

**Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September 2016**  
**St Nicholas CE Primary Academy**  
**Weekly Newsletter**  
**Headteacher: Christopher Dale**



Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back to the start of an exciting school year and welcome to all those who have just joined us at St Nicholas!

I was pleased to see the children starting the school year in smart new uniforms and shiny new shoes and we ask that correct and appropriate school uniform is worn at all times. This is in keeping with our ethos of "look smart, feel proud" ethos – appearances really do make a difference to attitudes!

Over the course of the year I look forward to building on many of the positive relationships we have developed and embedding these further. Soon I will be writing to parents about starting a parent council at St Nicholas. It is my hope that this will be a positive force to develop the school even further.

This year we will be improving our communication systems through the use of Parent Mail. There is more about this at the end of the newsletter. I do hope as many parents as possible will sign up to this system as it will allow the school to ensure communication is much more effective. Please make sure the Office has your correct mobile contact numbers and an email address.

At St Nicholas we operate an open door policy which means that parents may talk to a member of staff at any time. Please remember that teachers are very busy welcoming children into class first thing in the morning and will not be able to give parents a private or lengthy opportunity to speak. Should you require such an opportunity please arrange an appointment directly with the teacher or make an appointment via the school office.

Parents will also be aware of the new staff at the school from communication received at the end of the last term. The governors and I are delighted to have recruited such talented staff and we **all** look forward to working with you in the year ahead.

Yours sincerely

Christopher Dale  
**Headteacher**

**The Reading Challenge**

Last year we were the school with the greatest number of children taking part and came 1<sup>st</sup> in Shepway. Up until last week we were in 1<sup>st</sup> position but this week we slipped to 2<sup>nd</sup>. The aim of the challenge is to get children to read any six books of their choice from their library during the summer holidays. There is still time to register your child and as a school make one last push on the number of books we read. The challenge finishes on 17<sup>th</sup> September – Let's make one last push in our reading challenge – Remember there are plenty of prizes to be won!



**Dates for your diary**

**Mon 19<sup>th</sup> Sept** – Year R children start Full Time

**Monday 29<sup>th</sup> Sept** – KM newspaper, first day at school photos for Yr R

**Thur 13<sup>th</sup> Oct** – Kent Test (11+) Results day

**Fri 31<sup>st</sup> Oct** – Year 6 Secondary Admissions close

**TERM DATES**  
**2016/17**

**TERM1**

**Tues 6<sup>th</sup> Sept – Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Oct 2016**

**TERM 2**

**Mon 31<sup>st</sup> Oct – Fri 16<sup>th</sup> Dec 2016**

**TERM 3**

**Tues 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan – Fri 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2017**

**TERM 4**

**Mon 20<sup>th</sup> Feb – Fri 31<sup>st</sup> March**

**TERM 5**

**Wed 19<sup>th</sup> April – Fri 26<sup>th</sup> May**

**TERM 6**

**Mon 5<sup>th</sup> June – Fri 21<sup>st</sup> July**

**INSET DAYS**  
**School Closed to Children**

**19<sup>th</sup> 20<sup>th</sup> & 21<sup>st</sup> December 2016**

**Tues 18<sup>th</sup> April 2017**

**Mon 1<sup>st</sup> May**  
**Bank Holiday Monday**  
**– school closed**

## Attendance

As a school we are dedicated to becoming an outstanding school, this can only be achieved through the ongoing support of parents. Therefore I would ask parents to assist us by ensuring that children attend school as regularly as possible.

For a child to be successful in their education they must be at school! Our target for attendance is 96% across the school year. Anything less than 95% will have a serious impact on achievement and children will do less well than they should as a result.

**Above 97%: Less than 6 days absence a year - Excellent attendance!** These young people will almost certainly get the best grades they can leading to better prospects for secondary school, college, university or work.

**95%: 10 days absence a year**

These pupils are likely to achieve good grades and have opportunities for college, university or work, but **could still improve their attendance!**

**90%: 19 days absence a year**

Young people in this group are missing a month of school per year; it will be difficult for them to achieve their best.

**85%: 29 days absence a year**

Young people in this group are missing six weeks of school per year; it will be very difficult for them to keep up with work and they are unlikely to do their best.

**80%: 38 days absence a year**

Young people in this group are missing over a year of school during their time in primary education, it will be almost impossible to keep up with work. **Parents of young people in this group will be issued with a penalty notice if they do not work with the school.**

Please help by ensuring your child arrives on time: Classroom doors open at 8:35am – early morning learning begins at this time. Arriving late can be disruptive and stressful for children especially if lateness is frequent. Your help with these matters would be greatly appreciated.

## ParentMail

By the end of September 2016 we intend to distribute all letters via ParentMail; a messaging service that allows us to communicate with parents more effectively. For parents, this means you can easily pick up school messages direct to your email or on your Smartphone by downloading the free ParentMail App on Android or iOS. Text messages will be sent for important reminders. It is also our intention to begin using interactive forms where parents can sign up for Parent Consultations in the very near future.

We hope you will welcome this new approach to communication which is intended to make things easier and clearer for parents by delivering information directly to you. We would ask you to relay to each other the need to sign up to ParentMail and to encourage your fellow parents/carers to complete their registration as soon as possible.

To use the latest version of ParentMail all you need to do is verify your account. Over the next few days you will be sent either an email or text message from ParentMail when you receive this please just follow the instructions below.

If you have both a mobile number and an email address registered on your account you will receive a registration invitation by text and email. You can decide which way you register – but you will only need to register once.

**Mobile registration:**

Please click on the link from the text message and follow the verification process. You will be asked to enter some details, answer a security question to verify who you are and to set a password for your account.

**Email registration:**

Please click on the link from the email and follow the verification process. As above, you will be asked to enter some details, answer a security question to verify who you are and to set a password for your account.

The ParentMail “setting up” session on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> September has been cancelled. Details of the re-scheduled session are to follow.



This weeks collective worship focus is:

**JOURNEYS**

“Blessed is the one that trusts in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is.”

**Jeremiah 17:7**

**Stepping Stones at St Nicholas Church**

For Pre-school Children, Parents & Carers – we meet every Wednesday, 1.45pm – 2.45pm, weekly during term times for Food, Fun and Fellowship.