



Head's Update, Michaelmas 1, Week 0, 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

And in a flash, the lazy days of summer were over! In school the summer has been filled with planning, preparing, cleaning and we have made St Peter's School a beautiful and safe place to be for the children. The classrooms look stunning, the Hall and Hub are gleaming and the grounds look superb. With the minor addition of some coloured lines and sanitising stations, school also looks fairly normal. We can't wait to have the children back. The office is now open as normal answering emails and phone calls however, we are experiencing a high volume of enquiries and questions, so we thank you for your patience.

New Starters

The circle of life continues. As we say goodbye to our old Year 6s and those pupils who have relocated, we wish all of our former families well and wish them luck at their new schools and in their new homes. We also welcome a number of new starters to the school and Nursery this September. We hope you have a wonderful experience at St Peter's. Welcome to the family.

Nursery News

The toys are cleaned, the rooms are set up and all of the staff are raring to go. We can't wait for the children to see our new nursery canopy, especially when the sun shines. Smiles and a goody bag will be waiting at the door when you arrive on Monday morning. Please remember that only one parent should enter the school grounds with a suitable face covering.

Baseline Assessments

Over the next 2 weeks, children from Year 1 to Year 6 will be taking part in baseline assessments in Maths, Reading and Spelling. These are child-centred standardised tests, produced by the UK's leading assessment provider. They will help us identify areas of strengths and weaknesses following our extended time away from school. The children don't need to worry about them, neither do you, and many won't even notice they're doing them. The results will only be used by us to improve the quality of education for your child. I will communicate in a few weeks about how standardised tests work, what we will do with the information and how we will share this information with you. There is of course much more to assessing children than through formal written papers. Teachers will be using a wide variety of formative assessment techniques such as quizzes, questioning, classwork, but most importantly, they will get to know your children. They will then be able to identify what gaps there may be. This is part of everyday teaching at St Peter's and our teachers are skilled at supporting and challenging every child.



No Nuts

I know that I have sent reminders before, but it won't harm in telling you all again that we are a nut free school. We have children in school with allergies and it is important to keep them safe. Please do not send your child into school with any snacks that contain nuts. Thank you. We recommend a healthy snack, like fruit, in a throw-away wrapper.

Staffing Update

Mrs Waling, our new Reception teacher, has been busy this week preparing lessons, resources and games for the children with Mrs Morris and Ms Perkins. We welcome her with open arms and I know she is looking forward to seeing the children on Monday. We also welcome Mr Cox to the team. He is joining us as the Sports Assistant. Mr Cox is a keen sportsman and attended Bedford School. He is a very good cricketer (Former Northamptonshire Premier League Player of the Year, Young Player of the Year, leading run scorer... the list goes on) and as well as coaching in Australia he has a Diploma in Sports Development, Coaching and Fitness. Mr Cox will be involved in all sporting and outdoor elements of school life from Reception to Year 6. I know that the children will love his passion and enthusiasm for sport and he will help us all be more active. Fun fact: Mr Cox was taught, in Year 2, by one of our current teachers. I won't embarrass them by saying who.

In sad news, we will be saying goodbye to Mr and Mrs Burrows at the end of term. The Burrows family are relocating to London as Mr Burrows has been appointed Youth Minister at a new church. We wish the family well and we know that everyone at St Peter's will miss them dearly.

PE Kits and Bags

We have had a number of questions already regarding when to wear PE kits. Children should wear PE kits on their assigned PE and Games days.

- Reception - Tuesday
- Year 1- Tuesday & Friday
- Year 2 - Monday & Tuesday
- Year 3 - Monday & Wednesday
- Year 4 - Monday & Wednesday
- Year 5 - Monday & Tuesday
- Year 6 - Monday & Wednesday

Children may bring their bag to school which should contain their healthy snack, a water bottle and a pencil case if they wish. We discourage you from sending non-essential items. Please don't worry, I want your child in school, we can sort everything else.

House System

New this September, all children from Reception to Year 6 will be assigned a House, led ably by our Year 6 House Captains. Younger children will recognise their house by their colour and as they get



older children will join in House competitions such as lunch time sports competitions, spelling bees and singing competitions. We have a new system in school for recording House Points and teachers and staff will be looking for 'Excellent Achievement', 'Excellent Behaviour' and 'Excellent Effort'. I hope that all children will be working hard to earn points for their House. A running total will be on display in the school hall and the new school council representatives will help decide how we'll represent the points with tokens, stickers, acorns etc. For now, Housepoints won't be physical in order to keep it COVID-friendly. I will be explaining this to the children on Monday. The houses are still Barnwell (Blue), Brigstock (Yellow), Stanwick (Red), Sywell (Green).

Older children remain in the same house as last year. Certificates for hitting milestones will be issued and in the future there will be a mechanism for parents being informed that their child has earned a Housepoint and the reasons for it. The house system is very important, especially for getting children back in to school, it also:

- brings a focus to the academic rewards system
- enables both older and younger pupils to develop respect for each other
- presents role models to the younger pupils
- brings opportunities for encouragement, leadership and responsibility
- brings together Lower School and Upper School
- brings a sense of teamwork and team spirit
- brings parents together in support of house events
- helps prepare pupils for the secondary school house systems.

Nearly there

This is going to be a strange time for you and your child. There will be a mixture of emotions from sheer joy to immense sadness. Some children have not been in school for 7 months and they may be apprehensive. For some parents, this day could not have come soon enough! We are here for them and you and we will offer a calm and relaxed atmosphere for your child as they transition back into learning. We are ready. Our class sizes are small and our spaces are pristine; we have mitigated as many risks as we can do and our staff are dedicated to keeping your children safe. We will support you and you will support each other. Some of you may have seen Kettering in the news recently and the COVID level, we have investigated this and the global rates are actually dropping but there has been a slight increase in the positive test results in '20-29 year olds with an active social life'. This therefore doesn't impact the opening of schools. We monitor the local picture very closely.

Enjoy your final weekend of the summer holidays as we all keep our fingers crossed for good weather during the coming weeks so we can enjoy our wonderful gardens and let children re-familiarise themselves with each other in our great outdoors.

Regards

Mr Thomas

Headteacher