



Established in 1856

St Peter's Church of England (VC) Primary School

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Headteacher: Mr Jim Holditch

Friday 15th September 2017

Dear Parents,

As I reach the end of my second week here, I would like to thank everyone for making me feel so welcome. I was a little like a fish out of water during the first week, as I struggled to learn the names of the children, the routines here (I apologise profusely to the Year R parents who have been left waiting at the gate because I twice forgot to unlock it at 12pm) and simply getting used to being in a different school, with different people. However, I have no doubt about the decision I have made. I am very happy to be here and already feel as if this is 'my school'. I hope to be able to complete my role as Headteacher over the coming years in such a way that you are as happy to have me here, as I am to be here.

Citizens of the Week

Congratulations to Dolcie, Ruby-Marie, Emma, Luke, William, Brooke and Libby who have been selected by their class teachers as our first citizens of the week. We enjoyed squash and biscuits today and I now know a great deal more about Paw Patrol than I did yesterday. The teachers select the children because of their behaviour, politeness or their superb attitude during lessons. Well done to all 7 of them!

We will give the certificates out during our assembly on Thursday morning and the tea party will take place on Friday afternoon unless I am ever wrapped up in meetings. If your child is picked as a citizen and they have some dietary requirement which means that they can't partake of squash and biscuits, please let me know and I will happily get gluten free biscuits or anything else which is required.

Assemblies and Act of Worship

During these first two weeks, I have been leading all of the assemblies. I wanted to have an extended opportunity to talk to the children so that they could get to know me a little and the daily assembly was an ideal opportunity for me to do this. However, as of next week, we will revert to our more normal schedule, with daily acts of worship and there will still be a celebration assembly every Friday.

Road Crossing Patrol

Kent County Council have agreed to fund a Road Crossing Patrol for the school. Whilst we are only a small school, with a relatively small number of pupils, having only one gate means that the road is somewhat congested at the beginning and end of the school day. To this end, can I please ask parents to park considerately, and avoid going up on the kerb and reducing the space for pedestrians. We would certainly benefit from having a 'lollipop patrol' managing the crossing point outside the school gate.

However, whilst KCC will fund the position, it is up to us to recruit someone to do it. The role is 5 hours per week term time only Monday – Friday 8:15 - 8:45 and 2.45 - 3.15. The successful applicant will be paid within Kent Scheme Grade KR2, which is approximately the equivalent of £7.70 per hour.

Midday Meals Supervisor

Similarly, we would also like to recruit an additional midday meals supervisor. We need someone to help to supervise and care for the children during the lunchtime period. Responsibilities include supervision in the dinner hall, play areas and school grounds, assisting at meal times and ensuring that all children are safe and well. The hours are 11:50am - 1:05pm 5 days a week, term time only. Pay is within Kent Range 2, which is equivalent to £7.70 per hour.

If you are interested in either role, please contact the School Office for an application pack by email (office@stpetersaylesford.kent.sch.uk), by phone (01622 717335) or in person. Alternatively go to www.kent-teach.com and search support jobs in Aylesford. The full adverts are on this Kent Teach site and will also be displayed in the window of the village shop.

You must apply on our School Application Form as we cannot accept your CV. All completed applications should be returned directly to the school by 3pm Friday 29th September. If you are applying by email, please

address them to the School Business Manager sbm@stpetersaylesford.kent.sch.uk. Interviews for both posts will be on the 5th October.

Changes to the meals service

I have been eating school dinners with the children since the start of term and I will continue to do so for the next few weeks, as it gives me a chance to get to know the children and to assess the quality of our meals service. I am making a few changes to the meal service already and we have ordered separate plates, bowls and trays for the children to use. Once they arrive, we will stop using the flight trays which we currently have. I want the children to eat from plates and bowls just as they would at home.

I appreciate that carrying a tray and balancing a plate and bowl full of food, without spilling anything, can be a little tricky particularly for our younger children. Hence, as of next week, the Year 6 children will buddy up with a child in Year R. They will go into lunch together and the Year 6 will carry the tray for their Year R buddy, before queueing back up to get their own dinner. Hopefully this will reduce spillage and, more importantly, cement the relationship of the Year 6 children as big brothers and sisters to our youngest children.

We are also introducing the opportunity for parents to join the children for lunch. Every Thursday, up to 20 parents from one year group will be able to sign up for a dinner and come in to sit with their child whilst you eat together. If your child has a packed lunch, you can still come in, but we do ask that parents eat the school dinners and don't bring a packed lunch. Please don't make me eat my spaghetti bolognaise whilst you sit across the table from me, tucking into Waitrose smoked salmon. Each week will be open to a different year group. This will give you the opportunity to experience the meal service for yourself and provide you with an insight into an aspect of school life. We will write to you separately with further details once we have finalised them with the caterer.

Extra-Curricular Clubs

Next week, you will receive a list of the extra-curricular clubs which we are running in terms 1 and 2. I place great value on providing our children with a broad and enriched curriculum, and extra-curricular clubs are an important means of doing this. We are extremely lucky to have such a committed and hardworking staff, who have a range of skills and interests which they are prepared to share with the children. If you have a particular skill which you would also be prepared to share, please let me know. Obviously parents have to complete all of the necessary safeguarding checks as you would expect, but it could be that some of you have language skills, or are talented artists, musicians or whatever, and would be prepared to run a club here in order to share this interest with our children. Alternatively, you may be prepared to help one of us run the clubs which we are offering. I will be running a football club in terms 1 and 2, and then rugby in terms 3 and 4, and would certainly appreciate another pair of hands in doing so. Once the list comes out, please have a look and if you feel that you can help us or augment what we are offering, please let me know.

Trips and Visits

I'm aware that the school website outlines various trips which are planned for this year. I am reviewing the number of trips we undertake with a view to reducing them. Trips out are a superb and effective way of supplementing what we teach in the classroom. They are a wonderful experience for the children and can cement the learning which we do here in school. However, I just want to be sure that we aren't organising too many trips. I am very aware that they are a financial burden to parents, particularly those of you with two or three children here. I am discussing this with the teachers next week and we will update the information on the website once we have agreed what we will be doing this year.

Conkers

I've been beaten three times already, although I am still leading 9-3 for the season. Amelie told me that she had never played before, and then promptly smashed my conker into a thousand pieces, whilst Edward and Matthew seem intent on hitting my conker as hard as is humanly possible. Battle continues.

Best wishes

Jim Holditch
Headteacher