



St Lukian Newsletter

Learning, Laughing, Loving at Family St Luke's Issue 20 Nov 2018

Teaching and Learning Update

We've had a really busy few weeks since our last newsletter with lots of work in school, constantly working to develop the wider curriculum and also make changes to the way we approach the teaching of English and Maths, drawing on the most recent research. As such we are building in more opportunities to help children remember the information they've been taught such as more regular recapping, mini quizzes and the introduction of Fast Learning in Key Stage Two where children try to answer as many times tables questions as they can in a set time, trying to score their own personal best. They also work on a set of spellings relevant to their year group. Year 6 have been trialling this since September with great success so it was rolled out to the rest of Key Stage 2 after half term and we anticipate equally impressive results.

However, unlike some schools, Hanley St Luke's has never reduced its curriculum down to a narrow focus on English and Maths at the expense of other equally vital subjects but has always worked hard to maintain a broad and balanced curriculum (our School Games Gold Award and Science quality marks are testament to that). However, we felt we could develop our curriculum even further to really support the children's learning overall. So during this academic year, subject leaders have been tasked with looking at their own subject areas, along with each year group, to ensure real clarity around which key facts and skills we want the children to know and how we will support them to master both. We are also looking at the way in which we support children's learning through the use of our own facilities and grounds, supplemented by visits to local places of interest and visits further afield, as well as carefully coordinated use of subject experts such as artists, scientists and musicians to support curriculum areas. As an example, we are delighted that this week the children were able to meet Leon Baptiste, Commonwealth Gold medal sprinter and also enjoy the work of CBSO professional musicians which both offered unique and inspiring experiences for the children. In our Early Years we have been focusing very much on developing children's curiosity through the use of the outdoor areas and supporting imaginative play with a variety of natural materials and small parts. The children love it and we can see their language development progressing very well as a result. There's always room to improve in any school and here at Hanley St Luke's we are certainly on a very focussed and ambitious journey to offer your children the very best education we can, working in collaboration with key specialist and partner schools to achieve our aims and are very pleased with the progress we've made to date.

COMING SOON - NEW CODING CLUB

Look out for further details before we break up for the holidays, but starting on Wednesday 16th January we will be able to offer, totally free of charge, a brand new club after school for our KS2 children run by Core Education (they support our administration IT and are creating our new website). This project is being funded by a grant all Stoke On Trent schools have received as part of the two-year designation of Stoke On Trent as an Opportunity Area. There will be a maximum of 20 children who can take part over a 10 week block but the club will be repeated over the summer to give as many children as possible the opportunity to take part.

They'll be able to look at the computer science behind the gaming as well as exploring how to create their own which we're sure many children will love.



Forest School



We have also received funding for a Forest School project with Staffordshire Wildlife Trust which started this term and will be running all year, with 3 different groups of children being able to take advantage of this. This is a great opportunity for children to explore the outdoors (our Denise Stanyer Garden is perfect for this) and in so doing they learn new skills and develop confidence, resilience and the opportunity to work with children they might not usually work with in school. It's a highly accredited learning experience and we'd love as many children as possible to take part beyond this small funded project. To that end, we are

hoping to train our very own Forest Schools Leader, again with funding from the Opportunity Area and will let you know if we've been successful in this.

What's a Lockdown Policy? Important Information for All

In the local media you may have heard of schools going into 'Lockdown' which can seem quite a scary but is a procedure all schools have to ensure they know how to respond to any threat to the safety of pupils and staff. The reasons for this could be as wide ranging a gas explosion in a nearby factory, releasing toxic fumes; a member of the public acting in a threatening manner, right through to the unthinkable. All schools receive training on these situations and I and Mrs Jennings, our Office manager, joined other local schools this week for Police led training in how to respond. The message that came out loud and clear from the Police that if a school needs to Lockdown, where appropriate parents should be informed and told to stay away from school until they hear it is safe to collect their children. **Sadly, the police report, that where parents ignore this instruction or hear of incidents on social media, and come to the school anyway, they make the situation worse and jeopardise not only their own safety but the safety of all those involved in the incident and complicate the matter for the police and all those directly managing the threat, whatever that might be. Every parent's instinct is to run to protect their child, but in these situations if you ignore the advice given, you will be doing the exact opposite. This is stuff no one ever wants to think about, and God forbid, we ever need to use our Lockdown Policy, but if we did, you are now aware how to respond to help keep everybody safe. Thank you.**

Grandparents Meal

This is when we invite all grandparents (even if their grandchildren don't attend our school!) to a four course Christmas meal – free of charge! We do charge £1.00 per ticket, but this is returned on the evening of the meal – this year on Wednesday 19th December at 6.00p.m. Admission by ticket only - available from the school office now. Please encourage any grandparents you know to come to the meal – the monitors and staff wait on tables and the choir sing Christmas songs afterwards.



Childrens' Christmas Dinner

This will be served to Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 on Tuesday 18th December and Key Stage 2 on Wednesday 19th December. If your child normally brings sandwiches but would like to receive a delicious Christmas dinner, please pay via www.schoolmoney.co.uk no later than Monday 17th December. Look out for a Dojo closer to the time with more details of arrangements.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Mon 3rd Dec 9.15 a.m. - Yr 1 Family Stocking Decorating

Tues 4th Dec a.m. – Reception to Yr 5 Flu immunisation

Thurs 6th Dec – Yr 1 trip to Conkers

Fri 7th Dec 3.30pm – School Christmas Fair

Mon 10th Dec – Yr 3 trip to Hanley Museum

Tues 11th Dec – Choir singing at Brewers Fayre

Wed 12th Dec 9.30 a.m. – Foundation Stage Nativity in Church

Wed 12th Dec 2.30 p.m. – KS1 Nativity in school

Thursday 13th Dec 9.30 a.m.—KS1 Nativity in School

Thursday 13th Dec 2.30 p.m.- Foundation Stage Nativity in Church

Fri 14th Dec – Christmas Jumper Day

Wed 19th Dec 6.00 – 7.30pm – Grandparents Christmas Dinner

Thurs 20th Dec 9.00 am—Attendance Certificates

Thurs 20th Dec 2.30 pm – KS2 Christmas Carols

Friday 21st Dec - School closes for Christmas

School re-opens on Tuesday 8th Jan 19

Needed for our Christmas Fair

Cakes, Cakes, Cakes



CHOCOLATE

DARK OR LIGHT * BIG OR SMALL * BARS OR BOXES



Desperately Seeking : Bottles



Donations gratefully received via the School Office!!!

Two Arches



Our dining room is now complete and looks absolutely fantastic! We held a competition to name the new space and are pleased to announce Two Arches Bistro was the winner, picking up on the beautiful Victorian arches we were able to retain as part of the extension and rebuild. Well done to Svetlana for your ideas and thank you to all the children who took part.