



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

Headteacher's Newsletter

Issue 3

5th January 2021

Dear Parents,

I hope that you have had a safe, peaceful and restful break.

THE STAFF OF ST STEPHEN'S JOIN ME IN WISHING ALL OUR FAMILIES A HAPPY, SAFE, VERY PEACEFUL AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR!

As I reflect on the difficult and ever changing last year, I must say a big thank you to my incredibly hard working staff team across the federation who always want the best and rise to the challenge! I have superb deputies, an outstanding school business manager and dedicated governors. I would also like to thank yourselves for supporting the school through all the decisions made during the COVID 19 pandemic.

Unfortunately this was not the planned return we had hoped for and we understand the anxiety and inconvenience the school and nursery closure will cause. However, Covid-19 infection and transmission rates in Newham remain extremely high, and it is important that we all play our part in trying to reduce the risk to our communities, our colleagues and our loved ones. With children working online more than ever please monitor their access to devices and be vigilant in keeping them safe from the dangers online.

The school has been involved in an increased number of charity events as we show gratitude for being safe and well. The staff have donated presents to our most vulnerable families, instead of a raffled Christmas hamper this year we have made 5 hampers to donate to the elderly and finally a big thank you to those who have donated on justgiving towards Newham Hospital part of the Barts trust.

I am extremely proud that the school has remained in the Top 10 State Primary Schools in the Country as published in the Sunday Times in November at No 5. Again, this sterling work can only be done in partnership with yourselves. To be part of a school community where parents and teachers want the best for the children is such a great privilege.

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.

With much respect

Ms. Neena Lall OBE
Headteacher



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR OF GOVERNORS- Mr Shashankar Jana

I wish you all a very happy new year.

I know the last year has been a tough, challenging and testing year. Let us start looking into the new year with more hope and a positive note of keeping ourselves safe and healthy. Positive thinking will get us over the current phase we are going through. Education allows us to believe in ourselves, lead to transformation and lead a positive life. With thoughts of the wellbeing of all, we traverse another year and welcome back everyone to our school.

On the academic front, our children have worked hard to achieve another year of excellent results. For the fourth year, our school is at the top of the school league tables. Our children have displayed their talents and continue to utilise the many wonderful opportunities here at St. Stephen's. This success is very much possible due to the great inspiration and motivation given by all the teachers, staff, and being efficiently led by the Head teacher and her senior leadership team. I appeal to our amazing parents to help us bring the best out of our kids at our school with the continued support to the school.

I would like to say the following to the pupils: be confident and courageous, true to who you are, and learn all that life has to offer. Each lesson is a stepping stone on the journey that leads to success. Enjoy each moment of your education. We are all there to make you a successful person.

As Governors, we always pledge to do our best to support the school in every way required. We wish all our students, parents and staff members a successful year to come. We normally get to meet the amazing parents, enthusiastic pupils and the whole school community, but unfortunately last year we missed lots of opportunities to meet due to the pandemic. We are still approachable if you need us.

Let's all be safe and healthy.

Happy New Year 2021!!!

KINDNESS

We continue to develop a broad and balanced curriculum for our pupils at St. Stephens and at the core of our teaching is the school vision. We want our children to be respectful British citizens and at the heart of that is kindness.

Kindness is defined as the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate of others and now, more than ever, it is important for our pupils to practise these traits. We explain to children that it is important to think about other people and their feelings. One of the most important elements of kindness that children need to remember is that it is not something to be rewarded but something to be done because it makes you feel good.

At school, we celebrate all acts of kindness no matter how big or small and we ask that you praise and acknowledge these acts at home too.



JOY CUP

'THE JOY CUP' is awarded to a member of each class each term.
The joy cup is awarded to those children who have a joy for coming to school and embrace all that St Stephen's has to offer.
I would like to congratulate the joy cup winners for the Autumn Term 2020.

Autumn 2020	RED-Saif Abdullah RRK-Afiyah Vahora RKC-Rachi Patel	1IN-Noah Choplin 1EW-Alex Bercea 1BH-Muhamma d Azan Khan	2HA- Mariam Mohammed 2TB- Safwana Khan 2MW- Vedant Dhakecha	3DT-Yusuf Aden 3LT- Cole Webb 3RM- Aarez Javeed	4MS-Claud Gonzaga 4AQ-Tameem ah Hasan 4SH-Abdul Rehan Shahid	5EW-Zaynah Aziz 5CC-Zarghuna Syed 5NB-Vladut Bercea	6NG-Malamin Drammeh 6EH-Colin Flack 6RF -Reya Andrews
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CHARITY WORK AT ST STEPHEN'S

- Donations of food for our, all year round food bank were gratefully received and were distributed by the Children's Centre over Christmas and will continue throughout the year.
- 5 Food hampers were distributed within the community to bring a bit of festive cheer.
- The Children's Centre work with many vulnerable families, and during the Christmas break, the team delivered toys and gifts to the many families we support in the community.
- Macmillan Coffee Morning : £790
- Save the Children- Christmas Jumper Day-£1100
- Christmas Card Justgiving : £710

Thank you for all your donations to these worthwhile causes.

SCHOOL FUND ACCOUNT:

Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic we have been unable to raise money for the school fund.

- Current Balance£ 2064.66

RELATIONSHIPS AND HEALTH EDUCATION UPDATE (RHE)

Thank you to all those who have contributed to our parent/carer consultation on our proposed RHE policy and curriculum.

The consultation period runs until **Friday 15th January**.

Should you wish to book in for a meeting with key members of the RHE team, or seek any further information about our draft documents, then please let the school office know.

All the information concerning the RHE Parent/Carer consultation can be found on the school website.



Article 12 and Student Council Pupil Survey

Pupil Survey

The Article 12 and Student Council surveyed every pupil in the school to find out their views about their experiences at St. Stephens and about how we can make St. Stephen's even better for everyone. This process helps the school to fulfil Article 12 of the Convention of the Rights of the Child: every child has the right to give their opinion, and for adults to take it seriously.

The Article 12 group asked the children about a range of topics, such as how they feel about school, and playtime, where they visit in the holidays, how they feel about coronavirus and whether they watch the news.

Excitingly, some of the Article 12 and Student Councils members had the opportunity to feedback their findings to the Leadership team, and discuss ideas for how they can use the children's views.

What did they find out?

The survey revealed some interesting facts about the children.

Out of the 630 pupils surveyed:

- 585 children are happy at school. Out of the 45 who are unhappy, they said they weren't sure how to deal with friendship situations at playtime.
- 462 children watch the news 2 or 3 times a week. Some children said they watch the adult news with their parents and the news stories can often make the children feel sad.

Here are some links for news reports for children:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/news/watch_newsround

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/c40rjmqdlljt/children>

- 140 children said they feel either sad or are worried about coronavirus. We think we now need to learn about happiness and kindness. There has been a lot of sadness in the world recently.
- We asked where the children visit in the holidays, lots of children visit the park, shops or the forest. But, we do have children who don't visit any of these places.

Lastly, when we asked the children what device the children use to do their homework.

- We found that 42 children do not have a device to use. We have suggested that the school lets these children borrow a chrome book from school.

Actions

As a result of the survey, the Article 12 members have been working hard to generate ideas for how we can improve the school. To ensure children share their ideas and that no one feels lonely or sad in the playground. In addition, we will have a piece of Happy Homework termly, which will be set by the children. We will all learn about happiness and keeping our minds healthy during Health and Happiness Week. Teachers will also make suggestions of places children could visit both in the local area and those in London.

SAFEGUARDING

Social media

We have recently had many issues involving our pupils using inappropriate apps on devices outside of school. Please can I remind you that many social media apps are not appropriate for primary aged pupils and this includes Tik Tok (13+). This app is used for grooming of children as well as online bullying and we should not be encouraging or allowing our children to use it. Please monitor what your children are doing when they are online. Nowadays, many of our children are much more technologically advanced with the internet and apps than adults but it is our job, as parents, carers and teachers to ensure we are keeping them safe at all times.



NURSERY AND CHILDREN'S CENTRE

The Children's Centre team are continuing to support the community in many ways including 'Befriending,' food deliveries, supporting families to access the hardship fund and ongoing family support work related to mental health and parenting. Unfortunately, due to the current Tier 4 restrictions we are unable to run any groups at all in the centre. We will be reviewing this regularly and hope to begin sessions in the Spring.

We would like to remind all parents that for children under two years old, it is recommended that they **do not** spend any time at all on a screen - that includes watching TV, looking at an iPad or playing on your mobile phone. At this age, it is important for you to talk and play with your child as much as possible to support their language and social development.

If you find it difficult to say 'No' to your child, or you need children's centre support for any other parenting issues such as toilet training, weaning from the bottle or implementing routines please contact Marie Foley on 07904 663072.

CONTACT US

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This newsletter is also available on the school website.

