



ST NICHOLAS CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

School Road, Hurst, Berkshire RG10 0DR

NEWSLETTER 15 – 14th January 2021



The organic baby food co.

St Nicholas School Vision Statement

Delivering a firm foundation for our childrens' future success by celebrating individual and community achievement, built on Christian values.

ONLINE CHURCH SERVICE

Join us on at 11:00am on Sunday for our virtual service.
Visit www.thru-christ.org.uk for the link to their YouTube Channel.

'Happy Birthday' to pupils and staff who are celebrating a birthday so far in January (up to 17th January)

Lauren and Felix - Year 2

Josie - Year 3

Maddie and Martha M - Year 4

Daniel - Year 6

Mrs MacDonald



From Miss McGrail, and all the staff, governors, pupils and parents in our school family.

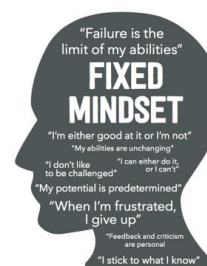
SCHOOL CALENDAR

January

Thu 21st School Census – Spring term
Fri 29th PTA Meeting via Teams, 9:30am

February

15th - 19th **HALF TERM**
22nd School Re-opens to all pupils (subject to Government guidance)



This week's Growth Mindset thought...

"No matter what happens, or how bad it seems today, life does go on, and it will be better tomorrow."

Maya Angelou, American Poet and Author

Our School Values: Respect, Thoughtfulness, Perseverance, Friendship

Dear Parents and Carers

I can promise you we were all set to open the school to all pupils on Tuesday 5th January. The Risk Assessment was updated; disinfectant, soap and hand sanitiser replenished; checklists ready; all staff available for work... and then we all watched the Prime Minister's briefing at 8pm Monday evening.

Very quickly, adaptations were made to day-to-day plans in all households and schools across the country. I want to thank all of you and all of the staff here at St Nicholas for showing the resilience and acceptance to the unwanted but unavoidable news. Our return to any kind of normality is once again on hold.

We are now educating only the Key Worker and vulnerable pupils on site for those parents who have requested a place. We are keen to reiterate the message that the fewer pupils and staff on site, the safer it is for everyone in school and everyone's wider household and support bubble.

The engagement with the home learning tasks and live class sessions has been outstanding. Thank you to parents who have taken the time to send positive feedback and personal messages to me and to individual teachers. Thank you to the pupils for all of the work completed and for sharing their successes. These have included Maths and English assignments; Science investigations; History, Geography and RE studies; creative art and design projects, physical activities and musical compositions. What an astonishing variety of achievements by pupils in our small school in just over one week!

We are mindful that in every home there will be a range of circumstances helping and hindering a pupil's ability to access the live class sessions and complete the learning tasks. Please speak to us if further support is required. This support might include printing off paper packs, access to a laptop or a 1:1 telephone call. We are keen to support all pupils and parents in any way we can.

We are also keen that rewards are fair and consistent. The teachers who would normally award Merits and Stars each week are not able to quantify the level of effort and independence contributed by each child to a finished piece of work or project....but YOU are! We are therefore attaching a template for a 'Lockdown Learning Star' certificate. Please share with the class teacher when you have awarded a star to your child and the reason. Upload or email a photograph so we can celebrate the achievement with you. We know how difficult it can be to motivate pupils and we hope the stars will help to value outstanding efforts and achievements. They can also be awarded for 'Respect,' 'Thoughtfulness' 'Friendship' 'Perseverance' and for 'Showing a Growth Mindset.'

Should you wish to, you could award stars to parents and siblings in order to show appreciation for the efforts everyone is making at home during this very difficult time for all of us. Stars can help to make us all feel valued. Be generous with them and celebrate the positives when you can.

Please keep safe and remember we are here for all of you. Please send an email to the school office or to your specific class email address to request a phone call whenever a bit more support is needed in addition to the on-line learning provision.

Be safe. Be thankful. Look out for one another.

Miss McGrail

Wellbeing Thought for the Week – The importance of Play!

As a working parent who is also supporting home-schooling, I regularly hear my children asking “how long is break time?” “What time is break?” “What shall we do this break?” “Can I call my friend?” “Can we Zoom call?” (other video messaging apps available!) It reminded me how imperative “break time” is to children.

When children are asked about what is important to them, playing and friends is usually top of their list. When we ask our children what they did at school, they will likely put a lot of emphasis, if not all, on playtime or lunchtime! It is an essential part of every child’s life and is vital for the enjoyment of childhood as well as social, emotional, intellectual and physical development.

Unfortunately, opportunities to engage in high quality play have been drastically reduced by the current situation. Children need play for social connection, to aid learning and to help them process a lot of complex emotions, especially during this time.

How does play benefit our children?

- Play gives children a chance to find and develop a connection to their own interests.
- During play, children learn how to make decisions, solve problems, exert self-control, and follow rules.
- Children learn to handle their emotions, including anger and fear.
- Play helps children make friends and learn to get along with each other as equals.
- Most importantly, play is a source of happiness.

Play isn’t just important for children; it has many benefits for adults too! While play is crucial for a child’s development, it is also beneficial for people of all ages. Play can add joy to life, relieve stress, supercharge learning, and connect you to others and the world around you. Play can also make work more productive and pleasurable! Here are some ideas for breaks and “play” at home

<https://www.shutterfly.com/ideas/the-best-family-games-to-play-at-home/>

For those who are juggling working from home as well as home schooling, play breaks can also give adults a break too. Allow children to communicate with their peers whether over a video or telephone call or over an online game. Having the opportunity to chat together and talk about their day is valuable when physical contact is so limited.

Sarah Hilling, SENCo

FirstNews

NEWS TO GET YOUNG PEOPLE TALKING

First News – Free Digital Downloads

First News, the children's newspaper aimed at 7-14 year olds, is offering free access to their online newspaper for a limited period of time, to help parents and children during school closures. News is reported in an age-appropriate and non-scary way that gets children engaged in current affairs in the UK and around the world. It also includes other items such as entertainment, games, animals, sport and puzzles.

To access First News please visit <https://subscribe.firstnews.co.uk/free-downloadable-issue/>



Map of the World

Thank you to the parent who purchased the Map of the World for us. It is on display in the corridor and looks fantastic. The pupils have seen it as it arrived just before the end of the Autumn term. It has already prompted discussions about countries and oceans of the world. We hope to use it primarily as a Geography resource and to link it to stories we read including during whole school assemblies. We love it!



There is exciting news this week; St Nicholas has another **Rock Hero**! Congratulations to **Sammy** (Blake) who has reached the top of the rock ladder, completing each question in an amazing average of 0.94 seconds!

Excellent work also from **Lucas J** (TS Eliot) who is now a Rock Legend and from **Louis** and **Violet H** (both Longfellow) who have become Rock Stars. Well done also to **Sunni** (Blake) who has moved up to Gigger status.

William V (TS Eliot) has also had a fantastic week, achieving the greatest improvement in correct answers, accuracy and the most coins. Great work, William! **Violet** (TS Eliot) is awarded the certificate for the best improvement in speed.



BATTLE! BATTLE! BATTLE!

Next week, we recommence the battles!

Who? Year 3 v Year 4 v Year 5 v Year 6

When? From 9.00am Monday 18th January to 6.30pm Friday 22nd January

Who will win?



Congratulations to **William** (De La Mare) for the biggest improvement in correct answers and levels; to **Mena** for improved accuracy and to **Amelia D** for earning the most coins.

There is also an amazing achievement in Numbots. **Bruno** (De La Mare) has completed the top level! Great work, Bruno!

Well done also to these Milne children who have been awarded stage certificates: **Ivy** (Brass), **Sean** (Tin), **Arthur** and **Henry W** (both Iron).



Our School Values: Respect, Thoughtfulness, Perseverance, Friendship

PTA NEWS UPDATE

Happy New Year and welcome to the first PTA newsletter of 2021. We hope that you all had a lovely Christmas and are excited for what the year ahead has in store.

We'd like to thank everyone who got behind our many events and initiatives last term. As you will know, we have been trialling a number of things to see how they fare and are delighted with the outcome of each.

New PTA Chair required!

All parents and carers of children in the school are automatically members of the PTA, so it is something we are all involved in. We are really lucky in St Nicholas to have such an active parent/carers community. Many of the members who attend meetings have older children in the school and we need to ensure some succession planning, so we would really welcome new parents/carers to the school, with younger children, who would like to be more involved in enriching the school community and improving the school for our children. If you are interested in becoming Chair of the PTA, here is a bit about the role and some of things you may enjoy doing as Chair:

- Three termly one-to-one meetings with the Head Teacher to discuss the PTA calendar and funding priority.
- To Chair meetings six times per school year, where any parent/carers can come along - this can be done in any way as long as funding decisions are properly recorded and minutes taken.
- To develop the PTA calendar for the school year in consultation with other members.
- To liaise with the school regarding PTA news and events so things can be included in the school newsletter.
- To develop things in a new way - it doesn't have to stay the same! Also, the job can be done on a job-share basis if you wanted to share the load.

It is really rewarding and a fulfilling position.

In addition, the PTA team warmly thank Mike Rand and Louise Gawthorn for all their hard work they have done and we appreciate the work they do for the benefit of the school community.

Additional Thank You's

Thank you to HIPP Organic for giving us £500, Christmas Tree Express for £20 and to all parents for your continued support.

How your donations have helped your children in 2020:

- Science teacher, 6 x half day sessions for Year 4 held November 19 - February 2020
- 3 x whiteboards / easels for De La Mare, TS Elliot and Blake
- The Week Junior for Longfellow class x 3 copies for 1 term
- Atlases a set for infants and set for juniors
- 50% of the build cost of the school website
- Contribution towards the improvement of the foundation outside area
- Contribution towards year 6 leavers gifts at £10 per child
- Additional Maths resources for Juniors
- Funding to set up a sensory space in school
- £70 per year group to purchase additional resources for use in classroom at start of term in Sept 2020
- 2 x beanbags for Donaldson
- Camera for TSE and Longfellow
- Artwork by former pupil now displayed outside hall
- Dyslexia friendly books, to build up a collection in school for dyslexic children and reluctant readers
- Year 4 Science lessons for Autumn term (7 sessions)
- Top-up amount for the history timeline
- 2 x circle bikes for use by children in Milne
- Annual subscription to Timestable Rockstars and Numbots
- Skip hire - March 2020

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Dates for your Diary:

Due to the current pandemic, we are limited to the events we can run to raise funds for the school. Unfortunately, we are unable to run our planned non-uniform day in January or Pancake Races in February.

- Friday 29th January - PTA Meeting via Teams
- Thursday 4th March - World Book Day
- Monday 29th March - Non-Uniform Day



Please support us by selecting us as your chosen charity, St Nicholas Hurst PTA

<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/1002238-0>

It's quick and easy to do!

Once signed up, shop on amazon as normal and amazon donates 0.5% of purchases towards the PTA.



Choose your favourite charity
Thousands of local and national charitable organisations.



Shop at smile.amazon.co.uk
Same products, same prices, same services as the Amazon you know.



Amazon donates to your chosen charity
Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases.



Easy Fundraising App <https://www.easypundraising.org.uk/causes/stnicholasprimaryhurst/>

Thank you to everyone who has already downloaded this app. It's simple and free to use! It has helped turn everyday shopping into free donations for the school.

If you haven't already done downloaded the app and would like some support in doing so, please talk to us or your class reps.