



Diocese of Portsmouth

ST EDMUND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

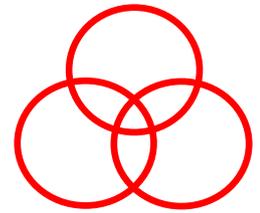
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e-mail: office.3856@st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk

www.st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs M Delany-White



15th September 2014.

Dear Parents,

May I wish you a 'Happy New Term' if I haven't spoken to you already this term. We have had a cheerful and positive start to the new academic year so far, mainly due to the delicious and freshly cooked hot meals we are now all enjoying every day, staff and pupils alike. I am delighted to say our new kitchen is already up and running and our enthusiastic new kitchen team (comprising of Mrs Helen Williams, the cook and her two assistants, Mrs Emma Davis and Mrs Julie Rowe) are already catering for nearly two hundred children every day. We are a victim of our own success as the healthy and tasty meals are proving to be so popular that the machinery and power supply is finding it hard to cope but through it all the team remain calm and unflappable and almost all the children reward them with empty plates each day.

I have many new things to inform you of for this academic year. Firstly, I spent many weeks of the summer holiday writing and updating our school website so if you haven't looked at it recently please do take a look at <http://www.st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk/> My aim is that our website becomes a major form of communication for you as parents and for possible prospective parents who want to find out about our wonderful school. I am aware that many of you are busy working parents who may not have regular contact with the class teachers or the office. I would like you to be able to look at the school website and feel fully informed about the education we are providing for your children, the dates for parents evenings and whole school or class Masses, the role of the governors, our school policy on behaviour, the menus on offer etc. I have spoken to many of you on the playground already and asked you to give me feedback on the information on the website so far and to tell me of anything else you would like to see added. You will find the class pages particularly useful on which the teachers have written a lot of information to keep you informed of practical details pertinent to their class. For example, on the class pages you will find information regarding homework, topics being covered until Christmas, how they teach phonics, PE days etc. I firmly believe that the more informed you are as parents the more you can support us as a school in ensuring your child gets the best possible education we can provide for them. I do hope our new website helps us in achieving that aim.

Secondly, there are many changes in the education world which I have no doubt you are aware of from the press. We have a new National Curriculum which our teachers have been planning for and are now teaching in all except Years 2 and 6. Year 2 and Year 6 will follow the old National Curriculum for this academic year as their SATs next May are based on the content of the old National Curriculum. The SATs in May 2016 will be relevant to the new National Curriculum so all year groups will follow the new National Curriculum from next September. The New Curriculum covers fewer things but in greater depth. Do take a look at the website for more information about our curriculum at St Edmund's. One of the major changes for your child will be that they will now be learning French- Mrs Semple has already begun to teach French across the school from Reception to Year 6.





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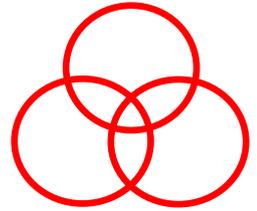
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In the New Curriculum some of the content and expectations of attainment for some of the subjects have now changed. For example, children are required to grasp many key skills in Mathematics at an earlier age. Mrs Hague has helpfully added a list of 'skills to go to the wall for' in Maths to our website- that is, a list of key skills in number that each child is expected to have achieved by the end of each academic year. You may want to look at this list and help us to make sure that your child is on track to achieve these skills as the year progresses. Also, there is a greater emphasis on production in the New Curriculum; that is, on the quality of work the children produce in their books and the evidence their books show of their new knowledge and understanding of the key skills. Therefore, the teachers will be putting even greater emphasis on the quality and quantity of work the children produce in their books and we have re written our marking policy to reflect the quality of feedback the children will receive from their teachers to aid the progress they are making.

Thankfully, much of the content of the New Curriculum lends itself to the creative teaching that our St Edmund's teachers do so well. So you will find that your children may be learning many of their literacy skills through the exciting class topic they are covering. There are also big changes in Information Technology (now called computing) which involve the children learning to write computer code to design and make their own games, for example.

There are also changes in the way we assess your children and how we report their progress to you. Teachers will be using focused, probing questions to help assess your child's understanding, looking at progress indicator statements, as well as looking for evidence in their books of their developing knowledge and understanding of the curricula content taught. They will be looking for evidence of age expected progress within the key ideas and concepts. At the moment the way we record your child's progress will largely remain the same until we are sure we have a robust and viable alternative. To that aim, I am currently working with other Abingdon Headteachers and members of Oxfordshire Local Authority to finalise exactly what format the new assessments will take. I will keep you informed about the changes to assessment over the next few months. Again assessments and the way your child's progress is reported to you if your child is in Year 2 or 6 will stay the same as before for this academic year.

On a much lighter note the following lucky people's names were drawn out of our 100 club draw on the playground last week:

100+ Club Winners for June 2014:

Margaret Cox	No. 87	£30
Jennifer Wade	No 76	£20
Margaret Hancox	No 46	£10

100+ Club Winners for July 2014:

Justine Linsley	No. 57	£30
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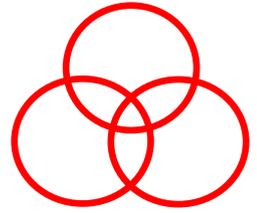
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Mr & Mrs Newman	No 64	£20
Mrs M Murray	No 43	£10

100+ Club Winners for August 2014:

Caitlin Hancox	No. 9	£30
Bryan Morgan	No 18	£20
Mrs M Murray	No 43	£10

Finally, two practical points to mention: Firstly, I understand that historically there has been some confusion over the colour of polo shirts that the children need for PE lessons. I believe the confusion has arisen from the children in Reception Class wearing house colour t-shirts rather than the red polo shirts the rest of the school wear and the request for all children to wear house colour t-shirts for one day a year- Sports Day. The staff and I have agreed to simplify the whole issue by stating that **red polo shirts only** will be needed from now on, including for Reception Class and for all children on Sports Day (we will provide coloured bibs to help you cheer on the house teams). If you have already bought a coloured t-shirt for your child I apologise. The confusion seems to occur at the younger end of the school and, as they grow quite quickly in Key Stage 1, hopefully you will soon be able to replace the coloured t-shirt for a red one. Any other uniform confusion please do check the information on our website. Can I particularly emphasise to just a few older girls in Key Stage 2 – our uniform is definitely grey skirts **not** shorts.

Lastly, can I ask for your co-operation in making sure that no children play with the outdoor Early Years equipment on their way round to the playground? The Early Years staff arrive early each day to set out the activities for the children for that day and it is quite frustrating if all of their hard work is undone by a few children who are passing through. Please could I ask all parents and carers to support us on this? Can I also ask you to support our Community Day which will be happening on Saturday 27th September? I know you have received a Parent Mail about this already and there are posters around school suggesting the types of projects we are hoping to tackle to make our school grounds be the very best they can be. The more willing helpers we have on the day the better. Any further questions about this do ask Theresa McGarrick.

I apologise for the length of this letter, there is so much information to share with you at the beginning of an academic year. As always, please feel free to ask me if there is anything you are unsure about and talk to me or your child's teacher if you have any concerns.

Yours faithfully,
Mrs Delany-White

