



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

Headteacher's Newsletter

Issue 4

21st February 2022

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school after half term. We are all looking forward to the longer Spring days ahead!

Visits have started to take place including the Year 6 visit to Arvon House Writing residential. The children worked very hard, creating poems and redrafting their writing to the highest quality. Although the week's focus was writing, the children had many opportunities to draw, sing and perform. The year 6 pupils were also in charge of cooking the evening meals and looking after their 'home' for the week.

At the end of this term you will receive your child's annual report on progress. We as a school and many parents felt that it would be of more use to have an overview of progress mid-year allowing targets set to be met this academic year. Therefore, you will be receiving your child's annual report on Friday 1st April with the opportunity to discuss this with the class teacher on the parent's day after the Easter break. The reception classes will receive their report at the end of the summer term as it is a report for the end of the 'Early Years' as required by the Government.

With Ofsted now reinspecting schools, we need as many parents as possible to give their views about the school on Ofsted's Parent View. In previous years we have had many many parents/carers submitting their views, but this year we only have 6 so far!!

Ofsted Parent View gives both the school and Ofsted a chance to see what you think about us. It is an online survey which takes about 5 minutes to complete. Please, please, could you share good news about the school, to support us in maintaining 'Outstanding' for your children.

Please visit

<https://parentview.ofsted.gov.uk/login?destination=give-your-views>

Thank you in advance to everyone who is able to help.

Ms. Neena Lall OBE -Headteacher



IN SCHOOL TUTORING

In our ongoing effort to support pupils with improving their basic skills, we will be running in school extra tutoring sessions for key year groups.

There are huge benefits of these being run by school staff. The familiar relationship as well as the staff knowledge of your child's strengths and targets will mean the sessions are bespoke for the group.

These sessions may run before or after school. If you receive a letter, stating that your child would benefit from attending tutoring can we ask that you accept this offer. Please remember that it is very important that children attend every session, behave appropriately and are punctual. Please note that not all pupils will be eligible for this and invitations will be targeted.

HEALTH EVENT

The Children's Centre will be holding a Health Event on the afternoon of **Thursday 24th March from 2 - 4pm** in the dining hall. As our community continues on the road to recovery from Covid-19 the event will have information and support for families on a range of health issues including: diabetes, maintaining heart health and mental health. There will be ideas and support on how to have a healthy diet including some cooking activities.

We all know that it helps our children to perform well in school if they are healthy - both physically and mentally. This means keeping active, eating lots of fruit and vegetables and ensuring our children can talk freely about their fears and anxieties.

An important aspect of children's overall health and well being is their oral health. In order to have healthy teeth it is important to make sure your children do not eat or drink sugary snacks, clean their teeth twice a day and visit a dentist every six months. If you are having difficulty in registering with a dentist then please come and speak to one of the Children's Centre Family Support Workers for support with this.

The health event will bring together various services offered by St. Stephen's Children's Centre in conjunction with professionals and support groups that we work with. The health visitors will be present to check whether families are eligible for Healthy Start Vouchers and provide information about immunisations.

We look forward to seeing you there!

IMPORTANCE OF CREATIVITY

All of St Stephen's nursery and reception staff attended the Newham Early Years Conference in January and the focus was 'Creativity in Young Children'.

Creativity is key in developing children's thinking skills. In this rapidly changing world children need to be innovative, adaptable and resilient. The process of being creative also supports mental health by allowing us to express our thoughts and feelings through a range of different media - for example, music, paint, clay and connecting with the natural world.

Following from the training the Nursery and Reception classes are implementing a range of creative activities and teaching children the skills they need to take part. Some examples include: blockplay, weaving, woodwork, using clay and artistic techniques. All of these activities build upon children's innate curiosity and natural urge to explore materials as well as supporting their literacy and mathematical development.



The early years team will be suggesting ways that you can support your child's creativity at home over the next half term.

FRIDAY SANDWICHES

I was very disappointed to see the amount of waste and litter on the roads surrounding the school made by sandwiches that had been thrown away after school on Fridays. I am sure you agree with me that we want to teach our children to be grateful and appreciative of any food they receive.

Due to this wastage from now on, all children in Key Stage 2 will receive a sandwich and eat this in school. This will ensure that every child is getting lunch and help the school with it's eco drive by reducing the amount of packaging required for taking sandwiches home.

The sandwich fillings each week were chosen by your children through a survey completed across the school.

READING BOOK AMNESTY

The English Team is in the process of reorganising all our reading books by recataloging and installing new bookshelves around the school.

If you have any school books at home then please give them to your children to bring back to school by the end of Spring Term.

Additionally, we welcome donations of a book instead of food for birthday celebrations. You and your child could write a message inside the book which then leaves a much more lasting memory on our bookshelves.

NURSERY AND RECEPTION PARENT CONSULTATION DAY

Nursery and Reception held a parent consultation day on Thursday 13th January 2022. Both Nursery and Reception were closed on the day and parents were invited to come and discuss their child's progress with their class teachers.

In the Nursery, there was 100% attendance. In Reception, the attendance was 96%. Parents who were unable to make the appointments have since managed to reschedule a meeting. The meetings were purposeful and specific, focussing on celebrating the children's work and settling so far alongside providing strategies and support for developing learning and progress.

The next consultation day will be held in the Summer term. In the meantime, please do feel free to communicate with the class teachers and arrange individual meetings should you wish to discuss any specific elements of your child's progress and wellbeing.

SAFEGUARDING

WhatsApp

It has come to our attention that some of our pupils have been using WhatsApp to communicate with their friends. WhatsApp is considered a social media platform. The age requirement for WhatsApp users is 13, so please closely monitor your children's use of any social media platform used for communication.

Questions to consider for parents:

What do your children use WhatsApp for?

What kind of group chats are they part of?

What kind of media do they mostly receive and send?

Are there any people in their 'group chats' you and they don't know?

Are your location and account settings as secure as they can be?



Have they shared personal information?
Has any situation made them feel uncomfortable while on an app?

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.

The pandemic has made it particularly difficult for parents of children with SEND (Special Educational needs and Disabilities). Many families are experiencing delays in appointments with outside services for example Speech and Language Therapy and the Child Development Service. The Children's Centre are running a number of groups which parents may access to support their families including E-PATs (Early Positive Approaches to Support). The Children's Centre has a number of staff with specialist knowledge in the area of SEND.

Sometimes just sharing a problem can help to make it more manageable.

Please contact:

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This newsletter is also available on the school website.



SPRING TERM DATES 2022

FEBRUARY 2022

Monday 21st February	Children return to Primary and Nursery after half term
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MARCH 2022

Wednesday 2nd March	Year 4 Times Tables Parent Workshop @ 2.30pm in the School Hall
Thursday 3rd March	World Book Day
Thursday 3rd March	Reception Parent Workshop-Phonics and Reading @9am
Thursday 3rd March	Finance Committee meeting @10am
Wednesday 16th March	Fairplay House Year 5 Parent Meeting @ 2.30pm
Thursday 17th March	Full Governing Body Meeting @4pm
Friday 18th March	Comic Relief Day
Wednesday 23rd-Friday 25th March	Year 5 residential visit to Fairplay House
Thursday 24th March	Nursery Curriculum Day - Physical Development
Thursday 24th March	Health Event 2-4pm in the Dining Hall
Friday 25th March	Mum's Morning

APRIL 2022

Friday 1st April	Annual reports to parents for Year 1-6
Friday 1st April	Easter Holiday
Tuesday 19th April	School restarts at 8:45 am
Thursday 28th April	Nursery Parent Consultation Day and Reception Class Consultation Day

Children's Centre will be closed from 11th April - 19th April 2022.



SCHOOL TERM/HOLIDAY DATES

SPRING TERM 2022

Last day of term	Friday 1 st April 12.45pm finish
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SUMMER TERM 2022

First day of term	Tuesday 19th April
May Day	Monday 2nd May
Half term	Monday 30th May to Friday 3rd June
Last day of term	Thursday 21st July 12.45pm finish

AUTUMN TERM 2022

First day of term for pupils	Tuesday 6th September
Half term	Monday 24th October to Friday 4th November
Last day of term	Thursday 22nd December 12.45pm finish

SPRING TERM 2023

First day of term	Wednesday 4th January
Half term	Monday 13 th February to Friday 17 th February
Last day of term	Friday 31st March 12.45pm finish

