

St Aidan's Newsletter

November 2022



Welcome back to everyone. I hope the half term holiday was restful. This is always the busiest half term of the year – there is so much to do and December gets particularly busy.

Remembrance Day

As Remembrance Day falls on a Friday this year, we will be marking this occasion to school with a Liturgy instead of Celebration Assembly. The children will gather at around 10:45 to pray together and we will observe two minutes silence together at 11:00am. Any parents who are not at work are welcome to join us for the Liturgy (as they always are) should they wish. Please note that this is not a performance and it is not needed that anyone books time off to attend; it is simply an invitation to pray with us, should you be available.

Building Work/Boiler Work

I am pleased to say that the boiler work and refurbishment of the heating system has been successful. The system was turned on over the half term holiday and the system was tested prior to the children coming back into school. We have heat across the entire site now and the building was noticeably much warmer than it has been in the past. The system should now be safeguarded against any future breakdowns or the need for expensive maintenance. It should also be more efficient in terms of cost – something which all of us within school are very happy about.

As you would have noticed, the school car park was out of action due to the contractors being onsite. We were unable to carry out any further work on the school yard due to this issue. Now that this has been cleared, I will be working with the School Councillors to have the fencing removed and install some seating/bike and scooter racks/ and have some bright new games printed on the yard. This has already been budgeted for and I hope to get it carried out as soon as possible.

We also have a number of other projects on the cards across school, including replacing the flooring in a number of rooms and relocating the library to what was the ICT suite.

Road Works

I have recently spoke to the council again regarding the traffic calming measures that were put in place outside of the school to try and alleviate some of the parking issues. There will be further works taking place in the near future including adding more no parking barriers to the junction between Moorhouse Lane and Keats Grove.

I have also spoken to the Council and asked them to give some thought to redesigning the barrier around our school entrance - widening it and adding a paved ramp and gate to



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allow the children to step straight from the path onto the car park entrance. They have promised to look into this for me and I will keep you informed.

School Uniform

Just a reminder that any earrings should be removed before entering school. Clear plastic retainers may be worn to preserve the holes.

Please ensure the children arrive to school in correct school uniform and PE kit.

Please remember, we have a significant amount of pre-owned school uniform, most of which is in excellent condition, stored in the caretaker's bungalow. If you would like to request some uniform – free of charge – please speak to Mrs Shortt or Mrs Jobling and they will be happy to help.

Activities/Trips etc

Please remember that the cost of one of these will never be prohibitive to the children taking part in one of these events. If you are struggling with the cost of living, please speak to us in confidence and we will support any of our families in whatever way we can.

Leave of Absence/Attendance

Our attendance target for this year is 97% - higher than our previous attendance levels have been historically.

So far this year our whole school attendance is 95.61% which is higher than the national average. I would ask that parents continue to only keep children out of school as an absolute last resort and that any appointments are arranged outside of school hours wherever possible.

I would also ask that children continue to arrive punctually.

Have you thought.....?

Minutes missed	Time lost in a week	Time lost over a school year
5	25 minutes	3 days
10	50 minutes	6.5 days
15	1 hour and a half	10 days
20	1 hour 40 minutes	13 days
19 days	2 hours and a half	19 days



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All holidays should be booked outside of school times. Parents should note that the vast majority requests for leave of absences will be rejected in line with the school Leave of Absence Policy.

Clubs

Thank you for the interest in the extra clubs. It really has been fantastic to see so many new faces at 'Mini Movers' and Miss Carrie's coding club. We have had a number of pupils express interest in learning to play the guitar. I will speak to Mrs Owen who will be teaching the children and we will organise some taster sessions during in school time – before Christmas – to see if the children are ready to commit to this properly.

Thank you for the feedback that was given on about the access to some other sporting activities after school such as Rugby or Cricket etc. I will look to buy in some specialist support to run clubs like these after Christmas.

Social Media

The best way to stay up to date with all the wonderful things happening in the classroom is to follow our Instagram account. It is full of photos of all of the wonderful things the children get up to. The tag is @staidansashington.

Parent/carers Consultations and Feedback

It was lovely to speak to so many of you last week at the parent/carers consultations and it seemed to run very smoothly. The vast majority you all managed to speak to your child's teacher. If you did not, please contact the office and they would be happy to arrange an appointment.

Thank you to all of the people who took the time to scribble a comment on the sheets which were in the Dining Hall. The suggestions for what we could do to improve what we offer in school are very much appreciated and we will take these into consideration. It was also lovely to read some of the extremely positive comments for the staff. I shared them with the staff in the Staff Room and they very much appreciated the comments and recognition of their hard work.

Forthcoming Events

Please see an updated list of all forthcoming events – many of which you would already have seen in the previous edition.

This includes a few small alterations due to clashes but also the Film Night and Christmas Disco organised by the School Council. Tickets remain on sale for these events – please speak to the office if you wish to purchase any.



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It seems that there are not enough volunteers or enough interest to form a PTA like we have pre-COVID. It is quite a big undertaking and requires a lot of time and effort which many parents simply can't commit to. With that being said, a number of parents/carers may wish to help out at the nights ran by the School Council – if this is the case, please let me know and we would very much appreciate any help.

Finally

Thank you again for your ongoing support. It continues to be a privilege to serve our little community.



Mr M Moran

Headteacher



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