



St Swithun's Half Termly News

Week ending 26th July 2024



Valuing individuals
Aspiring and achieving together in faith

St Swithun's C of E Primary Academy's Vision

Love bears all things

Believes all things

Hopes all things

Endures all things

(1 Corinthians 13:7)



Hi Everyone!

We made it! 8 weeks ago, we all started the term knowing that this was a long one but we actually can't believe how quickly the weeks have passed and of course, that means the end of another school year. It's been a fantastic one, packed full of amazing experiences for the children. I said last year at about the same time that class Dojo is a great way to look back on the great times and therefore I urge you all again to take some time with your child this holiday to reminisce on the wonders of the 23/24 academic year at St Swithun's.

Reading the reports this year has once again struck an emotional note with me. All of our children have come a long way from their starting points in September. Sometimes you forget parts of the journey as the months tend to be very busy and merge into one another but with a chance to really reflect now as we come to the end, it's honestly a time where as a staff we acknowledge the individual journeys that have taken place. Each of you should be very proud of your children as they have all grown in confidence, wisdom, a better understanding of themselves and academically so they are in a better place to begin their new year group or school in September.

Once again, the summer term has brought with it a variety activities and events outside of the academic curriculum. Our Newstead children have ended the year with a fantastic performance of Hansel and Gretel where talent was in abundance and on show to a captive audience in the Grove Church. Our Year 6 children had a wonderful sailing experience at Daneshill Lakes where their confidence, resilience and perseverance were put to the test. All children came through with flying colours, demonstrating an aptitude for manning boats single handedly.

Our Clumber children were treated to a Martial Arts session where they fearlessly went about breaking wooden boards with their bare feet. It was a sight to behold! Our Year 2 children then went on to have their first ever sleepover at school where they also showed resilience and the confidence to venture into new territory. That said, I think the parents had to dig deep too as for most of the children, it was their first night away from home. A fantastic evening and night was had by all!

The Rufford children seemed to have spent much of their time this year over at the Bassetlaw Museum. They've been busy learning about the Anglo Saxons this term and one of their activities involved them making life sized shields which were amazing. Rufford have certainly embraced a multitude of different ways to learn this year which has in turn, enabled them to recall and demonstrate excellent learning of key topics. Well done to all!

Our EYFS children have been busy bees throughout the year getting to know their local community through numerous visits. They've had adventure after adventure that also included a visit to the local fire station. Who knows, we may have inspired some children to aim for a career as a fire fighter. The year ended for the children with a wonderful visit to a Butterfly House where they all enjoyed time interacting with the wonders of nature.

As ever, we have been very busy in terms of the sporting calendar and this year a highlight was winning Gold in the Bassetlaw schools Boccia tournament. Our amazing children then went on to represent Bassetlaw in the County Finals, once again, doing themselves and the school proud. Well done to all the children who took part in the School Games events this year. They were all superstars and brilliant ambassadors for the school.

The above only highlights a small sample of what the children did and achieved this term. The year was jammed packed with enhancements and themed days which have hopefully given the children a multitude of fond memories that will be with them forever.

The staff at St Swithun's have as ever been amazing and it has once again been a privilege to work alongside each and every one of them this year. It never ceases to amaze me just how much resilience and motivation is shown during a school year. Yes, we get holidays of which we are all very grateful, but during term time, things in the world of education can be very full on with goal posts ever changing. Staff need to be adaptable to change and dig very deep at times when things become challenging. I have seen this day in and day out. Once again, I can't thank the team enough. St Swithun's is truly blessed to have such a dedicated crew to continue its on-going and ever evolving journey.

Our school Governors have been a great this year with many of them coming into school during key events to lend their support. Each of them brings an individual skill that helps enhance the overall offer we give to our community. Our Governors continue to play an active role in the running of and the on-going development of St Swithun's and I'd like to thank them all on behalf of the staff and the St Swithun's community as a whole. A thank you also to the SNMAT team who have once again been very supportive this year in helping to further refine and develop different areas of school life.

My final thank you goes out to each and every one of you who over my two years at St Swithun's have welcomed me and made me feel a part of your community. I have enjoyed getting to know you that little bit more this year and it's been lovely to welcome and get to know our new parents and carers who have joined us. Many of you have volunteered your time to support events, go on visits or make costumes for productions and themed events and this partnership ensures that the children continue to get a great deal.

Your support is most welcome and gratefully received. It's extremely valuable and never taken for granted so thank you for all you have done this year and in years gone by to support St Swithun's. Together as one, ensures great things happen.

The end of the school year often means that there are changes in school personnel or staffing and unfortunately, it's following the same pattern. We are sadly having to say a fond farewell to a few of the St Swithun's team.

Ms. Vogtbell, Miss Wilson, Miss Jackson, Mrs. Shaw-Browne and Mrs. Woolgrove have been dedicated to the cause throughout, giving their all each and every day. They will all be greatly missed and their positive contribution to the children and community of St Swithun's will always be fondly remembered. They all have an open invite to visit the school so hopefully they won't be strangers.

A further farewell goes to Reverend Ben who has been associated with the school for almost 6 years. He has also been one of the school governors and in his dual role was a weekly visitor to St Swithun's where he took whole school Collective Worship. Reverend Ben has been an amazing support to the school and its community and will be sadly missed by the staff and the children who always have great things to say about his Collective Worship times, stating that they are always fun and interactive. He leaves a huge hole in the St Swithun's family. He is moving on to look after two parish churches North of here so on behalf of the school and community, I'd like to wish him and his family ever success as they begin their new adventure in September.

Our final farewell goes out to our amazing Year 6 children. It's always sad to say goodbye as many of them have been a part of this community for many years. However, they have a new adventure to start in September and many of them are already eager for it to begin which is great. They have been a great bunch and will be missed when we return for the new school year. We wish, **Kaden, Kristian, Lillyann, Nathan, Lara, Faye, Oscar, Leo, Maddison, Oliver and Amber** a fond farewell and all the very best for the new adventures that lay ahead.

We do have the pleasure of welcoming a new member of staff from September. Mrs. Elizabeth Keywood will be joining our lunchtime team and will be supporting with breakfast club.

As I come to the end of my final Newsletter of this academic year, I'd like to once again thank you all for connecting with St Swithun's. There are many things for us to look back on with fondness and pride. You should all be super proud of your children. They are all amazing and have such a variety of talents and gifts. Children have gone above and beyond this year in terms of looking out for others within school and the wider community. They are great ambassadors for the here and now, and for the future. We will pick up our journey again in September, where we will strive even harder as a collective, to ensure all children, staff, parents, carers and the wider community flourish. I wish you all a great summer. Enjoy the special family time that's to come. Stay safe and look after one another. I'm really looking forward to re-connecting with you all on Wednesday September 4th.

Key Messages

Whole School Attendance – Currently 91%

School Target is 100%



95%	=	47 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 8 days in total or 1 week and 3 days
90%	=	95 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 16 days in total or 3 weeks and 1 day
85%	=	142 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 24 days in total or 4 weeks and 4 days
80%	=	190 LESSONS MISSED EACH YEAR 32 days in total or 6 weeks and 2 days

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

**WHAT DO YOUR
ATTENDANCE
FIGURES
ACTUALLY MEAN?**

BE SMART BE THERE!

Percentages based on 190 academic days

Our Governors have been looking closely at the school attendance and while they are pleased with many of the things they hear and see, they are concerned about some of our children who have missed a significant amount of school time, not only this year, but in previous years too. The facts above, highlight clearly the negative impact that not regularly attending school can have on a child. I am truly concerned about some of our children who are not where they could or should be in terms of their age and stage. While sometimes, there are other contributing factors that impact learning, many of the case studies explored by the Governors show that it's the persistent absentees who are the furthest behind in terms of academic progress and personal growth.

I have connected with many families this year in terms of their child's attendance and while in some cases there has been improvement, I feel that there is still a long way to go. We can only do our job, if the children attend. It's as simple as that.

The Governing Body in response to their concerns have appointed a link Governor to support with attendance issues. Also, with the backing of the Governors, the school will be considering following the penalty notice route from September. This hasn't happened this year and will not impact the majority of our families as unauthorised absences are not an issue with so many of you. However, where we have real concerns in terms of persistence absenteeism, this may well need to be one of the areas we need to explore.

CELEBRATION:

19 of our children had 100% attendance this summer term

43 of our children had an attendance of 95% or above this summer term

6 of our children had 100% attendance for the entire year!



Start to the school day for KS1 & KS2 children



- Gates open at **08:40**.
- Children come straight into school on arrival rather than lining up. (Just as it is when it rains).
- A member of staff will be in class to greet the children.
- There will be a task/activity ready for the children on arrival.

All KS1 and Lower KS2 children must have an adult with them until they have entered the school building.

- Class teachers/Support Staff will be available for a chat between 08:40 & 08:50.
- Gates will close at **08:55**.
- Children who are late will need to come in through the main reception.

***Just another reminder that only children in Year 6 will be permitted to walk to school without adult supervision. Those children in Year 6 wanting to walk to school alone will need written permission from a parent or carer giving their consent for this to happen. ***

Uniform

Overall, it's good, however, there are still a small number of children coming to school wearing trainers and hoodies that are not part of the school uniform. If you are unsure of the correct dress code, please see the uniform page on our school website. This can be found under parents – uniform information. Also, under this section is the school uniform policy. Please can you ensure your child wears the correct uniform.



PE kits

Please make sure that your child has a full PE kit in school every Tuesday and on their specific PE days. Overall, I am really pleased with what I am seeing so thank you. However, there are a still a small number of children who are still not coming to school with kit or if they do have kit, it's not necessarily the correct kit. KS2 children can bring their kit to school on a Monday, leave it in their locker and take it home again on the Friday.



Jewellery

A reminder that in terms of earrings, children are only permitted to wear studs, and these must be removed for PE sessions. All other non-essential items of jewellery should remain at home. Watches are permitted but children must understand that they are responsible for their watch so I would urge that they don't wear anything too expensive or something that's deemed to be a family treasure.



Events Team

Our Events Team have once again been fantastic and have organised endless events for both our children, parents and carers. Again, Dojo tells the story of how the team have been proactive in ensuring our children and community benefit from these planned events. It was lovely to see so many of you at our Summer Fayre this year and to catch up with some of you in the dinner hall whilst you were having your fish and chips. Thank you for coming and supporting the school through this event. It's much appreciated.

If you feel being a part of the Events Team is something you'd like to get involved with, please leave your details at the school office. There will also be a coffee morning during Autumn 1 where you can come and meet current members and perhaps explore joining yourself.

Class Dojo

Class Dojo is an effective tool that allows instant communication between school and parents and carers. It's great to see so many of you interacting and using this app to its full. However, could I please ask that you think about the times you send staff messages, thinking mainly about their well-being and personal lives outside of school. I feel that in terms of regular interaction between yourselves and members of staff, the hours of **07:45** and **18:00** are more than acceptable and should allow that free flow of information between both parties. I have also asked all staff to respect your well-being and personal lives too. You should not receive messages after **18:00** or before **07:30** unless there is an emergency.

In addition to the above, it's unlikely that teachers and staff in KS1 and KS2 will respond to Dojo messages during the day as they are involved with supporting and teaching your children. If you have a message for the teacher or teaching assistant, could you please call the school office, and staff there will get the message to the teacher or teaching assistant. It's slightly different in EYFS and Mrs. Howlett has said she does check Dojo occasionally due to the timings of the children coming and going to and from the unit.



ClassDojo

Diary Dates

2nd September 2024 - Inset Day for Staff

3rd September 2024 - Inset Day for Staff

4th September 2024 – Reception, Year 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6 children return to school

9th September 2024 – Nursery children start school

13th September 2024 – Roald Dahl Day (Children can dress as a RD book character)

3rd October 2024 – School Census Day (Themed Lunch)

17th October 2024 – Children break up for half term

18th October 2024 – Inset Day for staff

4th November 2024 – Children return to school

11th – 15th November 2024 – Anti-Bullying Week

18th – 24th November 2024 – UK Parliament Week

20th December 2024 – Last day of the Autumn term

Other key dates will be added to the school diary so please keep an eye out for Dojo messages and the calendar on the school website.

See you next year!

Mr. Charly

