

HOLY CROSS RC PRIMARY SCHOOL

September 2011

Dear Parents

Welcome back after the summer break. All the children look very smart in their uniform, a credit to parents and the school. Our new recruits in Reception class are settling in well to the school routine. We are delighted to start the academic year with the very successful Religious Inspection Report.

We really appreciate the support we received from parents during the inspections and are proud of your children who have been a credit to our school. A full copy of the report is available on the Diocesan Education website or through the school office. A copy will also be displayed on the parents' noticeboards.

The report highlights many strong aspects of the school including:

- Holy Cross is a good Catholic school with some outstanding features. It is led by a strong, dedicated headteacher and senior staff who share the vision to develop the Catholic life of the school by promoting dignity, respect and equality for all. This is reflected in the Mission Statement.
- Positive relationships are a key strength of the school and everyone feels that they have a voice.
- Parents say they are very happy with the school's Catholic ethos and believe their children benefit from a good Catholic education.
- The school's capacity to improve is good due to the determination of the leaders and managers to succeed.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and are very positive about their learning in Religious Education lessons.
- Pupils benefit from the many opportunities given to develop the Catholic life of the school. They take on the role of prayer leaders in their classes each day and Key Stage 2 pupils have their own prayer journals.
- The leadership and management team are outstanding in promoting the Catholic life of the school and they are deeply committed and driven to promote the Church's mission in every aspect of school and parish life.
- The school's provision for Catholic education is good. Standards are improving year on year.
- Teaching and learning is good and all pupils make good progress. Assessment, monitoring and tracking are well established and are being used well to ensure progression and improvement.
- Collective worship is good and pupils enjoy the responsibility of preparing and leading liturgies and assemblies.
- Religious education is recognised as a core subject in all aspects of school planning.
- The governing body are well informed and totally committed to supporting the school and as a result make a good contribution.
- The development of partnerships is outstanding and the promotion of community cohesion is good.

The area to further develop is consistency in Assessment of pupils work.

Information to keep you up to date (sorry it's a bit long!).

Drama

We are delighted to have had the honour to be chosen to take part in the National Shakespeare Schools Festival. This is the first year that primary schools have been invited to take part in the festival. Some of our Year 6 pupils will be performing Julius Caesar at the Playhouse, Whitley Bay on Monday 3rd October 2011 at 7.00 pm.

Uniform

Order forms for uniform if required are available from the school office throughout the year.

Sport/Clubs

Guitar Club Year 5 and Year 6 – Monday lunchtime

Music Club Year 5 and Year 6 – Monday after school

Boys Football Year 6 – Tuesday lunchtime.

Girls Football Year 5 & Year 6 – Wednesday lunchtime.

Drama Club Year 6 – Tuesday and Thursday after school.

ICT Club Year 4 and Year 5 – will be on Thursday after school (start date to be confirmed)

Other clubs will operate throughout the year.

Parish/School News

Parishioners are participating in the Great North Run to raise funds for charities and Fr John is running for Cafod . Miss McCartan our Year 4 teacher is also running to raise money for Crones Disease. Any donations for any of the charities may be sent to the school office or classteacher. 5 of our children are taking part in the Mini Great North Run for charity and one of them is running for the PTA for school funds. We are very proud of all our participants and wish them all the very best.

Reminder for parents of Year 4 children that the deadline for applications for First Reconciliation and Holy Communion was 9th September 2011. There will be a meeting for parents who have submitted their forms on Tuesday 20th September 2011 in the parish room in church at 7.00 pm.

The World's Biggest Coffee Morning in aid of MacMillan Cancer is to be held on Saturday 1st October 2011 in St. Aidan's Parish room.

The Parish Bulletin is displayed on the external parents' noticeboard. For further information and copies of the church newsletters you can visit the website: www.wallsend.aidettes.co.uk

Code of Behaviour

As it is the beginning of the school year we would appreciate your help by discussing the School Code of Behaviour with your child at regular intervals as home/school co-operation reinforces good behaviour.

Punctuality

We are always striving for improvement. Please encourage your child to be early. The school bell rings at 8.55 am to start the day promptly at 9.00 am.

We now operate a formal recorded late system in line with DCFS and LEA regulations. If your child is late, a late slip will be issued. If your child is consistently late, this will trigger involvement from the Education Welfare Officer.

Just a reminder:

Absence

Regular attendance at school is compulsory and necessary for a good education. In the case of any absence from school, it is important to inform the school **on the first day of absence** either by personal visit, letter or telephone call. On returning to school following absence, children should bring a note. Please date all letters.

Children should not take holidays during term time. Where it is unavoidable, the Headteacher can only authorise up to ten days in an academic year. We are obliged to pass on excessive holidays to the Education Welfare Officer.

Sponsored Silence

There will be a sponsored silence on Friday 4th November 2011 in aid of school funds, Henshaws Society for Blind People and Cafod.

We are looking forward to a very peaceful day in our school!

PTA

The Annual General meeting of the PTA will take place this half term, date to be confirmed, at 2:00 pm in the Parents' Room. The PTA has worked hard to raise funds to provide many additional resources including support for class trips. At present they are raising funds for school. We are very grateful for their support and hard work.

We would also like to extend our thanks to the parents and grandparents who worked to help make the Summer Fayre such a success.

Health & Safety

Children and Parents must not enter or leave school by the car park. This rule is to protect all of our children. Their safety is paramount. This also includes Breakfast Club.

Please could you ensure that no lollipops are sent to school for birthday sweets as we are concerned about children choking.

Please note the quote from our school brochure:

'Dogs are part of God's creation and deserve our respect'. However, even the gentlest dog can react in self-defence, if provoked. Children can annoy dogs without intending to do so. We all believe that children and their safety should be our first consideration. Therefore no dogs are permitted on school premises, and we ask your full co-operation in up holding this policy'.

Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Swimming

Children usually have swimming lessons as part of the PE curriculum in Year 3.

Arrangements for swimming changed last year as it has been found that children learn to swim much better if they have an intensive swimming course. Therefore, later this year the children will have the opportunity to complete a course of 20 sessions at the new Hadrian Leisure Centre.

Water Bottles

We are still encouraging the children to drink plenty of water during the day. The school has purchased water bottles for our new starters. If any child requires a replacement bottle at the cost of £1.50, please notify the office staff.

Data Collection Sheets

If you have not already done so please ensure that you return your data collection sheet as soon as possible so that records can be updated by office staff. Should any changes occur during the year please keep records up to date as it may be crucial to get in touch with parents in case of an emergency.

Dinner Money

Dinner money is £1.80 per day: £9.00 per week, and should be paid on Monday morning. If your child is absent on the Monday then dinner money should be sent to school on the first day back. Please make sure that money is sent in a sealed green envelope provided and clearly marked with the child's name and class.

Dinner and milk money is managed by catering services and no longer by schools. The school is merely the collection point.

Breakfast Club

We are delighted to be able to continue with our Breakfast Club this term. The Breakfast Club operates from 8:15 am each day. Pupils need to be in at the latest by 8:30 am as doors will be closed for Health & Safety reasons. Pupils come into the Key Stage 2 hall through the rear middle gate (near Year 3 classrooms). After breakfast children take part in supervised activities. Children will remain in the hall once

they have eaten breakfast. The children are enjoying the experience. Please note parents and pupils must not enter the Breakfast Club through the car park.

Homework

In line with our policy of parents as co-educators we are grateful for your support in ensuring that your children do their homework. Please keep up the good work. Like all of you, we want the best for the children and all the research indicates that children benefit greatly from homework.

Advance Notice of Parents' Meetings

Parents Evening

Wednesday 2nd November 2011. Further details and appointments will be circulated.

Information for Parents

Year 6 SATS meeting will be held on Wednesday 19th October 2011 at 9.10 am.

A number of parents have requested information about how to support their child reading. We thought it would be useful to share the strategies with you at year group meetings. We hope you will find them helpful and we would welcome feedback. The meetings are as follows:

Reception – Tuesday 27th September 2011 - 9.10 am

Year 1 – Tuesday 4th October - 9.10 am

Year 2 – Thursday 6th October - 9.10 am

Invitations will be sent by the class teachers.

School Nurse Parent Drop In

The School Nurse visits the school on a regular basis (usually the first Friday of each month) for the 'Drop In' sessions for parents.

Just a reminder:

During Curriculum week Parents Open Afternoon – Wednesday October 2011, 1.30pm to 2.30 pm

Parents are invited to visit the school to see their children and the curriculum at work.

Thank you once again for all your support at the beginning of another busy year.

Best wishes

Mrs A M Burns
Headteacher

P.T.O.

Please note policy information.