

Autumn Term 2022

WELCOME BACK



Dear Parent/Carer

I hope you all had a wonderful summer break and managed to enjoy some of the glorious weather we were blessed with over the holidays.

Our new school year together is very nearly upon us and we are really looking forward to welcoming back all of our pupils. The start of the school year is always an exciting time – a time for new beginnings, new goals and challenges, new friendships and new teachers (sometimes). So many exciting new things have been planned for the coming months and I am certain that this is going to be a wonderful year.

I am also looking forward to welcoming our new Reception children and am excited about them joining our St John Rigby family. I know the new pupils, and families, will be made to feel very welcome and helped to settle quickly into daily school life and school community.

This term's value is 'Faith' and we will be reflecting on this as a source of strength, looking to God to guide us in our new school year and learning journey. Please keep all of our pupils in your prayers as we all pray for a successful and happy academic year.

"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1)

Mrs M McGettigan
Headteacher

Please read through the key updates and important information about the new school year. As always, we are very grateful for your support and cooperation in helping us to keep the school running smoothly.

KEY UPDATES

SCHOOL BUILDING RENOVATION

There has been a lot of renovation works going on over the summer, including laying of new flooring and all walls and woodwork being freshly painted. We are particularly excited about renovations that have provided a bright and relaxing staffroom and a new welcoming reception area. Look out for some finishing touches that you will see happening over the next few weeks



STAFFING UPDATE

We are pleased to advise that Mrs Greaves will be taking over the role as Inclusion Lead (including SEND & Pupil Premium). She will still remain as an assistant headteacher along with Miss Guard (Strategic Assessment Lead). Please see our website for full details of staffing and their roles.

We are also delighted to be welcoming two new members of staff to St John Rigby.

Mr Donald - Quality of Education Lead

Having been a headteacher, Mr Donald has a vast experience of leadership in a primary school and will be joining our Senior Leadership Team, over the coming year, to support and develop teaching & learning and the curriculum.

Mrs Ball - Class Teacher - Y2

Mrs Ball has many years' experience as a primary school teacher and actually attended St John Rigby as a pupil! She is returning to the profession after having a family and will be teaching on Mondays, Tuesdays & Wednesday mornings as job-share with Mrs Jackson .

We are very excited to have them join us and hope they will both feel very welcome.



PLEASE NOTE: Children are not allowed on the equipment unless supervised by a member of staff.

Please do not allow your children to climb over the equipment.

KS2 OUTDOOR GYM

Using our Sports Premium Funding, we have had a 'Health & Wellness' Outdoor gym installed on the KS2 field (near the path). We know this is something our pupils have been requesting for a very long time, and we are looking forward to seeing them get fit and active on the equipment.

Installation is almost complete and we are just waiting for the matting to be laid. The children will then receive a health & safety brief before being allowed to go on the equipment.

SWIMMING

Swimming lessons have not been able to go ahead over the last two years, due to Covid-19. Due to high demand at the local swimming pool last year, we were not able to book sessions. Therefore, we have decided to bring the pool to school!

We have hired a covered, heated swimming pool for 3 weeks, along with swimming instructors and lifeguards, from 29th September and will be looking to provide swimming opportunities for the whole school: Catch-up and advanced swimming lessons for KS2 and clubs for EYFS and KS1.

More details will follow shortly and Miss Ferguson will be sending out a questionnaire to assess pupils' swimming proficiency as a starting point.

CROSS CURRICULAR ORIENTEERING

An orienteering course has been installed around the school premises and, on Friday 2nd September, teaching staff received training on how to deliver Physically Active Learning Sessions. We are very excited about this opportunity and will be able to develop the children's orienteering skills, as well as support teamwork, communication and problem solving in all areas of our primary curriculum.

We are also looking to develop 'Sports Leaders' who will be able to facilitate active sessions during lunch and breaktimes.

Development of Outdoor Play and Learning is a school focus and we will be embarking on a programme over the coming months to improve break and lunch activities

IMPORTANT INFORMATION



School Day Timings and Punctuality

A reminder that the **school day starts at 8.55am** and pupils must be in class by this time.

The school gate will continue to open at 8.40am allowing pupils to go straight to class where morning activities will be set – this allows for a calm and purposeful start to the day and the activities set support pupils in recapping and practising knowledge and skills they have previously learnt.

The gate will close promptly at 8.55am as registration in classes will have begun. Any pupils arriving after this time will need to access school via the main reception area in order to ensure they are correctly registered.

It is important that pupils arrive on time as it affects their start to the day and can they may miss important learning opportunities/information. Lateness will be recorded and monitored.

A reminder that the **school day finishes at 3.15pm** and pupils will be released from class at this time. Pupils in KS2 (Y4 - Y6) will not be able to leave class unsupervised if permission has not been given – Permission slips will need to be returned to the class teacher. Please note that even if you wish for your child to meet you at the school gate, permission will still need to be given.

****A note on the beginnings and endings of the school day** – it is important that parents/carers and pupils do not congregate around the entry and exits to the school. The school access is on a narrow public pathway and can become very unsafe due to the congestion. Please ensure you move swiftly away from the school site.

If you are meeting your child(ren), please arrange to meet them away from the school gate e.g. on the grass area near to the school.

Uniform

Uniform is important to us at St John Rigby because it allows our pupils to have a sense of pride and self-respect for the way they present themselves. It is a consistent message in supporting the school's efforts in raising aspirations and high standards.

We are continuing to allow pupils to come into school wearing PE Kit on PE days – I would like to remind you that trainers should be black or white (no designer sports or florescent colours are permitted). Pupils will also need to wear appropriate clothing in colder weather as they will continue to do PE outside – a black logo fleece and plain black jogging bottoms should be worn.

Finally, for safety reasons we ask that children do not wear jewellery in school. However, if children have pierced ears, they will be permitted to wear one **small, plain gold or silver stud** in each ear. No other type of earring is acceptable. We recommend that you remove children's earrings on P.E. days or cover them with tape should you prefer. Staff are not authorised to remove earrings and the school will not take responsibility for any injury or loss.

Please refer to our website for full uniform details:
stjohnrigby.org

PE at ST JOHN RIGBY

Physical Education has never been more important and at St John Rigby we are fully aware of the benefits this has on pupils physical, emotional and educational wellbeing.

All year groups will participate in PE lessons led by qualified sports coaches (Sinclair Sports) who will also be working with the school to provide extra-curricular clubs (lunchtimes and after school).

These PE Days are set as:

TUES: Year 4, Foundation Stage (Reception)

WED: Year 1, Year 2, Year 3

THUR: Year 5, Year 6

PE is also taught by class teachers and you will be advised of these days by the class teacher.

St John Rigby will also be engaging in more competitive sport over the coming year, working with Sports Partnership to access competitions with other schools in the area.

Health and Safety



Access to the school is fairly tight, particularly in the mornings. For safety reasons, I would like to remind you that pupils and younger children should not ride bikes or scooters whilst on the school premises.

Mobile phone are also **NOT** allowed to be used on the school site for safeguarding reasons – this is to safeguard our pupils, parents/carers and yourself,



Smoking/Vaping are also not permitted on the school premises.

Respect and Courtesy

The school actively encourages close links with parents/carers and the community. We know that pupils benefit when the relationship between home and school is a positive one. If a parent/carer or visitor has concerns we will always listen to them and seek to address them as quickly and positively as possible.

Our school represents our values of Faith, Love, Hope, Respect and Forgiveness, and we will always act to ensure the school remains a safe place for pupils, staff and all other members of our community. Therefore abusive, threatening or aggressive behaviour, verbal or written, will not be tolerated and, if persistent, will result in withdrawal of the permission to be on the school premises.

Thank you for working with us to make our school a great place to be!

Parking (Again!)



If feels as though this is a constant request and, whilst the school have no jurisdiction outside of the school gate, we continue to be committed to the safeguarding of our pupils. Despite several requests for safe parking and responsible use of the road outside school, there are still some serious concerns being brought to my attention and children's, staff's, parents' and carers' lives are being put at risk.

The laybys are provided for parents/carers to park when dropping off/collecting their children. It is illegal to park on the yellow zig-zags and double (even triple) park in the road. This not only restricts the room for vehicles to pass along the main carriageway, especially close to the islands, but is a huge concern for pupils and parents who may attempt to cross because the traffic appears stationary.

I understand it can be difficult to find spaces because of the number of vehicles attending at certain times. Please just take a few seconds to look where you have parked, making sure you are **safe** and not committing any offences. Alternatively, please park further away from the school gates and either walk to meet your child or, if in Years 4-6, give permission for your child to meet you away from the school site.

I ask that you please support our efforts to improve the safety of the roads that surround our school and ensure that we are not a school that having to support the community due to a tragic road accident.

Healthy Eating & Nut allergies (incl Nutella)

We have a number of pupils in the school with a severe nut allergy. We are grateful to all /parents/carers who ensure that packed lunches are nut free. We would like to point out, however, that some spreads particularly **Nutella**, trigger allergic reactions. Please avoid using this in packed lunches and snacks. Thank you for your understanding.

Packed lunches should also be healthy. Please do not send packed lunches into school containing foods high in sugar e.g. sugary drinks, sweets etc. A small chocolate biscuit/bar is acceptable as part of a balanced and nutritious packed lunch. All pupils should only bring water to school.



Pupil Premium

If you register for Free School Meals (even if your child does not want a school meal) it means that school will receive the extra funding which will benefit your child. This funding is called 'Pupil Premium' and is given to support and accelerate academic progress as well as develop self-esteem, self-confidence and social emotional skills of children from lower income families so that they are able to do their very best.

If you are successful, not only will it mean your child will receive a free school meal but we can also help in other areas such as with uniform, some school trips, after school sport clubs etc.

All children in reception, year 1 and year 2 are automatically entitled to a free school meal, regardless of income (Universal Infant Free School Meals), **but if you meet the criteria and/or are on benefits, you may be eligible.** Please feel free to contact our school office for confidential support, or alternatively contact Bedford Borough directly on 01234 267422.

COMMUNICATION & PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT

Finally.....

We recognise that parental involvement is key to a child's success in school, as well as being important to our Catholic School Community.

We would like to ensure there are more opportunities for parents/carers to be part of the school and share/celebrate the successes we see the children achieve every day. Over the coming academic year we will be inviting parents/carers into school to share what the children are learning, join us in collective worship and forming stronger links between home and school, including supporting parents/carers in how to support learning at home.

We are also working hard to improve communication with parents/carers and are reviewing best channels in which to share important information, as well as the day to day communication between class teacher and home. A communication policy to support both school and home is currently being put together and your feedback on this would be very welcome.

If you have any comments or suggestions, please feel free to share these with me by emailing into the school office (office@sjr.beds.olicatschools.org)

Who to contact and when:

THE SCHOOL OFFICE

- Your child is unwell and is not attending school
- Your child has a medical appointment
- Your child is being dropped off/picked up by somebody different
- Queries regarding Wrap Around Care, and payment
- Queries about school dinners, and payment
- Requests for leave of absence from school
- General enquiries about the school or whole school events
- If you want to make an appointment to speak with a teacher, member of the senior leadership team, the SENCO or Family Support Worker.

THE CLASS TEACHER

- Concerns/queries/advice regarding your child's learning, progress or attainment, including home learning.
- Concerns/queries/advice regarding your child's behavior in class or playground.
- Any pastoral concerns you wish to discuss with the class teacher e.g. friendship issues, child not being happy in class/school or a home issue that may affect your child in school etc **In the first instance it is always important that you contact the class teacher
- Queries regarding activities, trips, projects etc. organised by the class teacher or year group teaching staff.

THE SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

- Concerns or queries regarding whole school issues e.g. policies,
- Concerns or queries regarding Safeguarding
- When a concern/query has not been resolved following initial discussions with the class teacher, or other member of staff (please see complaints policy).
- Discussions of a sensitive nature e.g. support with payment of trips, pupil premium etc

This outline is not final but provides an example. Full clarification will be outlined in the communication policy.