



# St Lukian Newsletter

Learning, Laughing, Loving at Family St Luke's Issue 18 Sept 2018



I am sure many parents will already have read my welcome back to school messages posted on DOJO last week, but for those who have missed them, I extend a warm welcome back to school on behalf of all the team here at school. It's amazing how quickly the new school year settles down and it seems like the summer and its heatwave never actually happened, especially as we're starting to see Christmas cards in the shops already! I hope you find the newsletter interesting and helpful but please do ensure that you are signed up to DOJO so that you get the news quickly and don't miss out on important information.

## Our priorities for the year ahead

Each year we produce a School Development Plan which sets out our key objectives over the year and covers not only Teaching and Learning but other areas such as Premises, Safeguarding and Administration and Finance etc and helps governors to check the school is moving in the right direction and we are on track to meet our goals. It's a long and detailed plan but I thought you'd be interested to see a brief overview of some of the main areas we'll be working on this year:

### Teaching and Learning:

We will be working with 6 other local schools as part of a much wider government funded project known as a SSIF bid ( Strategic School Improvement Fund) which involves over 20 schools across the whole of Staffordshire and Stoke On Trent. This aims to improve outcomes for children in years 6 & 11. For us, it means continued high quality English support from an external English Specialist and tailored professional development for staff. Although the focus is in Year 6, all year children and teachers will benefit from this process and we are excited to be involved.

We started to redesign our curriculum last year to ensure the books we selected in English best supported the children's learning and the wider curriculum topics. We want to ensure we not only equip our children with key skills but we also want them to remember key facts so we are developing ways of revisiting concepts taught to aid long term memory.

We want to promote the joy of reading as much as possible and instil it not only as a regular homework habit, but a life- long pleasure. We have invested in new library shelving and new reading books including reading scheme books to support this aim.

We aim to develop our maths mastery approach by being part of Teacher for Mastery Working Group in association with North Mids and Peaks Maths Hub.

We will ensure all children at an age appropriate level have secured times tables and phonic knowledge.

We want to continue to ensure that we spend our allocated Pupil Premium finding wisely so that we can narrow the attainment gap between identified groups of children, ensuring all have access to a rich and varied offer both within and beyond the school day.

### Safeguarding

We want to continue to improve our attendance and punctuality figures and in particular ensure that our persistent absence figure (pupils whose attendance falls below 90%) halves from its current unacceptable level of around 16% to closer to national averages. This is a vital objective.

### Administration, Publicity and Community

We hope to have our new look website up and running by the end of the term if not before.

We hope to be able to have a school Facebook and/or Twitter account by the end of the academic year.

To encourage more parents to be part of an active Parents and Staff Association to support the life of the school in vital fund raising and community activities.

### Premises

To complete our dining room project to create more pleasant environment for the children and also provide an additional hall space for other activities either side of lunchtime.

To continue our programme of redecoration and refurbishment in key areas around school.

We achieved much last year and look forward to achieving even more over the course of this year and look forward to working in partnership with you to achieve our aims.





## Dojo Use

The vast majority of our parents find DOJO a really useful communication tool direct to the teacher and for whole school or class

related news. If you are not signed up then you are missing out and I'd urge you to do so ( speak to the office if you need help with this).

However, can I just remind parents that teachers are not required to respond to messages received outside of the school day, (although many choose to do



so) but that is at their discretion and should not be an expectation. Please also note that although I have a DOJO account to ensure access to the system, I do not get alerts in the same way as a class teacher so your message will probably go unseen. If you need to contact me, please do so via email to the school office, telephone to arrange an appointment or catch me when I am out and about at the beginning of the day.

Many thanks

## Homework

We believe that regular reading at home and practise of key times tables facts and spellings are the most effective form of homework.

This year all of our pupils from Y2 up will receive a time stable booklet and a page of this each week should be practised at home. Your child's class teacher will send a DOJO message with how this works for their year group.

We expect children to read as often as possible and reward regular reading ( at least 4 x weekly recorded ) with an extra playtime. Children from Y1 upwards who have not completed their reading homework the required number of times do not receive the extra playtime but children who show a significant improvement in effort may be included at the class teacher's discretion.

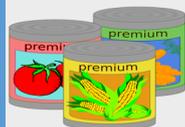
We are trialling a different system for spellings in Y6 currently, which we hope to roll out across the school towards the end of this half term/ beginning of next. Here, instead of a list of words to learn each week, the children practise in school each day during a 10 minute 'fast learning ' session which also includes recall of times tables and other key facts. Words for the half term are sent home in advance to support this ongoing process. In the meantime, each year group will continue to have their own spelling arrangements.



## Harvest



This year we will be holding our whole school harvest service on Oct 4<sup>th</sup> at 9:00 a.m. in the school hall. We are asking for donations of food for the local food bank so that our charity supports the local community. Tins and packets with long dates are best for this. Sadly, we don't have room for all our parents at the back of the hall but if you'd like to share in this time of praise with us, then we'll do our best to accommodate those who wish to attend and you'll be most welcome.



### Drop off and Pick up times

We're only a week into term and already I have received complaints about unsafe and inconsiderate parking around school. There is very clear signage and road markings all around school to protect our children and ensure our local residents can access their own properties. As ever, we will be working with the local PCSo and traffic wardens to help to keep our school access safe for all. Please apply for a St Anne's carpark parking permit from the school office if you feel this will help you park safely.

**We will be part of the Macmillan 'World's Biggest Coffee Morning' on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> September and will be hosting ours in the dining room between 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.**

**We need lots of lovely cake to sell to go with the coffee and tea we'll be serving for free but ask that all who attend make a donation to the charity on the day in return. It would be great to know in advance if any parents were willing to make some cakes for us to be brought in either the day before or on the day before school. If you love baking and would like to donate a cake or a batch of little cakes, please let the office know. Many thanks**



## Dining Room

We are a little frustrated that the access to the dining room has been restricted for longer than we were told would be the case but we hope that builders will be back on site soon so we can resume our normal access and exit routines. In the meantime, we apologise for the inconvenience this no doubt causes our parents with push-chairs and those requiring disabled access.



# Parent Teachers and Friends (PTFA)

We are looking to revitalise our PTFA this year by encouraging as many new members to join us. Sadly, we were down to a very committed but tiny number of parents at the end of last year (3) and 2 of those no longer have children in school!! A PTFA is a brilliant way of parents working together with the school to raise money and offer social events to really develop the sense of community and provide essential additional funding for those 'little extras' that school budgets just don't stretch to. So, to try and include everybody, we will be offering two opportunities to come along and have a chat and a cuppa and see what it's all about which is really just a group of lovely folk wanting to give a little back to help the children have the best deal they can:

**Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> Sept at 2:30 p.m.**

**Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> September at 6:30 p.m.**

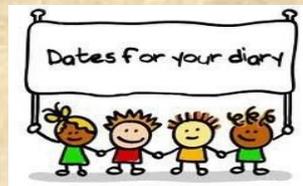
Hot drinks and choccy biscuits provided at both!

We hope to see you there!

## Updated Consent

We send various forms home for consent and are trying hard to streamline this so that once a form is signed it doesn't need to be signed year after year. It will take us a little while to get this right with all the GDPR changes, and we've a few glitches to iron out ourselves, so please bear with us. However, if a form is sent home to complete and sign please know we really do need it back and totally rely on your cooperation to have all the information we need.

Thank you.



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|----------------------|--------------------|------------------------------|
| Thursday 20th Sept   | 2.30 p.m.          | PFTA Meeting                 |
| Wednesday 26th Sept  | 6.30 p.m.          | PTFA Meeting                 |
| Friday 28th Sept     | 9.00 am—11.00 a.m. | Coffee Morning               |
| Thursday 4th October | 9.00 a.m.          | Whole school harvest service |
| Friday 26th October  | 3.15 p.m.          | School closes for Half Term  |
| Monday 5th November  | 8.45 a.m.          | School opens                 |



St Luke's Church &  
Community Centre  
Sunday Service 11 a.m.

Parent & Toddler Group

St Luke's Community Hall on Tuesdays  
9.15-11 am

Term time only

