



Diocese of Portsmouth

ST EDMUND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

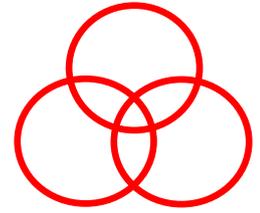
Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3PP

Tel: 01235 521558 Fax: 01235 532778

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

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

Headteacher: Mrs M Delany-White



16th October 2014

Dear Parents,

The weeks are rushing by and it is almost half term already. Although the weather has changed now and Autumn is setting in I'm pleased to see the sun is shining and everyone still has a happy smile on their face around school. This has been a busy but productive half term so far. Last week Year 6 had an enjoyable, if exhausting week at Kingswood. It was lovely to see all the children and staff arriving back safe and sound last Friday (though I'm sure parents weren't so happy to see and smell the damp, muddy clothing they brought back with them). The children have been entertaining me over the last few days with many stories of new Kingswood records and funny events in the dorms and I am really looking forward to hearing the official version of events next Thursday afternoon during our special Kingswood assembly at 2-3 pm. All Year 6 parents are very welcome to come to this assembly and we would also like to invite all of Year 5 parents so that you can get a feel of the adventures ahead for your children next year.

Another highlight of this term was our Community Day on Saturday 27th September. It was lovely to see so many families working together in the sunshine to improve our grounds and to make St Edmund's School into a place we can all truly be proud of. Children and adults worked alongside one another on a beautiful sunny day and managed to achieve so much in just one day. Many of you said that you would like to make this a regular event now so that we can keep on top of areas like the wildlife pond so do look out for information regarding our next Community Day in the spring.

A third highlight for us as a school this half term has been our recent visit by our HMI. She came back to school on 22nd September and spent an intense day checking all of the changes we have put in place, visiting most of the classrooms, looking at the children's work and talking to many adults. The outcome of her visit is that she is now happy that we are taking effective steps to improve in the specific areas highlighted by the Ofsted inspectors in February. She will no longer need to inspect us but we will keep her up to date with how things are continuing to improve over the coming year. She will then come back to school in an advisory role, probably next July, and if we feel we are ready then she will contact Ofsted and ask them to re-inspect us in the Autumn term 2015. This exactly matches the detailed improvement plan we put into action from April. I am delighted that our HMI recognised all the hard work all of the staff and Governors have undergone so far to get to this point, while recognising that we still need time to embed many of the changes fully before our next full inspection. If you would like to read the full HMI letter you will find it on the Ofsted website via the link on our school website. Also on our website you will find the link to Ofsted's Parent View which you can use at any time to inform Ofsted of how well we are doing. We will also soon be asking for your views of our school in preparation for our RE inspection which will happen in November.

In my last newsletter I discussed many of the changes in the academic world for primary schools this term. Your children are now being taught a new National Curriculum if they are in Year 1, 3, 4 or 5. Year 2 and Year 6 children continue to be taught the old National Curriculum for this





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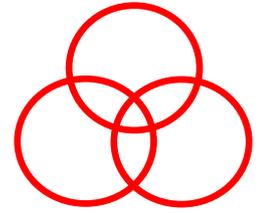
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academic year only. The way we are assessing children has now completely changed as well. The old National Curriculum levels are no longer applicable for children following the new National Curriculum. This means that the class teachers will be able to have discussions with you next week during Parents Evening regarding your child's class work and the progress they are making but they won't be giving you levels unless your child is in Year 2 and 6. We will continue to track the children's progress carefully and will discuss with you any concerns over the year if your child is not making expected progress in any area but the new emphasis is on formative ongoing assessment rather than labels (levels) which quite often didn't give the full picture or were difficult for parents to understand. During your Parents Evening meeting next week can I encourage you to listen to the teacher explain how well your child is working, ask questions so that you fully understand how well they are doing and how you can continue to support them at home and take the time to look at their books which will be available for you outside of the classrooms? The appointment times are longer this year which is why we are splitting the meetings over Monday and Tuesday evening. You should get confirmation today as to the exact time and day the teacher can meet with you. The teachers will also be in classrooms so that you should be able to hear them more clearly this year. I will also be around on both evenings so do ask me if there is anything you are unsure about.

A few upcoming dates for your diaries:

- Friday 17th October Harvest Mass in school at 2 pm – all welcome to join us (NB There will be NO Gold Book assembly this week)
- Friday 17th October Festival of Languages Day at Fitzharry's Secondary School
- Thursday 23rd October Year 1 trip to Farmer Gow's Farm
- Thursday 23rd October Year 6 Kingswood Assembly 2-3 pm
- Friday 24th October break up for half term at 3 pm.
- Monday 3rd November back to school.
- Tuesday 4th November Year 5 trip.
- Thursday 13th November Year 6 to Didcot Railway Centre
- Friday 14th November St Edmund's Mass in the Church, all welcome
- Tuesday 2nd December Big Christmas Sing, Oxford Town Hall
- Thursday 4th December Year 4 Singing Concert, Christ Church Cathedral
- Saturday 6th December Christmas Fayre
- Thursday 18th December PA Christmas Discos
- Friday 19th December break up for Christmas holiday at 3 pm.
- Tuesday 6th January back to school.

For all other dates do remember to check our school website which is regularly updated now.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Delany-White

