The Richard Crosse C of E (A) Primary School Newsletter Autumn 1 - October 2023

Our Motto: Believe and Achieve Our Values: Love - Respect - Friendship Our Christian Vision: Philippians 4:13: 'I can do everything through Him who gives me strength'

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Dear All,

It has been a long and busy half term, I can never believe how much we actually fit into Autumn 1! The children have settled in beautifully to their new classes and it has been lovely to welcome so many new families into Reception and Pre-School. School MAT reviews on learning, behaviours and attitudes have all been really positive and highlighted outstanding standards across the school. There is so much to share with you in this newsletter!

A big change to this term is the introduction of our Outdoor Learning Days. In the parental survey last year, there were a lot of suggestions as to this being something that would enhance our children's learning journey. There have been multiple reasons why this has not been possible before - space within our own grounds, coach hire costs (approx £450 per day) and lack of minibus drivers etc so... 'You said, we did' - The only way we have been able to make this work is through the support of our parents with dropping off and picking up at one of our MAT schools. The plan is to have these days once a term for each class, however we appreciate that this relies on parental support, so after the last 2 classes have completed their Outdoor Learning Day, we will send out a parental review form from this trial to see if this is something that we continue with. It would be great for you to share your views and your child's views with us in this form! Thank you to the staff who went above and beyond to plan, recce and resource these days for the children.

The vast majority of our children have amazing attendance and punctuality and we know that this supports their settled start to the school day and their learning time. To be an 'outstanding' school under the OFSTED criteria, whole school attendance being above or in line with national is essential. We are such a small school that every child really does count. I have had more holiday requests this term than I have ever had and I cannot approve them. Staffordshire have also updated their guidance this year and this will be reflected in our updated attendance policy this academic year. With illness please check against https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/ if you are unsure as to whether your child should come to school. Please rest assured that if we feel your child is too unwell to be in school, we will contact you to collect them.

Finally - thank you! We are really trying to promote a 'gratitude attitude' with our children this year and it is so lovely when we hear positive things about our school in public! We came back to school in September to an extract in the Kings Bromley Village News highlighting our children's positive behaviour. The children all felt really proud when we told them and it is wonderful that their politeness and respect is recognised and celebrated by our visitors! One of our trip volunteers also said to us this week that she 'had the best day surrounded by well mannered and sensible children', as I always say, we are a team around the children and when we work together amazing things can happen!

Don't forget to visit your child's weekly class blog and our gallery to see what your children have been getting up to! <u>https://richardcrosse.staffs.sch.uk/photo-gallery-category/school-gallery</u> Have a restful half term! We will see you all back on Monday 7th November.

Kind regards Ms Bowring (Headteacher)



I know that you will all agree, our school building is unique and beautiful! However, as with all beautiful older buildings, they come with not so beautiful complications and costs. Over the years we have done our best to preserve and protect the windows and front door but unfortunately they have seen better days. We are now in the position where we can no





longer fix and repair what we have and we need to replace.

As you can imagine this is extremely costly and not within our school budget. The window replacement application is in the planning permission stage at the moment. Due to the age and nature of the

building they need to be replaced with a like for like style which in itself is costly. Currently these windows are single pane glass and a lot of them have rotting frames. They are not energy efficient at all, costing us even

more money in heat loss each year which could be spent on enhancing the children's education even further.

We need to raise a minimum of £60,000. I believe that this school means so much to the current parental community, past parental community and local community that we can achieve this!

The PTA and governors are working closely with the school in this fundraising process and we will update you further in the next

half term. In the meantime, if you have any fundraising ideas or events where you would like to sponsor or donate to our appeal we have set up a Just Giving Page:

https://www.justgiving.com/page/the-richard-crosse-pta-the-richard-crosse-pta-1696603113684 Thank You!



Outdoor Learning Days

As stated in our original letter - It has been proven that children are happier and healthier when they have regular opportunities to learn and play outdoors. We are hoping that by making curriculum-linked outdoor learning a regular part of our curriculum, it will help to ensure that the children have positive intellectual, emotional, and social development whilst building the foundations for a lifelong connection with nature and our planet.

The pictures speak for themselves! Take a look at what a great time our children have had on their Outdoor Learning Days so far this year. Class 1 are going this Thursday and Class 4 after half term!

https://richardcrosse.staffs.sch.uk/photo-galleries/class-2-s-outdoor-learning-day https://richardcrosse.staffs.sch.uk/photo-galleries/class-3-s-outdoor-learning-day













Attendance - Important update

Every parent will receive a print out of their child's attendance this half term to give them an indication as to where their child's attendance is so far this year.

There has been an update to our attendance policy in accordance with local and regional guidelines. You will have received an email this week from our CEO outlining the MAT approach to attendance. The full updated policy can be accessed via <u>https://tssmat.staffs.sch.uk/governance/policies</u>

The main updates include:

<u>Any</u> period of unauthorised leave may result in a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. Key points to note from our policy:

- All leave requests must be received in writing **at least 14 days before** the first day of absence
- All holiday requests will be unauthorised and any holidays that are subsequently taken will result in a referral to the Local Authority for the issuing of a Fixed Penalty Notice
 - Leave requests that meet the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria will be granted and authorised.

Penalty Notice for leave of absence (holiday) in term time

Any period of unauthorised leave may result in you as a parent receiving a penalty notice fine. Your head teacher will be the only person able to authorise leave in term time, but this will apply only in exceptional circumstances. Any unauthorised absence will be referred by your head teacher to the local authority.

Penalty Notice for persistent lateness

Previously a pupil had to achieve 20 unauthorised late marks before a penalty notice warning could be issued. This has now changed to 10 marks, and late marks do not have to be one after the other in order for the penalty notice to be issued. You are therefore encouraged, where possible, to ensure your child attends school on time. However, if your child is late you must inform the school of the reason(s) why, as they may be able to offer advice or support.

Did you know?

Money for penalty notices goes to the local authority, not the school. There is no financial gain for the school in issuing penalty notices.

Attendance is covered under the OFSTED "Behaviour and Attitudes Judgement". Inspectors will evaluate the extent to which pupils have high attendance and are punctual, looking for evidence of a strong focus on attendance and punctuality so that disruption is minimised. In order to receive an 'outstanding' or 'good' judgement in this area, students' attendance and punctuality should be in line or higher than national percentages.

Volunteers



Volunteers are absolutely essential to us at Richard Crosse, they allow us to offer the enrichment, support and personal development opportunities that we do for our children.

We are so thankful to all of our regular helpers in school who make such a difference to our children but we also understand that people cannot always commit each week at a regular time. Currently, we rely heavily on a few very passionate and supportive volunteers. We always need additional support on trips and curriculum enrichment days. Volunteers do not have to be just parents or grandparents. If you or you know someone who would like to support the school by becoming a volunteer, please contact Mrs Hayward in the office who will be able to provide you with all of the necessary paperwork.

Volunteering is a great way to help others and research shows that it benefits people of all ages, by increasing feelings of selfesteem, social connection, and well-being. www.mentalhealth.org.uk

All volunteering positions will be subject to an enhanced DBS check.

The Big Question

Another new introduction for our children this year is 'The Big Question'. We are trying to support our children to become deeper thinkers by posing and discussing questions that have no right or wrong answer. This half terms question was 'What makes a family?'

As you can see the children came up with some amazing ideas and had some beautiful, respectful discussions along the way!





Our **BIG question** for next half term is: What's more important - giving or receiving? It would be lovely for the children to come

to school with some ideas that you have discussed as a family!

Casual Contract Minibus Drivers



We are looking for flexible and reliable people to drive our school minibuses, transporting pupils between schools, to swimming lessons and other venues for trips, sporting events etc. This is a casual zero hours' contract. Hours will be variable, known in advance and term time only. Trips are usually local and the minibuses are stored at either Richard Crosse Primary in Kings Bromley or St Mary's Primary in Colton. You will need to have held a full driving license for at least 2 years, have a clean driving licence and be prepared to undertake a Staffordshire County Council minibus driving test and medical. Closing Date: 9 November 2023, 9.00am We are looking for a pool of casual drivers

Informal interviews will be held w/c 13th November. <u>https://www.tssmat.staffs.sch.uk/job-</u> <u>vacancies/minibus-driver</u>

to call upon when needed.

Terms Dates and Events



We have had some queries regarding our term dates on the website. It transpires that problems are arising when people are Google searching 'Richard Crosse Term Dates'. Due to Google settings this takes you back to the first time you ever accessed this page and will not show the updated website page.

Please always check our term dates directly through our website for the most up to date version.

https://www.tssmat.staffs.sch.uk/aboutus/term-dates

Stay up to date with all events by synching to our School Calendar and checking our Events page!

https://www.richardcrosse.staffs.sch.uk/ca lendar

https://www.richardcrosse.staffs.sch.uk/ev <u>ents</u>

Autumn 2 After School Clubs

Please see separate clubs letter for booking details and prices

Monday - Martial Arts (3:30pm until 4:30pm) for KS1 and KS2 Tuesday - Football (3:30pm until 4:30pm) for KS2 - 'Soccerstars UK' Wednesday - Choir (3:30pm-5:00pm) for KS2 Thursday - Multisports (3:30pm until 4:30pm) for Years 1-6 - 'Everyone Active' Friday - Netball 3:30pm until 4:00pm (KS2) - Progressive Sports

Parking Near School

For those parents who have been with us a while you will know that unfortunately this is a regular feature of our newsletter. We know that a lot of people are not within walking distance of our school and we sincerely thank all of those parents who support our fight against inconsiderate and



dangerous parking, by parking further away from our school gates (Co-Op car park, village hall, far end of the estate etc) We are trying our best to combat unthoughtful drivers by putting cones out but this is an extra job for our already stretched staff team and unfortunately cannot always be managed each day if other events occur. We are not the highways agency, police or parking wardens. During drop off and pick up times, as adults, if **you** decide to park in any of the highlighted yellow areas **you** are substantially increasing the risk to our children's safety. We have already had some very near misses this year. Please think carefully about where you are parking.







OFFICIAL

Community Safety Flash

Remember, Remember Celebrate Bonfire Night Safely.

The Firework Code

Fireworks are explosives and potentially dangerous, so they need careful handling and storage.

- Only buy fireworks that are CE marked.
- Don't drink alcohol if setting off fireworks.
- Keep fireworks in a closed box.
- Follow the instructions on each firework.
- Light them at arms' length, using a taper.
- Stand well back.
- Never go near a firework that has been lit. Even if it hasn't gone off it could still explode.
- · Never put fireworks in your pocket or throw them.
- · Always supervise children around fireworks.
- · Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves.
- · Never give sparklers to a child under five.
- · Keep pets indoors.
- Don't set off noisy fireworks late at night and never after 11pm.



Sparkler safety tips

- These are often viewed as harmless but they do burn at fierce temperatures and can easily cause injuries.
- · Light sparklers one at a time.
- · Supervise children with sparklers and never give them to children under five.
- · Make sure everyone handling sparklers wears gloves.
- · Hold sparklers at arm's length while being lit.
- · Don't wave sparklers about close to other people.
- Never hold a baby in your arms while you are holding a sparkler.
- · When you have finished with the sparkler put it in a bucket of cold water.





Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service preventing • protecting • responding