



St Andrew's Church of England (VC) Primary School

'Learn to love and love to learn; in God's love each one will shine.'

St Andrew's Weekly Update

Date: 25.9.20

Headteacher: Mrs H Gillingham

Value: Hope

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well, the autumn equinox this week has certainly heralded a change in the weather. This week was also a sad week for us at St Andrew's as we have had to say a fond farewell to Mrs Addy. She has been an absolute delight to work with and I know from all of the comments from parents and staff that she has been an outstanding and compassionate member of our St Andrew's team over the years. She started her journey with us nineteen years ago as an LSA in the Early Years and also worked with Bobtails and Busy Bees. Since then she has developed and trained as a school counsellor and been an important part of our SEND team. We will miss her but wish her well in her new ventures. "Au revoir Mrs Addy!"

Mrs Davey wrote a lovely poem which her class performed to Mrs Addy. It is as follows;

You have been a wonderful friend,
You have helped us fly so high.
We can't believe it's now the end
And now, we must all say "Goodbye."
But soon we know we'll meet again,
You'll see how much we have grown.
You'll come to notice there and then
No one learns and grows alone.
You gave yourself, you did your part,
You nurtured us with your loving heart.
We'll miss you, we hope you know,
And wish you didn't have to go.
But Godspeed to you and lots of love,
And smiles from God up above.



I am often heard to say that I feel we are running two schools – one the "covid-19 operations side" and the second "normal school" where we are bedding down and really focusing on the learning of the children. To this end the staff are presently benchmarking the children in terms of their attainment. We are continuing with training and support from Herts for Learning to ensure that our Maths and English teaching is exactly matched with what our children need. Staff subject leaders are looking at their subjects and making sure they include appropriate catch up modules for the

parts missed through the Lockdown period and that staff feel supported to deliver this year's expectations. Mr Chesterman and Miss Muncey have begun their middle leadership qualification and we have welcomed our new student in Year 1, Miss Ives, as she begins her first steps training as a teacher.

The overview and objectives of our School Development Plan for this academic year can be found on our website.

<https://standrews323.herts.sch.uk/our-school/our-vision/>

The "normal" health and safety expectations of schools also continue and we had our first fire practice this week. The children did amazingly well and were all out below three minutes. Our Year 6 children were an excellent role models in how they departed themselves and modelled the expected silent leaving the classroom.

Harvest Festival

We were very excited to welcome Reverend Sarah Forrest to our school this week. Suitably attired with her clear visor, she visited all classes to say a hello and introduce herself. I am very much looking forward to her taking some of our school collective worship starting with her leading (via Teams) our harvest Festival Collective Worship in a few weeks. She will be talking to the children about the Diocese of St Alban's harvest appeal "Creating a Buzz in Nepal" which is aimed at encouraging more farmers in Nepal to keep bees as a way of supporting enhanced crop production and also providing the farmers with a good income generated from sales of honey. It has been estimated that the country of Nepal can sustain 125,000 beehives; presently, there are around 26,000, showing there is significant opportunity for further growth. If you would like to contribute to this cause, then please send any contributions to the office in an envelope marked **Bees Appeal**



Thank you for the contributions we have had for our food bank appeal. The box for dry goods is outside the main entrance.

Reading, Reading, Reading

As you know we have invested hugely in promoting and encouraging reading in our school. Our two libraries are being finished off with new furniture and we are presently ordering half class reading sets of quality fiction books for all classes, a set for each half term. Our intention is to ensure that, as our children move through the school, they study and get to read the very best children's authors and books. We know that great literature helps widen children's vocabulary and understanding of the structure of writing which will help enrich their own writing.

We are always looking for ways to promote our children's love of literature – which is getting ever more important as children are being too often lured away from reading through the twinkle of online gadgets and games. To this end I would like to inform you about an online (oh the irony!) but reading related event; "Reading is Magic" festival by the Book Trust.

<https://www.readingismagicfestival.com/>

The Festival brings you an all-star line-up of authors and illustrators for six days of free digital events for schools and families from **27 September to 2 October**. Inspired by Waterstones Children's Laureate Cressida Cowell's key message 'reading is magic and magic is for everyone', book festivals across the globe have teamed up to create an online festival, so that young people don't have to miss out on seeing their favourite authors and illustrators this year. Each day gives a mix of events to spark children's imagination and creativity e.g. Comic artist Adam Murphy encourages budding artists to create a comic. A collection of authors talk about how they write mystery stories and pass on ideas so children can write their own. Join Joseph Coelho as he shows children how to perform poetry aloud. It is certainly a website worth dipping into and the staff will be doing so next week.

Time to read packs

Time to Read packs have been given out to our Reception children. These packs contain the very funny picture book 'The Runaway Pea' by Kjartan Poskitt & Alex Willmore, are aimed to encourage reading for pleasure, which we know has a positive impact for children both academically but also for their mental health and empathy skills too. If you are a Reception parent and did not receive your free pack then please talk to the School Office where we have a few spare packs.

Important Information with regard to communication

Please be reminded that the class email addresses are presently to be used only for curriculum purposes. They should not be used on a daily basis for any other communication to the school, as the teachers are not able to monitor these on a regular basis. eg. collection, lunch and health arrangements. Directives to staff regarding these should be sent to the school email account at: admin@standrews323.herts.sch.uk Thank you.

Covid-19 Safety Information

Yesterday we sent out a letter from Jim McManus, the Director of Public Health for HCC. I have put this letter onto our website if you need to refer to it again. It can be found on the following link as can other Covid related information sheets we have sent out.

<https://standrews323.herts.sch.uk/news-dates/letters-home/>



As his letter says we are constantly reviewing our procedures and processes to ensure that everybody is as safe as we can make it at school. Staff wear face coverings in any areas where they cannot maintain the recommended social differences and we continue to ensure that our class bubbles are kept away from other bubbles.

Thank you again for supporting us with this and making sure that when you do have to wait either at drop off and pick up times that you also keep your social distance and wear face coverings.

CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING

Advice for parents and carers on looking after the mental health and wellbeing of children or young people during the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak can be found on the following link;

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing>



This week's **You Can, Toucan** awards, chosen by the staff, go to:

Nursery: Amelia for always being kind to others and for making friends with her peers.

Reception: Cianna for fantastic effort in maths. She has been trying so hard to write number sentences with + and = symbols.

Year 1: Lily for facing the new challenges of Year 1 with maturity and **Louie** for trying hard with his reading.

Year 2: Aaliyah for her creative writing at home.

Year 3: Rebecca and Millie F for their great attitude to their work and presentation.

Year 4: Maya for her perseverance in her maths this week.

Year 5: Amany for her enthusiasm towards her learning.

Year 6: Jodie for her excellent maths work and **Emily** for her fantastic effort in all of the curriculum areas.

Our Value: Hope



He will be called “wonderful Counsellor,” “Mighty God,” “Eternal Father,” and “Prince of Peace.” Isaiah 9.6

In our collective worship this week we have been looking at the words the Prophet Isaiah spoke foretelling the coming of Jesus and the hope they brought to the people then and for Christians today.

Year 4 then looked at another passage from Isaiah, thinking about times in their own lives when they had to hope.

“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.” Isaiah 40:31

Hope does indeed give us strength to face whatever life sends our way. I wish you all a happy and hopeful weekend.

Kind regards,

Mrs Gillingham

Office Update

Music:

All music lessons will recommence this Monday, 28th September. This includes both our piano and brass tuition. Please remember to click the link sent via Parentmail this week to Herts Music Service to ensure your child is included in their register. If you have any queries, please contact the School Office.

Dinners:

As mentioned earlier this week, next Thursday, 1st October (our School Census Day) and on every Thursday up until the end of the half term, we will be offering a choice of a hot cheese and tomato pizza with chips or fish finger roll for children in Reception – Year 6. (Children will need to bring their own packed lunch on these Thursdays if they do not require a hot meal). The option of a school packed lunch, with a choice of either; ham, cheese or tuna roll will still be available on all other days. Parents do not have to let the School Office know in advance if your child wishes to have a weekly hot meal, they will be asked on the day.

SANDWICH LUNCHES

As a reminder to parents of children who are bringing in a home packed lunch, that in line with our healthy eating programme, the following guidelines are set out to parents regarding foods to be included/excluded in sandwich lunches.

- To supplement sandwiches / rolls / wraps/ savoury lunchtime foods, children are encouraged to include fruit and vegetables in their lunchboxes.

- Eggs for sandwiches etc. should be very well cooked to avoid the possibility of salmonella and to cut down the risk of an allergic reaction.
- Cake, biscuits, mini biscuits or biscuit bars eg. penguin bars are also permitted, but only as part of their packed lunch.
- ‘Squeezy’ yogurts should only be used if your child is able to open the packet themselves.
- Children should not bring actual sweets or bars of chocolate to school as part of their packed lunch
- Packed lunches should be sent in a named, leak-proof lunch box.
- Drinks should be in cartons or unbreakable bottles. They should be ‘still’ and cold.

NUTS

VERY IMPORTANT: St Andrew’s is a ‘nut-free’ zone. Please note that we cannot allow peanuts, any type of nuts or sesame seeds in school either as a snack, in snack bars or peanut butter in sandwiches, due to the risk of anaphylaxis. Even the dust from peanuts can be fatal and it is imperative that parents adhere to this very important regulation. This also applies to ‘birthday’ sweets.

Nasal Flu Immunisation:

As a reminder, Vaccination UK will be offering all children from Reception to Year 6 a nasal flu spray, in school, during the next half term. A letter will be sent home shortly detailing the vaccination nasal spray together with a consent form which all parents and carers of children in Reception – Year 6 will need to complete.

Collins Big Cat Books:

Thank you to all those families who have returned school reading books. We still have a large number of books missing for Early Years that were given out just prior to lockdown in March to parents currently in Reception to Year 2. The books are part of the ‘Collins Big Cat’ set. Please could we remind parents & carers to have another good look around to see if you have any lurking (behind sofa, in an old bag, under the dog?!). We have a box outside the main reception (marked ‘Books’) where any books can be left. Thank you.

Parentmail:

If you have recently requested via the School Office a change to your set up in Parentmail eg. update to Primary Contact, or if you have amended any data held directly, we have become aware of a software issue at the present time that is not retaining the information/changes on their site. Parentmail are dealing with the issue. If you have been affected by this and have a concern, please contact the School Office and we will look into the issue on your behalf.

Secondary School Applications:

Also as a reminder, our Year 6 parents need to apply for a secondary school place via the HCC website: www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/admissions by the deadline of 31st October 2020. Please refer to information sent in earlier newsletters for details of the secondary school open events. The School Office is happy to help if you have any concerns / queries.

FORTHCOMING DATES:

September

30th Nursery 'Meet the Teacher' via Zoom - 2.00pm & 6.00pm