



Happy New Year

Welcome back to the New Year. From the conversations I have had it seems that Santa was very generous to many of the children and they certainly seemed to have enjoyed the time off. It was great to see lots of smiles as children arrived at school this morning (funnily enough lots of parents seemed to be smiling too). This middle term of the year is the one where we expect great progress to be made as everybody is familiar with each other and the systems and environment they are learning in. Teachers should have updated the class website pages by the end of this week so you can find out about the exciting learning opportunities planned for the next few weeks. Your opportunity to discuss your children's progress will come in the week after the half term holiday on the 20th and 21st February. The last day for children for this half term is relatively early as it is on Thursday 8th February so it is not long before you get to spend more holiday time with them !

Goodbye Miss Couzins

Fortunately for her, but unfortunately for us, Miss Couzins has been appointed as the Business Manager in a school in Somerset, which is closer to her family. She has been with us since 2009 when we were a much smaller school. She has helped the school run smoothly through a period of great change. She will be missed greatly by the staff and children, and I am sure by the parents too. I personally am very grateful for the support she has given me over the years, my job would have been much harder without her in the role. Her last day will be this Friday, 5th January.

Temporary Office Situation

Our Multi Academy Trust (Plymouth CAST) is looking at reorganising staffing throughout the organisation and so until a permanent plan for office staff is arrived at we will be working with a temporary solution. Lorna (Ms Taylor) will be working as the School Administrator in the mornings but will continue in her role as Family Liaison Officer in the afternoons. Our new Administrative Assistant will be familiar to most of you. We were very pleased to be able to appoint somebody who is very familiar with the systems of the school and most of the families also. That somebody is Mrs Way (if this newsletter gets to you today she has managed one of her first tasks).

After School Clubs

We will be increasing the amount of after school clubs available this term. We will use Sports Premium funding to pay for coaches, most probably Matt and Danny who teach PE to most classes, to offer a range of clubs. The School Council have been asked to come up with suggestions for clubs so expect a menu of choices very soon as we want to get the clubs started next week. At least one of the clubs will be aimed at Key Stage 2 children who have not taken part in after school clubs before.

Active Workshops

Another use of Sports Premium money has been to arrange workshops aimed at increasing physical activity amongst the children. This term year 5 & 6 will get the chance to learn how to 'Indoor Row' competing against themselves and as teams (Jan 9th) ; all Key Stage 2 children will be introduced to Table Tennis (Jan 23rd) ; and the whole school will enjoy a skipping workshop on Jan 31st. The last time we had a skipping workshop it really captured the imagination of the children and we hope it will have the same effect this year.

Friends

On the last newsletter I listed a number of events celebrating Christmas in school and I am very sorry that I forgot to mention one of the most successful events which was the visit by Santa to the grotto arranged and prepared by the Friends of St Joseph's. The room was truly transformed into a magical place which made a lot of children very happy. The next Friends event will be another Bingo night which will be just a couple of weeks away on the 19th. This was a good, fun event for parents and staff last year and we hope it will be even better attended this year. Watch out for details of how to purchase tickets and bingo cards in the next few days.

Charity Donations

You were exceptionally generous in your charity donations last term. Today I signed three cheques. The first was £136.45 to Children in Need raised through the mufti day. The second was to CAFOD for £163.74 through the Cafod Harvest envelopes. The last one was an outstanding amount raised through donations at the five Christmas performances put on by the children. SHINE will be getting a cheque for a massive £746.91 to help support families affected by Spina Bifida. Thank you so much for your generosity.