Sam is a new Foundation Governor, having been appointed by the diocese this summer. He is a member of the congregation of St Paul's Church, and works as a civil servant. Sam loves intellectual curiosity, and wants to see the best possible education for every child. He is excited to be joining the Board, and to work with Ann and the other governors to improve the school.



Mode shift STARS Platinum accreditation

We are delighted to share our news that we have achieved Platinum accreditation for our school travel plan with Surrey Modeshift STARS (Sustainable Travel Accredited and Recognised.) The scheme encourages schools across the country to increase levels of sustainable and active travel in order to improve the health and well-being of children and we are thrilled that we have attained the highest award in this area.

It was fantastic to see so many children take part in our Coronation Bling your bike event, earlier in the year and our Walk to school challenge week.

We are starting this year with the Year 3 children carrying out their Pedestrian training in October and we hope as many of our St Paul's families will pledge to Walk to School during October

International Walk to School Month.

Look out for Platinum accreditation on our website. A huge thank you from Mrs Atkinson and Mrs Smith.



History learning in Year 4



As part of our Ancient Egypt topic, Year 4 students have been working on string art this week. Last week, pupils practised drawing hieroglyphics and Egyptian designs in their art books. They carefully glued their strings to the cardboard after drawing their chosen design this week. The next step will be to paint them

Dates for the Autumn Term (new info in RED)

- Wed 27th September - Year R Reading Meeting for Parents/Carers (9 am and again at 6 pm)
- Thursday 28th September - School Photos
- Tuesday 3rd October - Y4 Egyptian Workshop
- Thursday 12th October - Flu Vaccines in School (letter to be sent next week)
- **Wednesday 11th October—Parents evening for those with children with additional needs (3.30pm onwards)**
- Thursday 12th October - Parents Eve (4.30 pm to 7 pm)
- 16th & 17th October - Y3 Pedestrian Training
- Tues 17th October - Parents' Eve 3.30 pm to 6 pm
- 23rd to 27th October - Half Term
- 2nd, 3rd and 14th Nov - Open Mornings for R24
- Wednesday 8th Nov - Chestnut Class Assembly, 9 am (School Hall)
- Thursday 16th Nov - Hawthorn Class Assembly 9 am (School Hall)
- Tuesday 5th Dec - KS2 Christmas Service, 9.30 am (St Paul's Church)
- Tuesday 5th Dec - KS1 Christmas Service, 2 pm (St Paul's Church)
- Wednesday 6th Dec - KS2 Christmas Service, 7 pm (St Paul's Church)
- Thursday 7th Dec - Year R Nativity, 9.30 am (School Hall)
- Monday 11th Dec - YR & KS1 Panto in School
- Friday 15 Dec - End of Term (1.15 pm/1.30 pm)
- Tuesday 2nd Jan - INSET (No Pupils in School)
- Wed 3rd Jan - First Day of Spring Term



Reading Competition

We are delighted with the response by children to the Dorking Library Competition that ran over the Summer holidays. Its aim was to 'keep children reading and to enjoy anything they like to read'. 74 children across the school took part, a fantastic

achievement that was recognised as part of celebration assembly

