



Leaveslake Drove
West Pinchbeck
Lincolnshire
PE11 3QJ
Tel: 01775 640357
Headteacher: Miss Sophie Ingle
Email: enquiries@stbartholomews.lincs.sch.uk
Website: www.stbartholomews.lincs.sch.uk
COMMUNITY - HOPE - WISDOM – DIGNITY

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Dear Parents/Carers

WELCOME BACK!

Welcome back to the new school year, and an especially warm welcome to all our new children joining us for the first time – we are looking forward to getting to know you and continuing your learning journey with you.

Our staff have been in school during the holidays busily preparing for the start of the new year. They have planned and prepared many wonderful learning opportunities and they cannot wait to share them with you! I am so excited to be able to talk to you about what you are doing in class and to work with you to make our school the best that it can be. Let's make this year a fantastic one!

Learning

Our school curriculum is on our website to advise you of the learning that has been planned for each class including the termly topic. We hope that you find this information useful; if you would like any additional information about the topic or how you can help your child with their learning please contact your child's class teacher who will be delighted to assist you.

Do remember to follow your child's class twitter pages and class pages on our website.

Curriculum

The staff are very excited to be delivering Cycle A of our curriculum. This curriculum contains all the content required by the National Curriculum but is designed to meet the needs of our children bearing in mind the knowledge and experiences that they typically have when they start with us. It also matches our class structure this year and for the years to come. This means we can ensure that our children know more and remember more as the years go by, always building on previous learning. We have incorporated thoughts from the children and governors resulting in content related to our local context and an aim for the knowledge that the children gain will enable them to become active and responsible citizens who are disciples of change.

Reading

Reading is an essential skill that underpins learning across the curriculum and its positive impact on children's progress cannot be understated. Reading provides for language development (so children's speaking and writing improves), it offers children the opportunity to learn about things beyond personal experience and it provides the key to independent learning – a lifelong skill. Therefore, developing enjoyment and engagement in reading continues to be a priority for the school.



We use Read Write Inc (RWI) for systematic synthetic phonics teaching which begins in EYFS and continues into Key Stage 2 for any children who still need it. Reading is an area of learning that parent/carers can provide active support. Teachers will soon be sending home reading books for you to share with your children. Apple and Palm children are expected to read every day and record this with support in their reading records. Oak and Willow are expected to read at least three times a week and can record this independently or with adult support. All reading records are monitored every Friday and email letter reminders will be sent to parents where a child is not consistently meeting the weekly expectations in order that we can work together to support and enable it to happen. The support you give your child's reading development will change as your child's reading ability grows, but the opportunity to read aloud and discuss books is an essential aspect of securing reading comprehension and confidence even when they are in year 6. If you would like to know how you can further support your child's reading at home please contact your child's class teacher. We will also be holding curiosity cafes again for parents later in the term to demonstrate reading, maths and writing in our school.

As well as hearing your child read, we would also recommend that you read books to your child too. Reading books to them which are beyond their current independent reading ability is also a great way to build understanding and extend their vocabulary – as well as just being really enjoyable too!

Children very much enjoy the opportunity to read to adults and are very proud when they are invited to read to a visitor in school. We are keen to hear from anyone who can spare an hour or so each week to hear children read. Please contact your child's class teacher or the school office to let us know if you would like to be involved in helping us to support the children.

PE Days

PE Days	Swimming	PE
Apple	Monday	Wednesday
Palm	Tuesday	Thursday
Oak	Thursday	Monday
Willow	Friday	Thursday

We swim in school from April until October half term. The pool is heated to 35 degrees. Please ensure that your child has their swimming kit and PE kit in school for the required days.

Cursive Handwriting

We will continue to use cursive handwriting throughout the school. In cursive handwriting all letters start on the line with a lead-in stroke and this handwriting style is taught from Year 1 right through the school and we have seen improvements in handwriting fluency and standards of presentation throughout the school since its introduction.

The rules of the Cursive Style help:

- to minimise confusion for the child as every letter starts on the line with an entry stroke and leads out with an exit stroke (confusion with 'b' and 'd' is reduced/eliminated)
- with the flow of Cursive Writing as letters naturally flow into each other; it is impossible to write separate letters without joining
- form spacing between words as the child develops whole word awareness
- develop a child's visual memory (which assists with spelling patterns)

Please encourage your children to use cursive handwriting at home. As with everything, a little practise on a regular basis will ensure that the skills are quickly secured and mastered.

Communication with Parents/Carers/Guardians

Communication will be sent to parents/carers/guardians via ParentMail our communication platform. Any communication requiring parental permission will be issued via a form through ParentMail. Please make sure that the school office has your up to date email address and mobile number. To reduce the number of emails parents/carers receive, whole school communication will be sent out on Fridays and class emails sent out on Mondays, however there will be the odd occasion where this is not possible.

Staffing

Mrs Davison will continue to oversee KS2 and is our Deputy Headteacher and Miss Cannon will continue to have overall responsibility for Foundation Stage and KS1. If parents/carers/guardians have a concern, the first person to speak to is the class teacher, as they know the children best. The next person will be the key stage leader (unless she is the class teacher), Mrs Davison if the concern is regarding a child with Special Educational Needs and then myself if it is felt that the concern has not been resolved.

Contact Numbers

Could I ask that all parents/carers/guardians ensure that they advise the office ASAP of any changes to their emergency contact details. It is imperative that we are able to contact parents/carers/guardians or another nominated adult in the event of any unforeseen incidents such as illness or accident. There have been occasions that we have been unable to contact a parent/carer/guardian and as you can understand this is distressing for any child who feels unwell.

Start of the day

The school gates will be unlocked at 8.35am and locked at 8.45am. Parents are free to stay at the school gates while children enter the school. Any children arriving after 8.45am should enter the school via the school office accompanied to the door by their parent/carer/guardian. Please ensure that your children arrive in good time to ensure an efficient and calm start to the day.

End of the day

Pupils in Apple and Palm Class will be released from the picket gate at 3.10pm and Oak and Willow Class will be released from their classrooms at 3.15pm. Please can you ensure that you arrive in good time to collect your children.

School Meals

Under the government's universal infant free school meals (UIFSM) initiative all Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children are entitled to receive a free school meal. Our meal provider, Willoughby Foods Ltd, currently offers a wide and varied menu which provides three meal choices a day. Lunches need to be ordered through Willoughby Foods Ltd online ordering system. Parents/Carers/Guardians will receive their log in details directly from Willoughby Foods Ltd. If you have not received this information please contact the school office who will be able to help.

All meal orders, either those which are being supplied under the universal infant free school meal scheme or those which are being ordered for KS2 children, do need to be ordered through Willoughby Foods Ltd website (willoughby-foods.co.uk) by 3pm the Tuesday of the week before they are supplied.

Allergies

We endeavour to ensure that we safeguard the healthcare needs of all children with allergies in school. To assist us further we would be very grateful if you could be conscious of the significant health risks these children experience and where possible avoid sending nut-based products in packed lunches.

Healthy Schools

EYFS and KS1 children will continue to be provided with a healthy fruit snack each day. KS2 children are encouraged to bring a healthy snack to enjoy at break time; crisps and biscuits will need to be kept in lunch boxes to be eaten at lunch times only. In line with healthy school guidelines water bottles are encouraged in class for all children and should contain water not juice. These need to be taken home each day so they can be washed and refilled.

Attendance

100% school attendance is the aim for every child as we know that attendance is directly related to educational attainment. A child will be considered to have persistent absence if their attendance level falls below 90%. This level will be met if in a six week term a child is absent for 3 days or 6 sessions.

I would be very grateful if parents/carers/guardians could book, where possible, medical and dental appointments outside the school day. On occasion we know that children require leave from school for exceptional circumstances; where this situation occurs we request that parents/carers/guardians submit a written request for leave, stating the dates of absence and the reason.

Sickness absence

If your child is unwell and unable to come to school please ensure that you let us know as soon as you can, however it is essential that you have advised us by 9am; the school office is staffed from 8.30am, alternatively please leave a message on the answerphone.

If we do not know why a child has not arrived in school, we will ring parents/carers/guardians to establish the reason for their absence. If we are unable to make contact and therefore have no information to explain a child's absence we will be required to visit your home to ensure your child is safe. If we cannot establish their safety at this point, we will contact the Police to initiate a safe and well check.

These safeguarding systems are aimed to ensure that every child who sets off to school arrives safely. As you can imagine, carrying out home visits does present a huge burden to the school, therefore we would be very grateful if you could help us avoid such a situation by ensuring that you ring the school to advise of absence on each day that your child is absent.

Safeguarding

As a school we have a legal duty to safeguard every child we have. This is demonstrated in a number of ways such as chasing up absences as detailed above, ensuring our premises, learning activities, policies and practices are safe, to name but a few. Occasionally we will need to speak with you about concerns that we have about something we have seen or that your child has said, or sometimes other children have reported. Please be assured that these conversations are to ensure that jointly we keep your child safe. It is not judgemental or accusatory it is just to ensure we meet our professional responsibility and our schools' moral commitment to keep your child safe.

Parking and Traffic

To reduce the risk to the children and other pedestrians arriving and leaving the school please remember that cars should not park on the yellow hazard lines **at any time**, even for dropping off quickly. Please do not drop children off in the entrance to the school driveway. If you are parking adjacent to the school (next to the hedge or the fencing next to the park) please remember to reverse into these spaces. We ask all Parents/Carers/Guardians and children to remain vigilant to their safety and the safety of others when arriving and leaving school. With a lack of pavements it is essential that cars go dead slow and children are closely supervised. In addition, please avoid parking opposite the school by the fence, next to the field, as visibility is poor for cars and pedestrians coming around the corner on that side.

Uniform

Items of school uniform are available to purchase via ParentMail along with book bags, PE bags, caps, beanies and sew on badges. The school office will process your order as soon as possible and items given to your child to bring home.

Parent Teacher and Friends Association (PTFA)

The PTFA contribute an incredible amount to the school both through their fundraising events and in school support. Having such an active PTFA ensures that our school maintains a very strong community feel and it is great to work towards something together, on a more informal basis with our Parents, Carers and Guardians. I would encourage any Parent/Carer/Guardian who can spare the time to get involved. Please remember being part of the PTFA does not require you to attend every meeting and every event, any time you can spare is greatly appreciated.

The staff and governors are really excited about working in partnership with you to ensure that our children make good progress and we reach the highest standards. As part of this process, I will be writing to you again in the next couple of weeks outlining what the school's priorities are for this coming year and providing you with a summary of our school development plan.

Yours sincerely,

Miss Sophie Ingle
Head Teacher