



St. Stephen's School  
and Children's Centre  
*Learning for Life*

Headteacher's Newsletter

Issue 4

22nd February 2021

Dear Parents,

It has been an unusual first half of the spring term.

The children both in school and at home have been busy being creative and completing their school work. I hope that those of you at home are continuing to enjoy the sessions with your teachers and are taking advantage of this opportunity to see your classmates. I have been able to see some of the 'live drop in sessions' that teachers have been scheduling for children last week and this week and it has been a joy to see you all attending. The teachers are regularly feeding back to me all of the information about some of your wonderful work - keep it up!

We await further news on the Government's plans for 8th March this evening. This will give us the time to plan effectively for school reopening. As soon as we have any further information, we will share our plans with yourselves. Please trust that the school will ensure your children will receive a full and appropriate curriculum in the coming months. It is also important to remember that the children have continued to learn during lockdown but just in a different way.

Some parents have made donations of food for school staff members currently on site. On behalf of everyone at school, we are so grateful for your generosity. Acts of kindness and appreciation like this remind us all how lucky we are to work with such a wonderful school community.

During this time where information is changing rapidly please can I request you check the website and texts on a daily basis. If you wish to speak to me about any issues that concern you please feel free to contact me.

Thank you!

Stay safe and well everybody

*Ms. Neena Lall OBE -Headteacher*



## COVID-19

With the continued COVID-19 pandemic, it is important for all members of the public and our staff to be treated with courtesy and respect.

Good ventilation, together with social distancing, keeping your home clean and frequent handwashing, can help reduce the risk of spreading coronavirus.

Please ensure that at the beginning and end of the day:

- Avoid chatting in groups on the road
- Remember to social distance
- Wear a mask when entering the school

We feel sure that you will understand that proper behaviour is absolutely necessary for our school community during these continued uncertain times.

With the roll out of the Vaccination in Newham and the rest of the country, we encourage all parents and the community to take advantage of the vaccine when they receive their appointment.

Please see the following link for more information in community languages.

<https://www.england.nhs.uk/london/our-work/covid-19-vaccine-communication-materials/>

## RHE PARENT CONSULTATION FEEDBACK

Thank you to everyone who took part in our Relationship and Health Education (RHE) consultation process. We had 66 parent responses and 5 1:1 parental consultation meetings, conducted over Zoom. We have now begun the curriculum and policy review and we look forward to sharing our results and outcomes with you later this half term.

We are very grateful to you for engaging with us and sharing your feedback.

## IMPORTANCE OF PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Moving forward from lockdown we must remember the importance of being active for both our physical and mental health. Our local community has been particularly badly hit by the Covid virus and it is crucial that we take all the steps we can to help ourselves and our children get into good healthy habits for the future.

In school and in nursery we will be focussing more on physical development over the coming months.

It is recommended by the British Heart Foundation that all children should have at least three hours of vigorous physical activity a day.

This can be:

- running
- skipping
- jumping
- throwing and catching
- cycling
- scootering
- swimming
- dancing
- walking



During the pandemic many parents have reported that their children are experiencing increased levels of stress and anxiety. When we exercise, the body produces endorphins - this is a hormone which makes us feel happy and calm and can help to counteract children's fears and worries.

### **SPEECH AND LANGUAGE**

As families have been spending more time together during the pandemic hopefully it has been a good opportunity for you to engage in longer conversations with your children.

Encouraging children to speak with confidence and fluency in different situations is a critical skill that they must be encouraged to practise, learn and use.

Take the time to talk to your children both individually and as part of family discussions. This will support them in understanding the key skill of turn taking as well as responding appropriately. Please encourage your children to answer in full sentences as well as reminding them to look at the person they are talking to.

If you need any more support or advice please ask the school for a copy of the St. Stephen's Parent's Guide, which highlights key language milestones.

### **COMMUNITY SUPPORT DURING COVID**

During these uncertain times, St Stephen's School has continued to provide Free School Meal Vouchers and Food parcels to children that qualify.

A total of 132 vouchers were given out to parents to cover the Christmas period which includes a payment for the February half term holiday and a further 156 food parcels have been distributed since the schools return on the 4th January 2021.

St Stephen's has been reaching out to the community in a variety of ways to support learning and wellbeing during this latest lockdown. For those students who have no access to electronic devices to complete remote learning, learning books have been distributed and home visits took place.

To support the pupils who are entitled to Pupil Premium, the school has provided a bag full of resources to over 160 children. Each bag was bespoke to each year group and contained things such as pencil cases (pencils, pens, rulers, rubbers, sharpness, scissors), exercise books, flash cards, dictionaries, skipping ropes, felt tips, colouring pencils, activity books and a set of reading books.

We have also been supporting families with Remote learning by loaning out both our school Chromebooks and some additional devices we have received from the Department for Education. At present, we have loaned out 81 devices to families which has helped 110 children get online. We are continuing to loan out any new devices we receive. If your child does not have a device to complete their remote learning on or is struggling with a wifi connection, please call the school office and we will endeavour to support you in any way we can.

### **PARENT'S EVENING UPDATE**

Due to the school closure, we unfortunately had to postpone the parent's evenings planned for the Spring term. We understand the value of communication between parents and teachers and will be looking to rearrange this parents evening later in the year. Please continue to communicate with your child's teacher through phone and email.

The next 2 parent's evenings will take place in the weeks beginning 26th April and 12th July 2021.



## NURSERY AND RECEPTION PARENT CONSULTATION DAYS

Nursery and Reception Parent Consultation days have also been affected by the third lockdown.

They will now take place on 29th April and 15th July.

Both Nursery and Reception will be closed on those days and you will be invited to come in and talk to your child's teacher/key person to review their progress. In the meantime, if there is anything you wish to discuss about your child's learning and development please communicate through phone and email.

## SAFEGUARDING

### Road Safety

When school is fully open, the roads outside our school are particularly busy at the start and end of the school day. Last term, there was an incident involving a pupil and a car on our local streets. It is vital that you ensure your children are kept safe whilst on the roads.

- When crossing the road, it is important that both you and your children look to see whether there are vehicles approaching before stepping into the road. Please encourage children to hold hands with each other or yourselves.
- If you are dropping your child off, please do not park outside the school gates and ensure your car has fully stopped before your child opens the car door. We are seeing children leaving slow moving vehicles and this is obviously very dangerous. Once parked, please do not pull off again before checking that there are any pedestrians, in particular children, walking in front or behind your vehicle.
- All children must wear a seat belt when travelling in a car.
- You must drive slowly on both Whitfield Road and Wyndham Road at all times. Unfortunately some parents have recently been driving too fast, which could lead to a serious injury to both pedestrians and/or car passengers.

## NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

The Children's Centre team is available to support families experiencing any difficulties which may be having an effect upon their children's well being and therefore their ability to make good progress in school. Some examples include financial hardship, problems with housing, parenting difficulties and feeling isolated or depressed.

Sometimes just sharing a problem can help to make it more manageable but if we feel you need more specialist help we can signpost you to the necessary service.

If you have experienced the loss of a family member during the pandemic, and are struggling to cope with the everyday demands of family life, we have staff who may be able to support you through the grieving process with compassion and understanding.

Please contact Marie Foley on 07904 663072.

## CONTACT US

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This newsletter is also available on the school website.

## SPRING TERM DATES 2021

### MARCH 2021

Thursday 4th March	Finance Committee meeting @10am
Thursday 18th March	Governors afternoon and Full Governing Body Meeting @4pm

### APRIL 2021

Thursday 1st April	Easter Holiday
Monday 19th April	School restarts at 8:45 am
Thursday 29th April	Nursery Parent Consultation Day and Reception Class Consultation Day

Children's Centre will remain open.

## SCHOOL TERM/HOLIDAY DATES

### SPRING TERM 2021

First day of term	Monday 4 <sup>th</sup> January
Half term	Monday 15 <sup>th</sup> February to Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> February



Last day of term	Thursday 1 <sup>st</sup> April
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### SUMMER TERM 2021

First day of term	Monday 19 <sup>th</sup> April
May Day	Monday 3 <sup>rd</sup> May
Half term	Monday 31 <sup>st</sup> May to Friday 4 <sup>th</sup> June
Last day of term	Thursday 22 <sup>nd</sup> July

### SCHOOL TERM/HOLIDAY DATES 2021-2022

#### AUTUMN TERM 2021

1 TT day	Wednesday 1 <sup>st</sup> September
First day of term for pupils	Thursday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September
Half term	Monday 25 <sup>th</sup> October to Friday 5 <sup>th</sup> November
Last day of term	Wednesday 22 <sup>nd</sup> December

#### SPRING TERM 2022

First day of term	Thursday 6 <sup>th</sup> January
Half term	Monday 14 <sup>th</sup> February to Friday 18 <sup>th</sup> February
Last day of term	Friday 1 <sup>st</sup> April

#### SUMMER TERM 2022

First day of term	Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> April
May Day	Monday 2 <sup>nd</sup> May
Half term	Monday 30 <sup>th</sup> May to Friday 3 <sup>rd</sup> June
Last day of term	Thursday 21 <sup>st</sup> July

