

Dear Parents and Carers

### **Hello and Welcome!**

Welcome back to you all! I hope you all had a fantastic summer break – in spite of the weather! I would also like to welcome all the children who joined our community in September. We will all be working very hard to ensure that they feel happy and reassured as they settle into school life. I would also like to welcome Miss Doherty, our new teacher in the Foundation 2 Key Stage (previously known as Reception)

Over the coming days and weeks I look forward to meeting and getting to know you.

### **Weekly Newsletter**

Good communication between school and home (and vice versa) is absolutely key. One of the ways I intend keeping you informed of developments is through the publication of a weekly newsletter. Typically it will contain information and updates about school that we feel are important and that you might find useful. From next week it will be emailed to all households. I would be grateful if you would ensure that we have your correct email address within ParentMail.

A key priority is to set up a school website. When this has been set up you will also be able to access the weekly newsletter from here too. If you have a problem accessing a newsletter via email please contact us. Thank you.

### **Staff News**

I spoke with Mrs Humphries recently and she told me that she is making a steady recovery and is starting to feel much better. Her doctors have informed her that she should not return to work before January. As a community we are holding Mrs Humphries in prayer and I would ask that you also remember her in your prayers – that she regains her health and makes a full recovery.

I would like to reassure the parents and carers of our Year 2 children that everything is being done to ensure that there is as much consistency as possible. We recognise and understand the importance of this, and I am delighted that Mrs Jones was able to continue to cover Mrs Humphries' absence. I will keep you informed of developments.

### **Calendar**

Your child will be bringing home a school calendar, which will include information on the half term holiday and key events in school. These include Masses, Assemblies, Educational Visits and our INSET day which will be on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2012. Please keep it safe so you can refer to it if you need to. At the moment it only covers terms 1 and 2 (until Christmas). The calendars for terms 3 and 4 and terms 5 and 6 will be issued in due course. In the future, it is my intention to issue you with an annual calendar of events.

### **Uniform**

I am a great supporter of school uniform because I believe strongly that it provides a school with an identity – and builds a sense of community; it puts our children on a level playing field and it promotes standards. I am very impressed with our uniform – the colours impressed my father too, as he is a keen supporter of West Ham Football club! I do appreciate your support in ensuring that our children look smart when they come to school everyday.

### **Jewellery**

I would appreciate your support in ensuring that children do *not* come to school wearing bracelets, rings, friendship or charity bands.

### **Partnership**

We are first and foremost a community school. Our Catholic mission is to be a beating heart within our community, and it is a mission I believe in and take very seriously. As part of this mission I want to further develop strong links with our parishes, local groups and with you our parents and carers. I am also very interested in establishing a Parent, Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA) with charitable status to serve two purposes:

- I. As a forum for bringing people together
- II. To involve the community in different fun events that also raise funds to improve the school environment and resources for our children.

If any one is interested please leave your details with Mrs Battams so that I can arrange a meeting.

### **Foundation 2**

Foundation 2 is a distinct Key Stage that follows on from the nursery provision that most children have before starting school. A key aspect of the Foundation 2 curriculum is the free flow of children and activities between the classroom and our outside learning area. As the children will be outside for part of the day we would be grateful if you:

- (a) could send your child in with an appropriate sun hat; and
- (b) would apply sun block **before** you bring your child to school. Please note that staff are not allowed to apply it on your behalf.

### **Mobile Phones**

Mobile phones should only be brought into school if your child is in Year 5 or Year 6 and is going home on his or her own. Phones **must** be brought straight to the office for safe keeping during the school day. Under no circumstances must children have mobile phones around school. Thank you for your support.

### **Morrisons Gardening Vouchers**

Vouchers can be deposited in a special collection box outside the School Office. Thank you.

### **Year 6 – Secondary School Transfer**

A reminder that the closing date for all applications, online or paper, for admission to secondary schools in September 2013, is 31 October 2012.

Please note that for admission to a Catholic secondary school you need to complete TWO application forms. Firstly you have to complete the local authority form (Common Application Form) online or in paper form and secondly you also need to complete a Catholic school application (Additional Information Form). **Both** are required by a Catholic secondary school as part of their admission process.

### **Achievements Outside of School**

At St John Fisher we aim to recognise and celebrate all achievement and I would be grateful if you would notify me or my colleagues in the School Office if your child has achieved something outside of school so that we can publish their name along with brief details in the weekly newsletter. For example a swimming distance award, the achievement of a higher belt in a martial art, a badge in Beavers, Rainbows, Cubs or Brownies, a Match Award, a Dancing Certificate etc. Thank you.

### **Attendance**

High attendance is vitally important. Last year I was delighted to note that the attendance record St John Fisher exceeded the 96% threshold. This is outstanding from an OFSTED perspective. That said we cannot afford to rest on our laurels and must work continually to promote a high attendance. In next week's newsletter we will start publishing details of the three highest attending classes in the newsletter. The winning class will play host to a bear who will visit and stay with them for the week. The children who work with Miss Kiernan and Mrs Asquith are coming up with ideas for naming the bear – and this will be revealed in next week's newsletter.

### **Finally**

I would like to thank the children, my new colleagues and you, the parents and carers, for making me feel so welcome this week. Have a wonderful weekend!

F Barratt  
Headteacher