

ST. PETER'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL, HESWALL
NEWS UPDATE – September 2016

Welcome / Welcome Back

On behalf of the staff and governors can I welcome you back to what we hope will be another exciting and successful school year. I would also like to extend a warm welcome to our new families who have joined us in either Foundation 2 or other year groups throughout the school. We look forward to getting to know you and hope that you and your child have a long and happy association with St. Peter's.

Singapore Maths

The start of this new school year will see the introduction of a brand new approach to teaching maths throughout the school called Singapore Maths. As a school we have spent over 18 months researching and developing this, including a considerable investment in new resources and learning materials, in readiness for its introduction at the start of this school year. This will be one of the key school priorities for this school year. We will be providing further information to parents in a separate letter in the coming weeks and this will also be the focus of our annual parent workshop later this term.

Building Update

Thank you for your patience and understanding during the second half of last year whilst our building project was undertaken. It was finally completed just before we returned to school on the 5th September. We now have a brand new staff room and training room that can accommodate our whole staff team, whilst the old staff room has been converted into a multi-functional room with a dividing wall. This will be used for a whole host of purposes including small group work with pupils, professionals meetings, meetings with parents and open events such as coffee afternoons and morning 'drop-ins'. We are also hoping to create a non-fiction library in this area and plan to develop this and grow it over the next couple of years.

A further addition to the school is the new staircase on the playground that is to be used for pupil access at the start and end of the day. Children in both KS1 and KS2 can use this staircase and entrance to come into school in the mornings. At the end of the day, children in Year 1, who are picked up from the bottom gate, will be brought out from this staircase by a member of staff and will congregate by the new bench at the bottom of the steps to be collected by parents. KS2 pupils will also come out from this entrance at the end of the day.

Parents are asked to continue to enter school via the main entrance and reception. This includes any queries for the school office or when children arrive after the bell at the start of the day. Access at the front of school is now fully open with the previous fence and gate being moved to enclose the playground fully.

Staffing News

Mrs Nicola Benson, who retired from St. Peter's at the end of last term after 28 years at St. Peter's, has asked to pass on her thanks for all the kind cards, gifts and messages that she received from pupils and parents and for making her final few weeks so special.

At the start of the year we welcome two new members to our Teaching Assistant team. Miss Lucie Walker has joined our Foundation 2 team, whilst Miss Sophie Spree will be working as part of our Year 5/6 team. We look forward to them becoming established members of our staff team.

There will be an opportunity to meet the teachers and teaching assistants in your child's year band as part of a series of coffee afternoons to be held this month, along with the welcome back barbecue arranged by the Friends of St. Peter's. The details are provided below.

Welcome Back Barbecue

Friends of St. Peter's have again organised a 'Welcome Back' barbecue after school on Tuesday 20th September. This popular event is non-ticket and will run between 3.45pm to 5pm. It's a great opportunity to meet new parents as well as old friends and catch up after the summer holiday.

'Meet the Team' Coffee Afternoon

We will be holding a series of coffee afternoons this month to provide an early opportunity to meet myself, the teachers and teaching assistants in the respective teaching teams over cake and a coffee. These informal meetings will take place in the newly created 'learning hub' between 2.45pm and 3.30pm on the following dates;-

FS2 Team – Thursday 22nd September

Y1/2 Team - Friday 23rd September

Y3/4 Team – Tuesday 27th September

Y5/6 Team - Thursday 29th September

Parent Governor Vacancy

Special thanks to Mrs Jo Jolly (Foundation Governor) and Mrs Rachel Beech (Parent Governor) who are both stepping down from their positions on the Governing Body as their 4 year term comes to an end. This means that we have a vacancy for the Parent Governor post from the start of this year. This is an important and exciting opportunity to be involved in the strategic planning and organisation of the school. Further information relating to this vacancy and an invitation for nominations will be sent out in a separate letter in the next couple of weeks.

Healthy Snacks

As a health promoting school, we encourage our children to make healthy choices both in the activities they choose and also in what they eat. All pupils in Foundation and Years 1&2 receive a piece of fresh fruit or vegetable as a morning snack, whilst pupils in Years 3 to 6 are encouraged to bring a 'healthy snack' for the morning break. We are asking that you support us in this by not sending your child in with a chocolate bar, sweets or any other high sugar snacks. This also includes having such items in packed lunches. We also kindly request that children do not bring in sweets or cakes for the class to celebrate their birthday. Thank you for supporting this healthy initiative.

Lunchtime Supervisor

We currently have a vacancy on our lunchtime team. We are looking for an enthusiastic, committed and motivated person to join our friendly and dedicated team. The role involves supervising pupils in the dining room and on the playground between 11:45am and 1:30pm Monday to Friday. If you are interested or would like more information please contact the school office.

ParentPay

The school's new cashless system 'ParentPay' is now up and running and will hopefully make it easier and more efficient for parents to make payments, including those for school meals and for all school related charges. Thank you to those who have already registered and made initial credits. All parents are asked to register as soon as possible so that we can ensure the system is running accurately and payments can be requested in good time. Please contact the school office if you have any queries.

Harvest Festival & Food Bank

This year's Harvest Festival will be on Friday 30th September and will be led by Miss Collins Class 3/4C. We would welcome contributions of non-perishable food items (tins, packets, pasta, etc.) to come into school from the beginning of that week. Further information about this will be sent out shortly. All donations will be taken down to church for the Harvest Service on Sunday 2nd October before being distributed to local charities and some of our elderly residents.

It is also an opportunity to thank you for your continued support of our local 'Food bank'. Mrs Paula Donnan, one of our parents and Lunchtime Supervisor coordinates the collections from school. Collections take place during the first week of each month and donations can be left at any time in the box in our Reception Area.

Lost Property

Please ensure your child's uniform and school belongings are all **CLEARLY NAMED**. Our pupils are strongly encouraged to take responsibility of looking after their belongings, but from time to time items are mislaid and end up in 'Lost Property'. When such items are clearly named, it enables them to be quickly reunited with their owner. Unfortunately, far too often items are not named or the name has faded making it impossible to return them. Please help us to help you and your child.

Parent Helpers

We always really appreciate the additional help and support from parents and grandparents, who are able to spare a few hours during the week to help in school, whether it be to hear readers, work with a small group or provide general support in the classroom. We welcome help for all year groups and so if you are free to help in school, please send a note in to the class teacher.

From the start of this school year, as part of our commitment to Safeguarding, all volunteers who work in school (including parent helpers) will need to complete a 'volunteer agreement' and will receive detailed information relating to the role of being a volunteer at St. Peter's. It may also be necessary to arrange a DBS clearance before you are able to work in school.

Parents in FS2 who wish to offer help will be contacted after half term once the children have settled in.

Are your details correct?

If you have recently moved or changed your contact details over the summer, please inform the school office of your new information. A data collection sheet will be sent out with your child for checking to ensure the information we hold on our system is accurate. This includes any medical needs or conditions your child may have and it is important that our school records reflect this and are both accurate and up to date. **Please can they be checked and returned to school regardless of whether there are changes or not.**

INSET Days for 2016/17

A further reminder of the INSET days for this academic year. These are the five staff training days that are allocated during the school year when pupils do not attend. Full term dates can be found on the school website. The dates are;-

Monday 5th September 2016

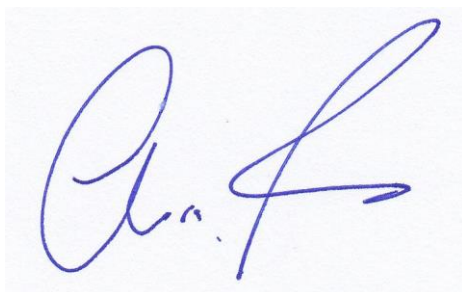
Friday 23rd December 2016
Monday 9th January 2017
Monday 27th February 2017
Friday 26th May 2017

School Website and Calendar

The school website continues to include information and news about what is happening and what is coming up at our school. It is the best place to find information about events and school news. We will be continuing to send e-mail alerts to new items as they are added as this proved to be very popular when we introduced it last year.

The calendar for the term can be found on the website and includes all the key dates leading up to Christmas with provisional dates set for the whole year, which hopefully enables you to plan ahead. Please refer to this both at the start and during the term to keep a note of what is happening and all the different things coming up.

I hope you are able to make one of our 'welcome events' over the next couple of weeks and I look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Penn', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Chris Penn
Headteacher