

Dear Parents and Carers

### **School Mass**

It was wonderful for us to come together proudly as a school community this morning to celebrate the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross. It was an opportunity for us to root the school year in prayer. I would like to thank Fr Paul for celebrating Mass; Miss Kipling for preparing the liturgy; Mr Burt for leading the wonderful music; Mr Smith and our fantastic young people in Year 6 for leading the liturgy; our a fantastic altar servers and all the boys and girls for joining in with the responses and singing so well. I would also like to thank all the parents, carers and friends of the school who were able to join us. I felt very blessed to be part of this community and celebration today.

### **Bluebell Wood**

As a community we have been invited to get involved with the 'Living with Nature' initiative in partnership with Bluebell Wood Hospice. The Bluebell Wood Children's Hospice is located in North Anston, Sheffield. It is a very special place which offers care and support to children with a shortened life expectancy, both in their own homes and at the hospice in North Sheffield. Bluebell Wood is a place filled with laughter and love. The hospice aims to give families the chance to relax, take a break and have fun - and they aim to support the whole family. It costs £3 million every year to offer this support. With no government funding, the hospice relies on charitable donations. We have been invited to support them by getting involved in a scheme to plant a new bluebell wood here in Hackenthorpe, at Dyke Vale Road.

You can join in by buying a bulb (or several bulbs) - at a cost of £1 each. If you would like to support this worthy cause, all you need to do is send in your donation in an envelope marked clearly "Bluebell Wood". We will then contact the charity and order the bulbs. Representatives of our School Council will then join Ms Golland in planting the bulbs on behalf of our community, and your donations will be passed directly to the hospice. Thank you.

### **Social Networking**

It has been brought the school's and Governors' attention that, from time to time, comments are made and shared on social networking sites such as Facebook. These sites are very popular because they bring people together, which can be tremendously positive. The nature of such sites means that any comments made flow far and wide. Sadly, when these comments are negative and directed at an individual or groups of people who are part of our community, it can prove very distressing to those affected.

I very much hope that you all will work with school and Governors to ensure that St John Fisher continues to be a place where every member of our community feels welcome and respected. Thank you.

### **Class Liturgies**

As a result of lessons taking place in the school hall, and to avoid disturbing the children, please could parents wait outside the main entrance (weather permitting) until the class teacher informs the office that the class are ready. If it is raining we ask that you arrive no more than 5 mins before the time, when you will be able to wait outside the staff room.

### **Partnership**

*As you know, strengthening the parent/carer partnership is a key priority of mine.*

Last year SJF piloted sessions for parents and carers such as coffee drop-ins, parenting skills and craft activities etc. A number of parents have also requested sessions for information and support with regards to children with additional needs. This year we will try to incorporate all of these into a specific programme. They will be open to any parent who feels that the subject or activity is of interest to them. These sessions will take place on Thursday afternoons 2.15pm – 3.20pm in the Church Hall. A list of dates and the proposed sessions can be found on the Parent Information Board and will also be available at the first general coffee and information session which takes place on **Thursday 20 September**. Please see Mrs Asquith at this session if you wish to be involved in some or all of the sessions. My thanks go to Mrs Asquith for planning and delivering this programme.

### **Bobby Bear & Attendance Awards**

I would like to introduce Bobby Bear to you. Bobby was named by the children who work with

Mrs Asquith and Miss Kiernan. Bobby will visit the class with the best attendance for week ending

7 September were:

1. In first place was Y5 with a 100% attendance
2. In second place was Foundation 2 with a 98.9% attendance
3. In third place was Y4 with a 97.9% attendance

Congratulations to the girls and boys of Y5 class, I know Bobby will enjoy visiting you next week! For the week ending 07-09-12 the average attendance was 97.7% which is above our target of 96%.

### **Ice Cream Sales**

A huge thank you to Karen Murphy for organising and selling Ice Creams after school during the Summer. She managed to raise a massive £408 for school funds.

### **Medical Details**

Occasionally children's Medical Conditions change during their time at school. Asthma is one of the conditions which we need to be aware of, especially during PE lessons. If your child is diagnosed as Asthmatic and requires an Inhaler during the day kindly contact your doctor for a spare which can be left in school (CLEARLY NAMED) in the class Inhaler box.

**Parents should check their child's Inhaler regularly to ensure it is not empty.**

If your child has any Medical conditions that we need to be aware of details should be indicated in the Medical Section of the PUPIL INFORMATION SHEET which you will have recently received.

If details change during the year which could affect your child's education in any way (even just needing to go to the toilet more often) please inform the school office.

Thank you for your support – your child's welfare is important to us

PLEASE NOTE: Short Term medication (prescribed or non-prescribed) cannot be administered by school staff. Parents must come into school to give their child medicine if they need it during the school day. The only exception is for children who require LONG TERM or LIFE SAVING medication when a Health Care Plan will have been set up with the School Nurse. Children MUST NOT bring any form of medication (tablets or sachets) to take themselves.

### **Behaviour Initiative**

The lucky winner of the £20 cash for the end of the Summer Term was Matthew Ford. Well Done!

### **Assemblies, Pastoral Groups and Praise Days**

You will probably hear your child talk about Assemblies, Pastoral Groups and Praise Days. These take place on a rota basis on Friday afternoons. Parents are very welcome to attend any of the Class Assemblies – dates are on your School Calendar.

### **ParentMail**

If you haven't already done so please make sure that you register with ParentMail2 using the code on the letter which we have recently sent home. At the end of this month we migrate to ParentMail2 and ParentMail1 will no longer be available. We will be using ParentMail2 to update you on anything that is happening in school either on the Newsletter or by a separate letter/note. Until then, most of our information will be sent home on paper so please keep looking in your child's bag. **PLEASE NOTE that once we start using ParentMail2 it is up to you, the parents, to keep your e-mail and mobile telephone numbers up to date!**

### **Pupil Information Forms**

This week we sent out a white envelope containing a Pupil Information form detailing the information we hold in our database for your child. This is sent home every Autumn for updating. Please check the form carefully, sign on the back and ensure that you return it to school (in the same envelope for Data Protection purposes) before 14 September with or without any amendments. It is most important that you keep contact telephone numbers up to date throughout the year in case we need to get in touch urgently.

### **Dates for your Diaries**

Everyone should have received a copy of the Calendar for Terms 1 and 2. We are pleased to inform you of a few dates for the rest of the school year where you may need to either arrange alternative child care or time off work:

**Spring Term Parents' Evening** – Tuesday 12 February 4.00pm – 7.00pm

**Easter Performance (Y3,4,5)** – Tuesday 26 March (2.15pm) and Wednesday 27 March (7.00pm)

**Sports Day** – during National Sports Week – exact date to follow as soon as we know

### **Autumn Term Parents' Evenings**

A letter will be sent home shortly providing more details about the Parents' Evenings and with a form for you to return to book an appointment with your child's teacher. Please note that appointments are for 5 minutes only to discuss your child's learning and academic progress. If you have any other issues you wish to discuss kindly make a separate appointment with the teacher at a mutually convenient time. If you have any worries before or after Parents' Evening kindly speak to your child's teacher asap to resolve the problem.

### **Morning Arrival**

In an effort to encourage 'Independence' in our Y3/Y4/Y5/Y6 children we ask that parents leave the playground as soon as possible before the morning bell – 8:50am – so that the children can line up in their relevant classes with their friends and make their own way into school. Members of staff are on duty in the playground every morning from 8:40am. On **'Wet Mornings'** ALL CHILDREN should use Y5/Y6 entrance and meet in the School Hall where staff again will be in attendance from 8:40am. At 8:50am the children will go to their relevant classrooms

**TO SAFEGUARD ALL OUR CHILDREN PARENTS SHOULD NOT COME INTO THE BUILDING UNLESS THEY NEED TO SPEAK TO A MEMBER OF STAFF**

### **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**

Oscar Cranston in Year 6 is a scout and was recently awarded the 'Tiger Patrol' badge, his first anniversary badge, the Artist badge and the 'Nights Away' badge. Well done Oscar!

A reminder that if you would like to share details of your children's achievements outside of school, for example a swimming distance award, a martial art award, a Match Award, Dancing Certificate etc. please send the details into school. Thank you.

### **Parking**

Parking regularly becomes an issue around school. Please be sensible when bringing and collecting your child and please consider our residents by not blocking their driveways or parking on their grass.

### **Football Coaching**

The after-school football coaching run by Mr Wood commences for the girls and boys of Years 3 and 4 on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September 2012. Participants will have the opportunity of achieving various 'Star Awards'. The cost of this session is £2.50 – which includes a 50p donation to school. This fee covers the coaches necessary to prepare the children for the awards and for the awards themselves. A letter will be forwarded to you next week. Coaching and matches for the girls and boys in Years 5 and 6 commence next Friday 21<sup>st</sup> September. As the older children will not be doing Star Awards, there is no charge. I would like to thank Mr Wood for all he does to support us.

### **Proposed PTFA**

Thank you to those who have passed us their names and contact details. We will get together for a short meeting initially, straight after school, during the week commencing 24-09-12. If you are interested in getting involved - in small ways or big - I would be very grateful if you would add your names to those already submitted. I will confirm the date of the meeting shortly. Thank you.

### **Governor News**

Sarah Ludlam (parent to William and Alex in Y1) has recently joined the Governors as a new Foundation Governor, with a term of office of four years.

Next week, a letter will be sent home for each family to ask for the annual donation to the Diocese Building Fund. As you may be aware, some of the money raised stays in school to help with our buildings and maintenance, and we are using that money to pay towards the renewal of our boiler which will be taking place this term.

Have a happy and safe weekend.

F Barratt  
Headteacher