



ST PAUL'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

**Our school is a place of learning
A place of love**

www.stpauls373.herts.sch.uk

Friday 4th December 2015

Dinners

Week beginning 7th December – Week 3

Week beginning 14th December – Week 1

Recommended Books

Nursery and Reception	'I Will Not Ever Never Eat a Tomato' by Lauren Child
Years 1 and 2	'Funnybones' by Janet Ahlberg
Years 3 and 4	'The Butterfly Lion' by Michael Morpurgo
Years 5 and 6	'The Wolves of Willoughby Chase' by Joan Aiken

County Review

On the 25th November a review by County took place in school. This was to identify whether the school was making good progress towards becoming a good school. I am absolutely delighted to inform you that the judgement was indeed good and the school was praised for the speed at which improvements have taken place. During the day all classes were visited to observe the teaching of maths and to talk to the pupils about their learning. These visits were made with me. The advisor who carried out the review also made checks on a range of documents including the school's evaluation of its progress, the school's development plan, maths and English subject leader plans and impact of actions, governing body minutes and the school's monitoring records. Pupils' maths books were also scrutinised. The following are extracts from the report;

'Work scrutiny in all Key Stage 1 and 2 books showed that mathematics work is thoroughly marked with strong evidence of discussions between the pupils and the teacher which moves learning forward. Children are provided with work which is pitched at the appropriate level, reflecting the expectations of the new curriculum and enabling them to apply their wider mathematical knowledge. Evidence suggests that teaching over time is good.'

'Challenge for the more able pupils was seen in all lessons'.

'Discussion with pupils demonstrated that learning was considered by them to be exciting and challenging; they understood the purpose of the activity and how it would develop their learning further. One Year 5 pupil said, "Last year maths was not very challenging or interesting. I was in the top group but I didn't feel challenged. This year I love maths! We are doing lots more investigations and it is much harder but really fun. We have to prove our thinking and I'm learning lots more."

'The provision for mathematical learning and specifically number skills in the Reception class has been improved greatly since the last review. Both inside and outside learning environments are now impressively well-resourced and provide inviting opportunities for children to explore mathematical concepts, reinforce their knowledge and understanding and incorporate them into their child initiated learning in a wide variety of ways.'

'Teaching in adult led activities and questioning during child initiated learning demonstrated the whole school focus on encouraging and supporting children to explain their thinking with many children doing this well.'

'Learning journals reflect the progress children have made and clearly identify their next steps'

'During this review all pupils demonstrated an impressive ability to articulate their thinking and explain how they were applying their prior learning . Behaviour for learning was exceptional. A growth mindset was also evident throughout. Children talked about being in the 'learning pit' and how they were supported to overcome challenges. A child stated, "I believe that my maths has really moved on since I came into Year 6. When I trip up into the 'learning pit' I feel so pleased, as that proves that I have learnt something new! As they say, 'mistakes are expected, respected and corrected!'"

'The headteacher and her senior leadership team have greatly increased their understanding of and use of performance indicators for all cohorts and for all groups. They have established a robust system for carrying out school self-evaluation which includes monitoring the quality of teaching through pupil voice, scrutiny of planning, scrutiny of pupils' work, lesson observations and developmental feedback, a rigorous appraisal system to hold all staff to account and the analysis of performance information.'

'Scrutiny of governing body minutes at this review confirmed that the governors are now questioning the senior leaders to a greater extent. They have a much better understanding of their strategic role. They also have a much better understanding of the school development plan and the end of year targets. Governors are carrying out significantly more visits and through this they now have more opportunity to evaluate the impact of the classroom practice on outcomes in the school development plan.

'The evidence gathered suggests that there has been a very fast pace of improvement and the school is now on track on its journey towards a judgement of good at the next section 5 (Ofsted) inspection.'

I would like to thank all the staff at St Paul's for their incredible hard work and commitment to ensuring that our pupils receive a good education. Their energy and enthusiasm has been boundless. I would also like to thank every pupil who makes our school so very special. Your enthusiasm and love of learning is an absolute delight to see.

The past few months since our last inspection have been incredibly difficult for us as a school and for you as parents. I hope that you also recognise the difference in the school and feel much more confident in our abilities to provide a good education for your child. Many of you have stayed loyal to the school and that has meant a great deal to me. Thank you so much for this, it has greatly helped. I know that working together we will continue to get even better. Next term our focus will be the teaching of English and becoming outstanding in maths. If you are pleased and can see a different atmosphere and learning culture, please go on Ofsted's Parent View and tell them!!

Year 5 Girls

This term we have worked closely with Bonneygrove School to share good practice and raise standards in teaching and learning. As part of this project, the Year 5 girls from Bonneygrove visited our Year 5 girls as we only have 8 in the class. The two schools worked together sharing ideas and writing a persuasive article for a school brochure. Everyone enjoyed the morning, with our girls saying it was good to work with lots more girls. The morning was so successful that we hope to arrange another one next term.

Advent Reconciliation Service

This week children in Years 4, 5 and 6 have participated in a reconciliation service as part of their preparations for Advent. I would like to thank Mrs Moore for organising this and Father Clement for visiting school to provide children with this important opportunity.

Football and Netball Teams

Well done to the netball team who won 16-1 against Goffs Primary and 22-1 against Dewhurst. Also well done to the football team who won 2-1 against Dewhurst. You all played exceptionally well and with exemplary team spirit. Thank you.

After School Club

Congratulations to Ms Diallo who has now been registered by Ofsted to provide after school care for children. The whole process was very rigorous and stringent with a great deal of preparation required. If you would like to register for the club, which runs straight after school until 5:45pm, please see Ms Diallo. I hope that the breakfast and after school club will help lots of working parents with childcare arrangements. It is lovely to work with Ms Diallo who is so committed to providing this opportunity for our children and parents.

Finally, a letter from the Queen!

Earlier this term, Year 3 wrote a letter to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth as part of our celebrations for her becoming the longest reigning Monarch in British history. I am delighted to say that we have received a reply. Part of the letter reads; 'The Queen greatly appreciated your kind messages. Her Majesty was interested to learn about the activities you took part in at school to celebrate this milestone in The Queen's reign, and thought it kind of you to include one of the crowns you made, and some lovely photographs of your tea party for Her Majesty to see'.

I have to say how much I have enjoyed writing this newsletter – a real feel good feeling for the weekend!

Mrs Y Devereux
Headteacher