



# ST NICHOLAS CE Primary School

*Our Christian Community Growing and Learning Together*

## Autumn 1 Newsletter 2019

### Message from the Head Teacher

Dear Parents,

Welcome to our first newsletter of this new academic year! We've had a great start to the academic year and our Reception class have settled in really well, as you will see in the sections below. On Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> October, our Reception children opened up our Open Afternoon with a wonderful performance of Cauliflowers Fluffy. They were so confident and completely unaffected by the large turnout of prospective parents, that it was hard to believe that they have only been in school for six weeks! A special mention goes to our Head boy and Head girl Oscar and Tami, who spoke incredibly confidently in front of over 80 parents.

As you are aware, at St Nicholas, we are very proud of our educational outcomes at the end of Year R, Key stage One and Key Stage Two, especially when we found out that our Year 6 outcomes were in the top 20% nationally! However, whilst it's important for our children to be academically successful, we recognise that for our children to fully achieve their full potential there also needs to be a focus on their wellbeing needs. Consequently, we are going to have an increased focus on our PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) curriculum by purchasing a PSHE scheme of work, which is going to be purchased through the PTA and we are incredibly grateful for this.

In November, you will be receiving a Survey Monkey link to our annual parental survey as part of our self-evaluation and school improvement process. It's important for us to seek your opinions and ideas on matters such as behaviour, teaching and learning, homework and the pastoral support we give our children. I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation.

I'm very much looking forward to being back at school after half term following my operation in September. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Carere and all the staff for their hard work in my absence. I have been kept fully informed throughout my recuperation, despite being told off for not sticking to my recovery plan!

### **Attendance and Holidays during the School Term**

Attendance during the first half-term has been very good. Thank you to all the parents for your support with minimising pupil absence. It's great to see that for the first half-term, all classes were in the high 90's for attendance. It's been an incredibly busy half-term, and the two weeks will give both staff and families a chance to recharge. Whether you are off on holidays or staying home, may you all enjoy a restful and peaceful half-term, and we will see you again on the 4<sup>th</sup> November.

Mrs. Sophie Sear  
Head Teacher

Mr. Dustin Carere  
Deputy Head Teacher

...And the best attendance goes to: 

**Year 2 and Year 4!**

Year Group	Autumn 1 %
Year R	98
Year 1	98
Year 2	99
Year 3	98
Year 4	99
Year 5	97
Year 6	98





## What have we been up to? The autumn term so far...

### Class R

We have had a great start to the year in Class R! We are all doing a great job of coming in on our own and being brave and organised. We have started the year off by learning all about ourselves. As part of our topic we have written our own introduction sentences, painted self-portraits and made our own family trees. It has been great to find out all about each other as we become friends.

In literacy we have started to read 'On Sudden Hill' this is a book all about friendship and play! In the story Birt and Etho spend lots of time role playing and imagining, they turn their cardboard boxes in to all sorts of things. We had a go at turning our own cardboard boxes in to a whole range of different things and had a go at writing sentences to accompany our play. We wrote 'It is not a box it is a ...' and chose what our box would be. We practised using our phonics to sound out and spell some words.

In maths we have practised counting and have found out that all sorts of things can be counted including claps and hops. We are beginning to learn about shapes. Last week we came up with our own shape riddles. One of our riddles was 'I have 10 sides, I have 10 vertices. Who am I? Can you guess what we are?'



### Year 1

We have had an exciting and busy start to the year and the children are making an excellent transition into Year one. Our topic this term has been the Great Fire of London, where the children have had an opportunity to participate in a whole class drama workshop which really brought the topic to life and have enjoyed weekly dancing exploring movement related to the Great Fire of London. We have looked at historical facts and timelines from the event and created diary entry's using Samuel Pepys as an example. The children have also created fantastic art work depicting a scene of the Great Fire of London. In science we have been focusing on Our Body and using our senses to explore the environment and solve an investigation using our sense of smell. We have looked at two books in literacy 'Stanley's Stick' and 'Beegu'. The children loved exploring the pit and collecting their own sticks and it really helped to bring the story to life, enabling the children to create their own versions of Stanley's Stick. The children have also enjoyed creating role plays and writing recounts of Beegu's trip to earth in the form of a postcard. In maths we have been learning about place value and addition and subtraction. The children have used their knowledge to order numbers, use part whole models and writing number sentences to create fact families. In RE we have been focusing on the question what do Christians believe God is like? The children have been thoughtful and caring when thinking about how Christians show their love for God. We have also read the parable of the lost son and Jonah and explored these parables through role play. It has been a fantastic start to the academic year, keep up the hard work Year One!





## Year 2

I can't believe our first half term has finished and what a busy one it's been! The children have worked incredibly hard and should be proud of their efforts. In English we have enjoyed reading our class novel, *A Necklace of Raindrops*. This book has provided lots of opportunities for drama and writing in role as different characters. In Science we have been exploring materials and look forward to carrying out some investigations after half term. We have been thinking about Creation in RE and why we are fortunate that God made the world. We have been thinking about how we can help care for the world and the importance of this. In History, we have been learning about the significance of Florence Nightingale and why she made the choices she did when she travelled out to Scutari. In art we created our own portraits of Florence in the style of Paul Klee using hot and cold colours. Examples of these can be seen in the Hall. We also enjoyed making Florence style lanterns and decorating these with all of her achievements. We are looking forward to another busy half term and lots more learning. 😊



## Year 3

Year 3 have had an incredibly busy start to the year. We learnt a brand new worship song and created our own movements to enhance our performance all in just a couple of weeks. We performed our interpretation of the song to seven of the other primary schools within our Trust at the Aquinas Year 3 Celebration Service which was held at St George's church in Bickley.

Our topic this term has been the Romans and the children have been really inspired by this topic. We had an amazing Romans day when we visited Crofton Villa in Orpington, activities included dressing up as Roman soldiers and Celts, making mosaics, looking at the remains of the Roman villa and observing, drawing and handling ancient Roman artefacts including pottery, animal bones and tiles. The day was completed by looking at and recreating our own Roman onagers. The excitement of watching a model onager fire rotten tomatoes at a target in the Pit topped the day off perfectly. This has not been the end to our Roman adventure, we have been re-enacting what life was like for every day Romans and soldiers in our dance lessons and we have been playing addition and subtraction games in maths using Roman numerals.

We started off our English by studying 'Leon and the Place Between'. It is a magical book that took us to a peculiar world of illusions. We wrote in role as the main character, studied the language that the author used to create descriptive passages and wrote our own magical stories. The children all have amazing imaginations! We then went onto study a book linked to our topic, called *Escape from Pompeii*. We have learned all about the deadly eruption of Vesuvius and explored rich and varied language to describe the scene of the disaster.

In maths we have been working with 3 digit numbers and learning about place value and addition and subtraction. We have enjoyed using games and problem solving to extend our reasons skills.

Our science topic has been animals and humans, looking specifically at our bones and muscles and how to keep these healthy. We made a new class member 'Bella' from a pile of 'bones' we found in the classroom and have been thinking about how we could make her move by making a model of our arm and using elastic bands to create antagonistic muscles.

Our RE topic this term has been People of God. We have learned about Noah and Abraham and thought about how these bible stories can help us understand what it is like to follow God. We have linked this to how we follow God in our school, local and wider community.





#### Year 4

Firstly, thank you for sending in holiday postcards. They provided a reminder for the children when writing their summer holiday recounts. Since then, our main text has been Ted Hughes' Iron Man. We have visualised the story and the characters' feelings using drama and music, we created Iron Man poems, written a diary entry and persuasive letter, retold the story on behalf of different characters and are working as reporters to publish newspaper articles. There was great excitement during the making of papier Mache Iron Man masks in DT, which also linked to our Stone-Bronze-Iron Age Topic. This topic was launched with our reenactment day where we dressed up to help us immerse ourselves in 500,000 years prehistoric history, learning about life, clothes, farming, weapons, tools and houses, building mini Stonehenges and looking at actual artefacts from Neolithic times. We are now creating fact files taking our research from the Iron Age Day, books, home learning and online using I-pads and laptops in class.

In Science we have been investigating changing states of matter: gases, liquids and solids, melting, condensation and evaporation. We conclude this topic learning about the water cycle. Our RE module is Creation in which we have been thinking about what Christians learn from the Creation story, how to be responsible, what happens when temptation is put in our path and how to say sorry. Finally, we have all become better swimmers and are learning new rugby skills with our coach. A very busy half-term!



#### Year 5

In year 5, we have been reading the book 'Street Child' by Berlie Doherty. Through this, we have learnt a lot about the terrible conditions children had to suffer in Victorian workhouses and have wrote diary entries and letters in role, imagining that we were those children and expressing their thoughts and feelings. We have been debating whether life was actually better on the outside of the workhouse, with the other awful jobs many children were forced to do! In science, we have been finding out about how scientists are discovering new materials, such as super-thin polymers, which could be used to make foldable mobile phone screens and real invisibility coats! In music, we have been learning about traditional notation on the staff; we even made a human staff in which we were the notes hopping around to make a tune. We have been listening to the music of classic pop 'idols' such as Abba, Queen and The Beatles and comparing various aspects of the music, such as tempo, dynamics, texture and mood. We all had different favourites, but everyone seemed to enjoy Bohemian Rhapsody! In French we have been learning our numbers, letter and sounds, and in PE we have been increasing our endurance in cross-country, as well as learning rugby skills with the new sports coach.





## Year 6

We have had a very full half-term in Year 6. Our topic has been World War Two. We were visited by Norman Burnett and his Home Front Bus. Inside the bus were detailed reconstructions of a 1940's living room, shop, bombed out street and air raid shelter. The children learnt fascinating facts about British life during World War Two. They experienced themselves what it was like to sit in a dark Anderson Shelter waiting to here the 'all clear' siren. The children also completed a DT project where they designed and made mini model Anderson Shelters and gardens.

Our class book this half-term has been Goodnight Mr Tom - linked to World War Two - which has inspired the children to create beautiful pieces of writing, including letters, diary entries and short narratives. In maths we have covered place value and all four operations; the children have completed many reasoning and problem solving activities related to this.



Other updates:

### Sport:

We welcome our new sports coach Jack Meade to the staff here at St Nicholas, where he is responsible for curriculum coaching as well as taking teams to matches and tournaments. Our KS1 football team were in action earlier in the term, where they more than held their own against all of the schools in Bromley. A perfect balance of boys and girls got to the semi-finals before finishing 3<sup>rd</sup> overall. Our girls' team went undefeated in their initial tournament, unluckily losing on penalties to Farrington's in the semi-final. Our boys competed well in their tournament, but couldn't find the back of the net enough to get a win, drawing 4 matches and losing 2. Our efforts now focus on the swimming gala, which will have taken place by the time you read this newsletter, and the Year 5 & 6 cross-country event at Crystal Palace on the 16<sup>th</sup> November.

### PTA:

Our school PTA have helped raise valuable funds for the school consistently every year. They also have a lot of fun putting on a huge range of events for children and parents alike. The PTA have their own area on our school website where you can see the full calendar of events: [PTA AREA](#). There is also more information on match funding and easyfundraising, two great and easy ways to raise money for the school. Forthcoming events include Bonfire and Fireworks night on the 9<sup>th</sup> November, followed by Film night (Toy Story 4) on the 15<sup>th</sup> November.

### GRIT:

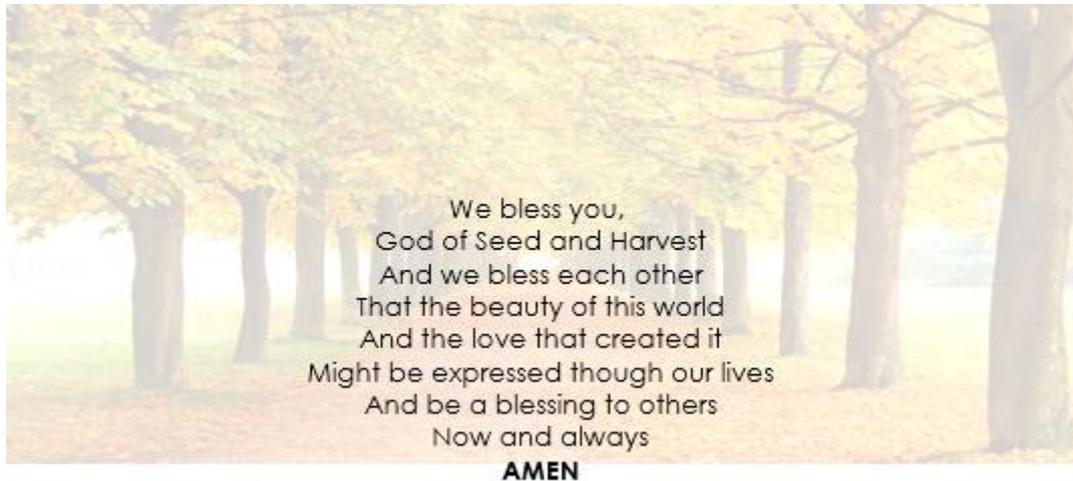
Years 3-6 have been doing some work around memory and recall in class. All of Key Stage 2 attended a workshop on mnemonics and memory palaces earlier in the term. Many children have found these really useful tools to store and retrieve information. We have also been talking about being effective learners, coming out of our comfort zones and having a [growth mindset](#). Why not ask your children about their memory palaces?



**Gentle Reminders:**

- All pupils need to bring their boots into school.
- All belongings need to be named please.
- To maintain our health and safety procedures, parents/carers must use the front door and not come in through the back door. We thank you in advance for supporting us to keep your child/children safe.
- Please remember that ALL collection arrangements for your children must be communicated to the school and class teacher. If these are regular arrangements, eg another parent collects your child on a particular day each week, this must be communicated in writing to the school office, so that we can ensure all staff are aware of the arrangements
- We are seeing the odd piece of clothing or accessory that does not adhere to our uniform policy eg hair band and accessories that are not blue, yellow or white

**Finally... A prayer for autumn**



**Summary of key events for your diary...or fridge!**

Please note that dates will be updated in every newsletter. Term dates can be found [HERE](#)

Term	Month	Day	Event
Autumn 2	November	4 <sup>th</sup>	Start of autumn 2 term
		6 <sup>th</sup>	Boys' football tournament
		7 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 Eucharist
		8 <sup>th</sup>	Own clothes day- bring a bottle for fireworks night
		9 <sup>th</sup>	PTA fireworks night in the pit
		11 <sup>th</sup>	Art week in school
		16 <sup>th</sup>	Crystal Palace x-country event for Years 5 & 6
		20 <sup>th</sup>	Year 6 visit to Chislehurst Caves
		29 <sup>th</sup>	Year 2 Christmas Journey
	December	4 <sup>th</sup>	PTA KS2 & KS2 Christmas Parties
		5 <sup>th</sup>	St Nicholas day service at St Nicholas Church
		6 <sup>th</sup>	Year 5 ice-skating trip (TBC)
		6 <sup>th</sup>	Last day of clubs for the autumn term
		11 <sup>th</sup>	KS1 Christmas Nativity at Methodist Church
		12 <sup>th</sup>	KS1 Christmas Nativity at Methodist Church
		18 <sup>th</sup>	KS2 Christmas Carol service pm at St Nicholas Church
		19 <sup>th</sup>	KS2 Christmas Carol service evening at St Nicholas Church
		20 <sup>th</sup>	Last day of autumn term (dismissal 1.40pm)
		January	7 <sup>th</sup>