

Newsletter December 2017



Dear Parents and Carers

We can't believe that we are already at the end of our first term here at St Chad's, time definitely flies when you are having fun! It has a very busy term and, once again, we are extremely proud of our children and the wonderful learning that has taken place.

It has been great getting to meet you all on the school gates in the morning and after school. I feel truly blessed to be working as your Head of School. St Chad's definitely feels like my second home so thank you for taking me into your hearts (and for always greeting me with a lovely smile first thing in the morning!).

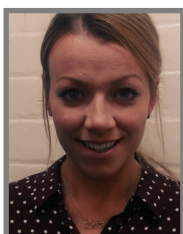
As I write this and think back to all of my memories from the past term I can't help but smile and feel immensely proud. Following on from our very positive Ofsted Monitoring report in October, we continue to welcome a high number of visitors into school. They have been particularly interested in our learning environments, our EYFS provision, our approach to the teaching and learning of Maths and our induction procedures for new starters. Visitors' feedback continues to be very positive. Our Facebook page continues to grow in popularity and there are now a number of Head teachers and schools in and around the UK who are 'liking' and 'following us'. This is a testament to the staff's hard work and dedication: once again, we strive to give our children the very best.

Please have a wonderful break with your children. To our families celebrating Christmas, please let peace and joy be with you and your loved ones.

We look forward to welcoming you all back on **Wednesday, 3rd January**.

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year!

Ms Leach and Mr Gallimore



**HAPPY NEW YEAR**



#### DATES FOR THE DIARY

<b>Wednesday 3rd January</b>	<b>SCHOOL RE-OPENS</b>
<b>Thursday 11th January</b>	<b>Frogs Parent Session 9am-10am</b>
<b>Friday 12th January</b>	<b>INSET SCHOOL CLOSED</b>
<b>Tuesday 16th January &amp; Wednesday 17th January</b>	<b>PARENTS EVENING (Times TBC)</b>
<b>Friday 16th February</b>	<b>BREAK-UP FOR HALF TERM</b>

#### STAY AND LEARN PARENT SESSIONS

It was lovely to see so many of you at our Stay and Learn parent sessions. Thank you so much for attending—it is vital that we have a very strong school-home partnership.

Miss Afzal and Miss Gilsenan continue to run daily Stay and Learn sessions in EYFS (9am-9:30am). Every week there is a different area of focus. Feedback from parents has been very popular—thank you for your support!

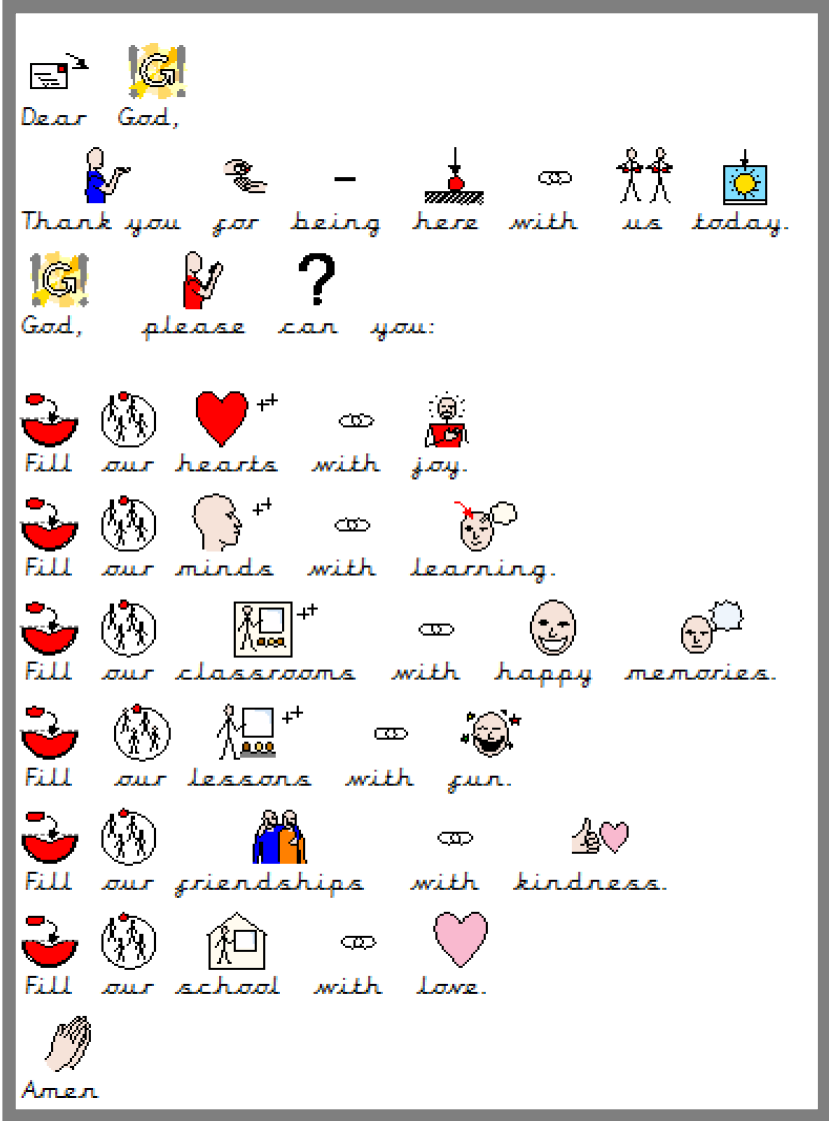
Miss Hewitt and Miss Wright (Tigers) led a parent session on phonics and Mrs Harley (Giraffes) organised a 'Big Finish' to support her Castles, Towers and Turrets theme. Attendance was excellent and lots of fun was had by my children, staff and parents. Mrs Habib (Frogs) welcomes parents in on Thursday, 11th January (a letter will follow after the holiday).

**GOOD LUCK MISS HEWITT!** We wish Miss Hewitt and her lovely partner, Will, lots of luck with the safe arrival of their baby in the New Year. We can't wait to share their baby news with you all soon!

NEW SCHOOL PRAYER

As a church school, we have a statutory duty to lead a daily Collective Worship. Collective Worship is a wonderful opportunity for us to come together as a school community and unite in our school ethos, LOVE.

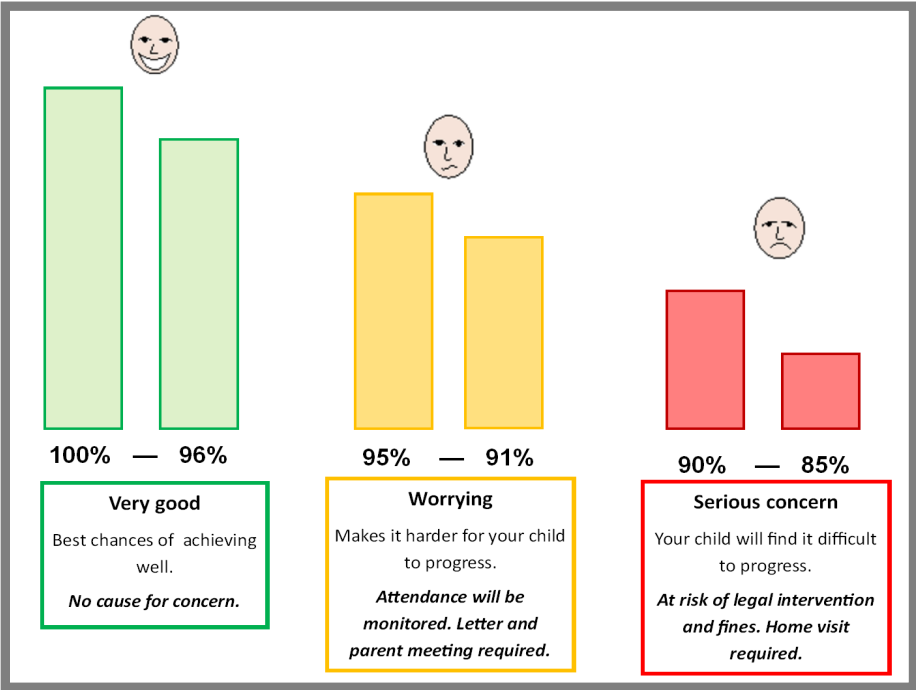
We have spent this half-term creating a new school prayer. We wanted something that represented our school’s vision and values and was age appropriate to all of our children. I am thrilled to share our new school prayer with you. I would like to say an extra thank you to our School Ambassadors who helped to create the beautiful prayer:



ATTENDANCE

We are having a big push on attendance and punctuality. This half-term we have launched our Every day Counts campaign. **Our school attendance target is 96%. All children need to be in school by 9am. Anytime after 9am is classed as late.**

The incentives that we have introduced are proving to be successful and we are already noticing an improvement. We appreciate your ongoing support with attendance and punctuality—thank you.



BOOK BAGS

Please can you ensure that your child brings their book bag with them into school every day. Regular home reading is vital. Please ensure that your child reads at least 3 times a week at home. Every child needs to have their reading record signed by an adult to say that they have read. Class teachers continue to monitor home reading closely. In January we will be organising a parent workshop to support home reading. Dates and further information will be sent out after the holiday.



LUNCHTIME SUERHEROES

Our Lunchtime Superheroes table continues to be very popular. We are noticing an increase in the number of children having a school dinner (and trying new foods!). On Friday, 1st December, we were joined by two real-life superheroes! PCSOs Will and Rich from Pear Tree Police Station visited school and ate their dinner with the children on our Superhero Table. We had lots of fun!



For those children that are still going home during dinnertime or bringing in a packed lunch, I would like to stress that **school dinners are free for every single child**. During the colder months, we recommend a hot dinner to help children stay warm.

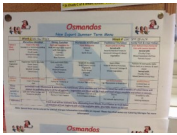
PARENT VOICE

Thank you for your very positive response to our weekly Parent Voice questionnaires on the gate. So far we have asked for ‘your voice’ on school dinners, PE kits, homework and attendance.



As you know, we are very keen to develop and improve our parent-school links. Mrs Bola has recently been involved in setting up our school PFTA—our *St Chad’s Heroes*. We are thrilled to be working closely alongside a group of parents, exploring ways that we can improve our school and local community.

We welcomed your views on school dinners. Feedback was that there was too much Quorn and not enough variety for our vegetarian children. We have reviewed our menus and will be meeting with our catering company in the New Year to share your feedback. We will of course keep you posted in the coming weeks and months! If you are interested in becoming a St Chad’s Hero then please speak with Mrs Bola.



Become a St Chad's Hero!

**WE NEED YOU**

Would you like to make a difference to your child's education?  
Do you want to become more involved in your child's school life?  
Can you help to make improvements to St Chad's school?

We would like to set up a Parent Support Group: *The St Chad's Heroes!*

READING VOLUNTEERS

Mrs Bola continues to work very hard to recruit our team of Reading Volunteers. I am thrilled to announce that we now have 10 reading volunteers regularly supporting across school. We are very lucky as some of our reading volunteers are retired teachers! They continue to be very complimentary about our school and children. We welcome all of our volunteers to our St Chad’s family!

MATHS AND ENGLISH CLASSES FOR PARENTS

Mrs Bola managed to organise a series of free English (ESOL) and Math sessions for parents through Derby College. **All classes are free**. Unfortunately, our first meeting was not very well attended. Mrs Bola will be re-arranging the sessions for the Spring term. We encourage all parents that would like to improve their Maths and English skills to attend the sessions. Further dates will be confirmed soon.

FOUNDATION STAGE PLAYGROUND MAKEOVER

Miss Gilsenan and her team in Nursery and Reception continue to work very hard to develop and improve the outdoor area in Nursery and Reception. We now have the main areas in place and we are looking forward to enhancing them in the New Year. We are particularly excited for our fairy garden, woodwork area and outdoor stage and music provision!



SNOW

On Monday (11th December), Mrs Lambert in the office was inundated with phone calls following the snow over the weekend. In adverse weather conditions, we will **endeavour to remain open**. Any school closures will be announced on our website (Newsfeed section) and on our Facebook page. It is important that the phone lines are kept free in the morning to allow for parents of sick children to report their absence.

HATS AND GLOVES

Please ensure that your child has hats and gloves in school whilst it is very cold. Please ensure all items have your child’s name on them. It is vital that children are dressed in sensible footwear.



CHRISTMAS AT ST CHAD’S

As a church school, Christmas is a very important event on our annual calendar. It is a time for us to stop and think about the true meaning of Christmas: giving, sharing, gratefulness, togetherness and love. We have held a number of key events this year to help celebrate this special time of year. Here are some of our highlights....

THE KINDNESS ELF

We took the idea of Elf on the Shelf but used it to teach kindness to the children (we don’t like the word ‘naughty’ at St Chad’s!). Every day Elf was hidden in each classroom, alongside an Act of Kindness Card. The children had to carry out their act of kindness, without getting caught! Some of our favourite acts of kindness were: *play with somebody that you don’t normally play with* and *smile at everybody that you see today and ask them how they are feeling*.



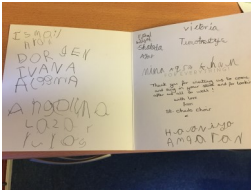
CHRISTMAS TREE DECORATING AND CHRISTMAS CARD MAKING



Yet again, we have been very lucky to have a beautiful (and real!) Christmas tree in school. Every child made their own decoration to go on the tree. There was no ‘set’ colour scheme, we wanted to embrace the children’s creativity and let them have ownership over *their* tree. The whole school did an AMAZING job! The children also enjoyed designing and making ‘thank you’ Christmas cards to our Governors and volunteers.

CAROL SINGING AT TESCO

On Tuesday, 5th December, our school choir were invited to perform Christmas songs at the Tesco Metro store in town. Mrs Clarke and Mrs Bibi accompanied the children on their outing. They did a wonderful job entertaining shoppers with their beautiful singing. After their performance, the children were invited for treats and took part in Christmas crafts organised by the staff. Mrs Clarke is already looking forward to next year’s performance!



RECEPTION NATIVITY

It was wonderful to see so many parents at our Reception class Nativity this year. Monkeys certainly helped us all to get into the Christmas spirit. The costumes, singing and performances were AMAZING! I would like to say a special thank you to Miss Gilseman, Mrs Clarke, Miss Afzal, Mrs Bibi and Mrs Bibi for all of their hard work in helping to make the nativity such a success.

EXPERIENCING CHRISTMAS AT ST AUGUSTINE’S

On Thursday, 14th December, Year 2 children were invited to take part in a Christmas Experience at St Augustine’s church. They took part in various ‘Christmas related’ activities and workshops (and were treated to a yummy drink and biscuit!). As always, the children behaved impeccably.



CHRISTMAS LUNCH AND SANTA VISIT

All of the children and staff enjoyed a yummy Christmas lunch. It was fantastic to see so many festive jumpers and sparkly tops on display! We finished a very successful term with a party and Santa even stopped by to say hello!

KINGS AND QUEENS

We are thrilled with the introduction of our Kings and Queens Ceremony. At the end of every half-term, a King and Queen is nominated from each class. These children are rewarded for consistently showing Golden Behaviour and our LOVE values. We hold a ceremony (led by a General!) and our Kings and Queen each have the opportunity to sit in a throne whilst they are crowned. We have a special display board in our hall dedicated to our Kings and Queens.

This half-term, our Kings and Queens were:

Adil and Zawish (Pandas)

Emil and Ivana (Monkeys)

Umar and Sara (Tigers)

Liam and Hareem (Frogs)

Adam and Faatimah (Giraffes)

We are crowning our new Kings and Queens this Friday (15th Dec) and will announce their names in our next newsletter!

