



Dear parents, carers, friends and governors,

Welcome to our third newsletter of this school year. School breaks up for October half-term break at 3.20pm on Friday 23 October and re-opens on Monday 2 November. It has been an interesting time at school since we fully re-opened in September; I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our pupils and staff and you, our parents, for your support in helping to establish the new school routines and for your support of the new protocols. Thank you!

Congratulations (1)

After 25 years working at St Catherine's Mrs Linda Miles officially retires tomorrow (Wednesday) from her employment in our school. Mrs Miles has given our school community the best years of her working life and has touched the lives of so many children, and their families, during her time with us. 25 years of working in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 means that Mrs Miles has worked directly with more than 700 children and I'll bet she can remember the names of most of them! We hope and pray that Mrs Miles enjoys much happiness in the future as she begins the next chapter in her adventures; she will long be remembered here for letting her light shine and we hope that she keeps a little bit of St Catherine's in her heart wherever she goes in the future.

Congratulations (2)

On Saturday Miss Downie, our Reception Class teacher, celebrated her wedding to her new husband, Ian. We wish Mr and Mrs Craggs much love and happiness for the future as they begin their married life together.

Applications for High School

If your child is currently in Year 6 please remember to make an application for the next phase of their education by 31 October. You are able to express up to 4 choices and we would encourage you to do this, given the pressure on secondary school places over the last 2 years. St Mary's have information on their website where parents and students can enjoy a virtual tour.

Applications for Reception Sept 2021

It is now possible for parents to apply for spaces in Reception Class for September 2021 at www.newcastle.gov.uk. The deadline for applications is 15 January 2021. Whilst we are currently restricting visits to the school we are happy to take any phone-calls or emails where we can direct prospective parents to further information and a guided video tour on the school website (coming soon).



Parents Evening

With the current restrictions on visitors to the school building we need to rethink how we will operate our usual Autumn Term Open evenings for parents. It is likely to be a blend of phone-calls or Zoom meetings and we will provide further details of how this will work in the next newsletter.

Relationships and Health Education

Please look out for information relating to our revised RHE policy and programme which we will be consulting upon over the next few weeks. It is a statutory requirement that all primary schools now teach this key subject from January 2021.

Whilst we have always taught this subject within the context of the teachings of the Catholic Church, which will continue, the launch of the new programme from Ten Ten gives us the opportunity to share with you what we will cover and to seek the views of parents about the programme.

This information will be with you before we break up for half term.

Fundraising for Forest School

In the absence of the Sponsored Walk and Hallowe'en Disco and the income these events generate (usually more than £1300) could you consider donating to the school's Forest School fundraising project? And inviting/encouraging/cajoling extended family members to contribute to this too? Perhaps your child could create their own half-term sponsored walk challenge through Jesmond Dene and ask family members to sponsor them? If they do, let us know please.

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfundin g/st-catherines-forest-school>

Harvest

Thank you to everyone who has supported the Harvest collection. We have been overwhelmed by your generosity. Last day for collection of tinned goods is tomorrow as we'll be taking the donations to Blackfriars on Thursday to support the great work of the SVP as they provide daily meals to the underprivileged and homeless of Newcastle. Thanks to our mini-Vinnies for their help in this project.

Highlight of the Year so far?

On Friday we assembled everyone in the playground to make human-sized letters as part of a special thank you message for someone very special (sshhh!). I appeared on the roof (very safely) to cheering from the children. On cue, everyone made heart-shapes with their hands and I released a drone, complete with video camera to get a birds-eye view. Much to the bemusement of the children (and I suspect the amusement of the staff!) the drone flew up, and up and over the trees, houses and neighbouring gardens to disappear out of sight. After 20 minutes of grovelling in the neighbours gardens it was recovered! Does anyone want to buy a second hand, slightly bashed and bewildered drone?

Enjoy a break from the school routines next week if you can.

Best wishes



M Ewing

Headteacher