

St Nicholas School Newsletter - April 2021



St. Nicholas School Canterbury

Dear Parents and Carers

The school is slowly returning to some sort of normality after more than a year of restrictions and disruptions. We know the virus is still with us and could again cause further difficulties and so we are continuing with the increased hygiene measures we have had in place, Lateral Flow Testing, staff wearing face coverings in the more social areas and vigilance around symptoms of the virus. Now that the weather is better we can begin using more outdoor spaces and access safely the community as part of our curriculum. We will start to use our dining hall again after the May Day holiday and we are already seeing more visiting professionals recommencing their work with children.

We are now planning for September and the changes to the classes that that involves. As soon as we are clear about our class groups for the next academic year we will inform you. We are also planning transition events and we will let you know when they are happening. I sincerely hope that this year we will be able to have a much smoother transition process as I know that last's years' experience was very challenging for many of you.

We have found though through this period that having EHCPs using Microsoft Teams has been well received by many of you as being more convenient and with improved attendance from other professionals involved with your child. We would like to continue with this way of organising EHCP meetings but I welcome your views on this.

We hope that we can start up again the Breakfast Club on the main school site after the half term break.

We also hope that we can organise sports days for late June or early July where you will be invited to the school to share the experience with your child.

Once again thank you for all your support.

Best wishes

Daniel

Get to know the Assistant Headteachers

Lorna Sullivan



Lorna has worked at St Nicholas School since 1994. Lorna started as a Teaching Assistant then four years ago she became the Assistant Headteacher with the responsibility of leading the secondary department and since Term 5 has moved to the primary department. Lorna is passionate about working with children with additional needs. She finds it rewarding when the pupils begin to make progress - however small. Equally Lorna enjoys working closely with families to ensure that the quality of provision for our pupils is at its optimum. She believes that the pupil's wellbeing and learning is maximised when the partnership between school and parents/carers is effective, open and honest.

David Jenner



David is the acting Assistant Headteacher for the secondary department. Previous to this role he worked at the school, for many years, as a teacher in Key Stages 2 and 3. David is a PROACT-SCIPrUK instructor and a Makaton tutor. He has an interest in new technologies and how we can use these most effectively to support our student's learning. When he is not at school David enjoys running and playing frisbee at the park with his two young children.

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Gillian Newport



Gillian has worked at St Nicholas since 2003. She is Assistant Headteacher with responsibility for the Curriculum. She is also the District Lead for the Specialist Teaching and Learning Service. As part of that role Gillian works with the Specialist Teachers to support children/Young People with SEND in the mainstream schools and settings in our district. Gillian also chairs the LIFT (Local Inclusion Forum Team) meetings in the district. Gillian enjoys being with family and quilling. She likes anything creative and has often been referred to as a chatterbox! She has two daughters, two cats, a husband and multiple newts!

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Lorna's hobbies are mountain biking and looking after Malcolm her cat.

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Focus on Hawking Class

Each newsletter will focus on a class. Please use our website to see up to date news on your individual classes.

Mindfulness



This term we have been to the woods to practise Mindfulness. It is so relaxing and we feel very sleepy afterwards! Tim came and made a video of us for Mental Health Awareness Week in May. You will be able to see this video on YouTube soon.

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Lifecycles



In Science, we are looking at Life Cycles. We have four little caterpillars in class which we are watching carefully every day and looking for any changes. We are reading *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* in class. We have been learning the different vocabulary used in the life cycle too. We are so excited to see what they will look like when they emerge from their chrysalis!

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Plants



This week we have been planting sunflower seeds. We know that plants need soil, water and sunlight to grow. Here are our sunflowers so far.

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Letter from the Chair

Now that we can look forward with some optimism to the school returning to normal after the Covid-19 driven difficulties of the last 12 months, I plan to write to you more frequently about the work of the St Nicholas Governing Board. My articles will be short and explain what governors are doing to make sure that every child at the school receives the best possible education in a safe, rewarding and happy environment.

To kick things off I can tell you that governors will meet in May to discuss how we can be more visible to everybody involved with the school and how we can promote a culture of openness and transparency in everything we do. A vital element of this work will be to improve how the Board engages with parents and carers so that we know what is important to you and your children. Your ideas, suggestions and concerns will be essential in helping us to determine what we need to do to make St Nicholas the best it can possibly be. I will write to you again following the May meeting to tell you what has been agreed and how we plan to start what will be an ongoing dialogue with you.

Before I sign off I should also like to tell you about recent changes to the membership of the Governing Board. Since I last wrote to you we have welcomed three new parent governors to the Board: Clare Stow, David Stratton and Louise Sands. We have also welcomed two new co-opted governors: Joe White, who is an Assistant Headteacher at Ifield School in Gravesend; and Louise Huddleston, who many of you will remember teaching at St Nicholas in recent times. All five new governors are excellent additions to what is a skilled and committed team.

Nigel Wootton



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**Kent
County
Council**



Special Educational Need Strategy

Kent County Council have recently published their latest special educational needs strategy. Please click below to view

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PTFA



Just as lockdown hit last March, Vanessa handed over the reins of Chair to me. Due to the restrictions placed on us all and the stresses and extra work the whole school community has faced for the last 12 months or so; not a lot has happened in the way of fundraising sadly.

Recent funding requests from Izzy for sensory cubes (£45) and Carrie for funding towards the sixth form outdoor space rejuvenation project (£2200) were both approved.

I am also looking at ways to improve communication as the school community is now spread over several sites. I am hoping to include more staff, parents, and carers and even Governors in the PTFA by asking them to sign up to a regular PTFA email that I will generate. This will be for suggestions for fundraising requirements, fundraising ideas, and looking at what events etc we can hold, asking for volunteers etc., as well as updating everyone with what has happened since the last email.

As we don't have the normal school gate meeting opportunities; being part of the PTFA is a great way to meet other parents and carers as well as some of the staff in the school that you wouldn't otherwise be able to. It doesn't mean you have to commit to coming along to PTFA meetings or getting involved in every event we hold.

You can be part of the St Nick's community and contribute to making it a fun and well-resourced place for your children:

- You may have skills you never knew you had that might help with fundraising.
- You might work for a company that will fund match?
- You might be able to sell a few raffle tickets or get a raffle prize donation.
- Or you're happy to help out on a stall at a school fair or help tidy up afterwards.

There are so many ways you can be involved without too much effort. It just takes a tiny bit of your time.

Please email, text or call me to join our PTFA

Mandy Stratton
mandy@stratton.org.uk
07800725229



ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21

Term 5

Start: Monday 19 April 2021

Finish: Friday 28 May 2021

Term 6

Start: Monday 7 June 2021

Finish: Wednesday 21 July 2021 at 2 pm

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