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Newsletter



From the Headteacher



Welcome

A very warm welcome back to St Leonard's to all our children and families this new school year. Hopefully everybody has had a restful and enjoyable summer holiday and now has their battery fully recharged! This is an exciting time to be at St Leonard's and if you are joining us for the first time we wish you a very happy association with the school. There has been a real buzz around the school these first few days and staff and children are united in doing the very best that they can. Wishing you all a very successful and rewarding year.

School Site

Our site has been hectic in the weeks leading up to September and a lot has gone on behind the scenes. There are new interactive whiteboards and projectors in Years 5 and 6 and we are close to completing our fantastic new play area in Reception, which will be a huge asset to our young ones. You may also have noticed new signage which looks very smart and a "stained glass" window by our reception entrance. This is a copy of a window within St Leonard's Church which was designed by one of our former pupils many years ago. We hope you like it!

Attendance

Good attendance is closely linked to good progress and attainment. Poor attendance increases the chance that a child will have gaps in their learning. We were delighted therefore to see that overall school attendance rose to 95.15% last year, and 247 children exceeded the school target of 95%. 30 children achieved 100% for the year which is a great achievement.

On a more concerning note 42 children had attendance below 90% which means missing over 10% of school, or one whole year by Year 10. 7 children were below 85% and this seriously impacts upon a child's ability to meet their potential. Long holidays, often abroad, still account for a number of these absences and **we are unable to authorise holidays in school time.**

Learning News

As the term starts please check the school website regularly, in particular the Curriculum pages. Here, you'll find termly topic plans and newsletters explaining what the children are learning about and how you can support them in learning at home. If you haven't done so already check out "Around the Classrooms – Term 6" where you'll see examples of some of the fantastic work from last term, including Commonwealth Week. We have Celebration Assemblies every Friday where children get the chance to share their work and to hear about the good efforts of others.

Reception

What an exciting time it is for our little ones as they enter Big School for the first time. There have been a few tears shed and one or two tantrums, and that is just the parents! We are as excited as you are about this new step in your child's life and want to get to know you and your family as quickly as possible. Each child has a key worker whom will be delighted to share your child's achievements with you. There will be lots of opportunities to come into school and share your child's learning as the term progresses and please do see us if you have any worries or concerns.

Staff News

It's not just children whom we welcome to St Leonard's. There are several new adult faces too and we are delighted with all our 'additional' staff, who each bring something special with them. Mrs Boston joins us teaching in Nursery in the afternoons. Mrs Drummond returns from maternity and teaches Mondays in Reception, job-sharing with Mrs Keyser. Miss Kurek joins us from a school in Northampton and takes the second Reception class with Miss Somers joining the Key Stage One team in Year Two. We're also very pleased to welcome Mr Clark to Year Five, plus we have two new Teaching Assistants Mrs Ford and Miss Lyford. Please join me in welcoming our new members of staff when you get a chance to meet them.



From the Headteacher Cont.



Open Door Policy

We pride ourselves at St Leonard's upon working with parents to benefit our children. Somebody is always available should you need help or support and it is usually best to approach the class teacher directly about learning or health issues. The beginning of the day is perfect for passing on messages but if you wish for a longer conversation then the end of the day is usually better. If you cannot attend in person then please phone or write with your comments.

Eid-UI-Adha

Eid Mubarak to all our Muslim families and we wish you a happy family celebration next week. Absences for observance of Eid will be authorised on Monday and Tuesday.

Best wishes,

Neil Blackwell



What we are doing!

Roald Dahl

Next week is the 100th anniversary of Roald Dahl's birth and children are invited to dress up as a character from one of his books on Monday to help us celebrate. Why not visit www.roalddahl.com to find out more or to get some ideas?

School Council

We are seeking new representatives for the School Council and elections will be held next week. The children's ideas are very useful in improving school from a 'child's view' and it is an excellent way to contribute to the organisation of the school. Unfortunately previous Councillors are not allowed to seek election.

Courses for parents

Following last year's popular course we start another five-week **Maths Course** on 22 September with Family Learning. We have places for about 12 parents to attend. It will run from 1:15 to 2:45 pm and is for parents to further their own skills in maths and to learn best how to support children. We also hope to run another **Joy of Food Course** next term. Could anyone interested please contact Christina (07827 271063) or Mrs Steptoe (school office).

Drop-In Groups

We are still running a selection of drop-in groups: Wednesday morning for **all parents** from 8:45 to 10:00 in the staff room, Wednesday afternoon for **parents of Pakistani heritage**, from 1:30 to 3:00 in the staff room, Thursday afternoon for **Polish parents**, from 2:00 to 3:00. The afternoon groups will focus on supporting parents to develop their English skills, both written and verbal. Why not come along with a friend and see what is on offer? We are able to support families with a range of matters including finance, health, budgeting, benefits, employment, housing, and parenting. We offer a comfortable and welcoming environment with tea and refreshments where staff are willing to listen and support you with matters that affect you and your family.

Telephone Numbers

Please let the school office know if your contact details have changed over the summer holidays, particularly telephone numbers. This is really important for those rare occasions when we need to contact you in case of emergency. Many thanks.

School Gates

May I remind you that the car park is for staff and contractors only; we still have a number of parents who put our children at risk by using the car park for dropping off and turning around. For this reason please note that the school gates will be closed at 8.40am from now on until the situation improves.

Password Change

Please note that we will be changing the password for the Children's Page on the website on Friday. Your child will be bringing the new password home this week.



Dates for your Diary



Monday 5th September: Term 1 starts

Thursday 8th September:

- Trip to Banbury Town for Year 3
- Full Governors' meeting at 7.0pm

Monday 12th September: Roald Dahl dress up day

Tuesday 13th September: Trip to Banbury Museum & canal - Mrs Debus' class

Wednesday 14th September: Trip to Banbury Museum & canal— Miss Somers' class

Thursday 22nd September:

- Maths workshop for parents (5 week course) 1.15—2.45
- Governors' Meeting (Resources) 6.30pm

Saturday 24th September: Banbury Area Cross Country 11.0—1.0pm at Banbury Academy

Monday 10th October: Parents' phonics sessions for parents of children in years 1 & 2. 2.30pm and 6.30pm

Monday 17th October: Parents' evening 6.0pm—8.0pm

Tuesday 18th October: Parents' evening 3.30pm—6.0pm

Wednesday 19th October: School photos

Friday 21st October: Term 1 ends at the normal time.

Tuesday 1st November: Term 2 starts

Drop in Sessions Running Every Week

Wednesdays:

- For all parents 8.45—10.0am in the staff room
- For Pakistani parents 1.30— 3.0pm in the staff room

Thursdays:

- For Polish parents 2.0—3.0pm in the staff room