



St. Saviour's RC Primary School

10 Bonfield Road
Lewisham
SE13 6AL

Headteacher: Mr D Houson
020 8852 4283
www.stsaviours.lewisham.sch.uk
admin@stsaviours.lewisham.sch.uk

8th December 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to the seventh newsletter of the term, there's been lots going on! Thursday saw our choir perform beautifully at the Turning of the Year concert in Blackheath, we started our Christmas celebrations with the lighting of the first candle on our advent wreath and the children enjoyed the annual school pantomime on Monday. There's still much more planned!

Challenge Partners Visit

I hope you enjoyed reading the *Challenge Partners* feedback from their three day visit in November. The report was carried out by 3 reviewers – a lead OFSTED inspector, a headteacher from Manchester and a headteacher from Wiltshire. The review was very comprehensive; every class teacher was observed and the senior management team interviewed for 4 hours to scrutinise our data and plans.

The school was scored in three areas and we were graded **outstanding in 2 out of the 3 areas** (*Outcomes for Children and School Improvement Strategies*)!

The report is extremely positive and a *huge* validation of all the staffs' hard work over the last few years, I'm extremely proud of our wonderful team and children.

Coffee Morning to support parents with social media

We were extremely disappointed that we had to cancel this morning's ICT Safety out of school Coffee morning as only **one parent**, Mrs Beltrami, attended.

The Coffee Morning had been advertised in the last two newsletters, posters outside every KS2 class and posters in our Foyer.

In the recent questionnaire responses many parents wanted more support out of school / coffee mornings / community events. Coffee mornings take several hours to plan and photocopy resources, so if we are to continue we must have your support.

Christmas Cake Sale / Christmas Raffle

On Monday 18th December the school will be holding a cake sale and Christmas Celebration in the hall at 3.30.

We are asking for cake donations for the event, if you are cooking cakes for the event we must have a copy of the ingredients for Health & Safety reasons, and please – **no nuts please!**

At the event will be –

- Cakes for sale at 50p
- Christmas Raffle draw for the Christmas Hamper and Pamper Hamper (*Tickets on sale next week*)
- Christmas items for sale

All proceeds go to St Christopher's Hospice, our chosen Christmas Charity

Parents Evenings

A huge thank you to all the parents and carers who came to hear about their children's progress in the recent parent evenings, it was wonderful to see such a huge turnout. I would also like to thank the staff for being so accommodating with their time.

Christmas Jumper Day

On Tuesday 12th December, the children will have their Christmas lunch and we are also inviting children to wear Christmas Jumpers (*normal school uniform apart from the jumper*) and contribute £1. The money will be donated to St Christopher's Hospice, our chosen charity this Christmas.

Parent Questionnaire 2017

As promised, I will share the feedback from the recent questionnaire, sharing the positives and answering your concerns -

What's the Best thing about St Saviour's?

- Really good teachers / Quality of teachers / Standard of teaching / Good Education / Care of the children from staff
- Behaviour of the children / Discipline / No bullying / Well behaved, polite children / Well disciplined / Children free to express themselves
- Catholic Teaching / Religious Teaching / Lots of emphasis on Catholic Teaching / Outstanding Catholic studies
- Newsletter / Dates in advance
- School is well organised
- Everyone united / Like one big family
- Diversity of staff and children

What could we improve about St Saviour's?

PTFA

I can assure you all that we do have plans to relaunch the PTFA.

Original plans were made last Christmas with a member of staff assigned to meet with parents and start the procedure, but sadly the member of staff then been has absent with long term sickness. Since then, we have had an interim business manager, a new sustentative business manager, four members of staff on long term absence (for medical reasons) and we have had to face huge financial losses with the new Government funding formula.

In situations like those mentioned above, it is my job to prioritise and ensure that the standard of education remains higher than National Averages and that the children and teachers have adequate support in the classroom. As you will know from previous newsletters, the vast majority of our outcomes for children last academic year were above National Averages and in some areas, in the top 10% of schools in the country.

We do value parental input and we do want a PTFA, which will enhance the community spirit, and now we have some of our team back (and a superb Business Manager), we will begin plans to relaunch in the Spring Term. I share your frustration at the lack of progress so far.

Variety of Clubs

This is an area we have also been working on this term. We have managed to secure Italian Lessons for children in KS2 during lesson times, and an after school club for the younger children. The main reason for the lack of progress with more clubs has been the same as mentioned above. Please look out for a after school provision questionnaire in the Spring Term, which will ask your opinions about what type of clubs you want for your children.

More Homework

I noticed a few parents mentioned more homework for their children. This is a difficult area for several reasons: firstly, it takes our teaching staff a long time to source, prepare, photocopy and mark homework. Any increase in homework would mean an increased pressure on their already high pressured time constraints. I would much prefer they used their time in preparing high quality lessons which have the most impact. Secondly, several parents have complained this year that we give out *too much* homework!

If you want to give your child more work at home, please remember Education City. All the children have log ins and passwords which work at home. Children can work on many Maths and English areas which can be used to support all areas of learning.

Text Message Reminders

I do understand that parents lead incredibly busy lives, juggling jobs and childcare (*I have to deal with those demands myself!*). Every text message sent comes at a cost to the school. Each text costs about 4p for the school to send and we have 231 children in the school. Last year the school spent £800 on text messages to parents, although this doesn't sound much, mixed in with the £40,000 funding we lost in the Government funding formula, it all adds up. I have to prioritise each penny spent and I feel it is a much better use of money to ensure we retain current staffing levels in a climate where several schools are cutting their support staff by 50%.

Please remember to use our school website as a source for planning and finding out when events are.

More Trips and Residential Visits

We are always looking to enhance our children's learning with extra-curricular trips. At the moment apart from reception and nursery, each class goes on one visit per term, not including choir events. We feel this is about right as to go on more trips would place an increased financial burden on many parents, with costs for trips ranging from between £4 - £20.

Residential trips are limited to year 6 for the same reasons, along with the increased expectation for staff who would have to be part of any residential trip. Many of our staff have young families, so three to five days away from home is very difficult along with the associated cover costs the school would incur.

So what is the school doing to raise finance?

Since the start of September, the school has been letting classrooms to a local charity called AFRIL who are based at the Leamore Centre. The Charity uses the space to help children with English as an additional language and / or are refugee children. Myself, Mr Chown, Mrs Reid and Mr Stopperton take turns unlocking the school each weekend. A large part of the Spring Term was spent negotiating with the company and preparing the associated paperwork. The income from these Saturday lets has ensured that we have not had to lose any of our teaching assistants this year, which in turn means the support your child gets in school has not been affected. Please remember that many schools are cutting support staff ratios at the moment and we are very pleased this has not been the case with us.

I hope this answers some of your questions and again, many thanks for your on-going support.

Mr. D Houson
Headteacher



Many thanks to Mrs Dummett for the beautiful Nativity scene in our foyer.

Diary Dates Autumn 2017

12 th Dec	St Saviour's Christmas Dinner
13 th Dec	St Saviour's Choir supporting St Christopher's Hospice
14 th Dec	EYFS / KS1 Nativity at 9.30am – <i>tickets only on sale soon</i>
15 th Dec	EYFS / KS1 Nativity at 2.00pm - <i>tickets only on sale soon</i>
15 th Dec	EYFS Day Part 5 (For Parents looking for Reception places for 2018)
19 th Dec	KS2 Christmas Carol Concert in St Saviour's Church at 2pm
20th Dec	Christmas Mass in St Saviour's Church at 10am
20 th Dec	School finishes for Christmas Holidays
3rd Jan	School Closed for INSET day
4th Jan	Children return to school at 9am