Friday 20th October 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Thank you for successful start to our academic year. We have had a busy half term and have made a positive start to our school year. The children break up tonight for a one-week half term holiday and return to school on Monday 30th October 2023.

As you will be aware, today is Mr Key’s mast day at St Bede’s. On behalf of the staff, parents and children can I publically thank Mr Keys for all of his hard work and dedication as class teacher, SENCo and Deputy Headteacher during his 5 and ½ years at St Bede’s. We wish him well as he moves to his new school and know that he will be an asset to their team.

**Half term updates:**

There has been a lot going on this half term, here are some of the highlights –

* Year 6 Welcome Mass in Church, attended by many of our Year 6 parents
* Year 6 and EYFS Welcome liturgy held in the hall – an opportunity for our Year 6 children to buddy up with our new EYFS children to help them to feel welcome in our school. Thank you to all of the parents who came along and shared in this liturgy.
* Year 5 Bikeability – helping our Year 5 children to develop safe cycling skills when travelling on the roads
* More than Dance visit for Year 3 and Year 4 – children exploring spiritual dance
* Year 6 residential to Robinwood – a fantastic opportunity for our Year 6 children to develop their skills and confidence through a range of outdoor challenge activities
* Whole school curriculum evenings – these were very well attended by parents and a great opportunity to find out the curriculum for your child and how you can support them at home
* Year 6 visit to Safety works – part of our safeguarding / PSHE programme
* Whole school dogs trust workshops
* Year 5 Harvest Festival Mass, attended by many of our Year 5 parents
* Early Reading and Phonics workshops for our EYFS and Year 1 parents – thank you to all of those parents who attended

**Thank you:**

Can I say a huge thank you for your generosity in our annual harvest festival collection. As is usual, we will be distributing food parcels to the elderly members of our Parish and the rest of the food donations will be sent to the local food bank to help those families in need.

**Attendance Update:**

As you are aware, attendance and punctuality are very important and remain a focus for the Local Authority. Our school target is 97% attendance. Mrs Howell and I continue to monitor attendance on a half termly and termly basis and we celebrate improvements to attendance as well as those children who fall within the green band of 97%+ attendance.

Attendance has started very well with our current whole school attendance figure being 96.4% for this half term. Please continue to support us as we work towards our attendance goal.

**PTA:**

The PTA continue to do great work to fundraise for our children. Tonight, they are holding a ‘spooky disco’ – 4.00pm – 4.45pm for EYFS and KS1 (parents to attend) and 5.00pm – 6.00pm for KS2. Following on from this, the PTA are holding their monthly bingo night tonight at 7.00pm, please come along for a fun evening.

**Parent’s Evening:**

Individual parent’s evenings are being held for each class in the first week back after half term. It is essential that you attend the meeting as it is an opportunity for the class teacher to share the progress and attainment of your child so far this year and also to find out how you can help and support your child at home.

If you have not yet made an appointment, please do so as a matter of urgency.

EYFS: Monday 30th October or Wednesday 1st November

Year 1: Tuesday 31st October or Wednesday 1st November

Year 2: Tuesday 31st October or Wednesday 1st November

Year 3: Tuesday 31st October or Wednesday 1st November

Year 4: No parents evening at this time due to staff change

Year 5: Tuesday 31st October or Wednesday 1st November

Year 6: Monday 30th October or Wednesday 1st November

**Safeguarding:**

Firstly, a polite reminder with regards to parking around school. I appreciate that there is limited parking and I ask parents to consider either walking to school or parking further away, where it is safer and does not cause congestion for our neighbours, and walking the final part of the journey.

We do teach our children road safety however some of the driving and parking around school can be quite dangerous and some of that is from our own parents. I would hate for there to be an accident.

Can I also remind parents about keeping a watchful eye with regard to their children’s online viewing. I have had a number of parents raise their concerns about an online video called ‘Skibidi Toilet’ which seems quite disturbing. I am very aware that it is very easy for children to accidently come across online materials which we would not like them to view. As parents it is important, and your duty, to have the right parental controls and checks in place to try to safeguard them as much as you can.

**After-school clubs:**

Our programme of after-school clubs will recommence in the second week back after half term (week commencing 6th November) due to the parent’s evenings being held in the first week. The new offer will be published for parents very soon.

**Mini-Vinnies:**

Mrs Savage and I are re-launching our Mini-Vinnie programme next half term and will be holding a weekly Mini-Vinnie group meeting every Thursday evening from 3.30pm – 4.30pm, starting from (this is not a club, and is therefore free of charge, and is only open to the existing Mini-Vinnies). This dedicated time will allow us to get some of our projects launched and make a great start to our Mini-Vinnie work for the year.

**Forthcoming Events**: (information to follow)

20th October - PTA Bingo Night

Monday 30th October – Wednesday 1st November Parent’s Evenings (see above)

Sunday 5th November – Parish Coffee morning after Mass (10.30am)

Friday 10th November PTA Games Night

Monday 13th November – Odd socks day (to launch anti-bullying week)

Wednesday 15th November – Year 5 visit to see The Velveteen Rabbit Show

Week commencing 20th November – National Road Safety Week

Sunday 10th November – Parish Coffee morning after Mass (10.30am)

Week commencing 4th December – PTA Christmas competitions

Tuesday 5th December – PTA Panto Event