

3rd November 2023

Dear Parents

Welcome back to the start of this new half term. I hope you all managed to have some sort of relaxation over the half term break. The last part of the week has been wet, wild and windy; let's hope for a calmer weekend!

The Friends – I spent last night at The Friends' annual general meeting. **It was incredible to hear that over the last three years, the committee and dedicated parents have raised £86,556 and that £89,201 has been donated to the school.** The full financial report will be sent separately. I would like to sincerely thank the outgoing committee for their three years' service to the school. Breda Patterson and Nacho Nieto-Cygan have been our Co-Chairs, Peachy Szell Vice-Chair, Dani Pizzi-Njada Secretary and Eorann Kavanagh and Alex Farrugia our Treasurers. They have done a sterling job, not only raising this eye watering amount of money but also providing such an excellent sense of community which we have all needed and appreciated, especially during covid. I am always a bit nervous when the three year service comes to an end and wonder if any parents will be interested, willing or keen to continue this vital work. I am thrilled to announce our new committee: Emma Phelps and Linda Groarke Co-Chairs, Kathleen Thomas and Bonnie De Seze Vice Chairs, Lisa Mounsey-Thear Secretary and Anne-Marie Byrne Treasurer. I'm immensely grateful to this group and we had our first meeting this morning – lots of exciting things to look forward to! With the full implementation of the national funding formula, our indicative budget for April 2024 is **-0.64%** on this year (yes that's a minus figure). You can imagine the challenges we will face trying to afford the increased costs of salaries and utility bills alone. If any of you have any connections with the Department for Education or a Member of Parliament, your voice would be very appreciated regarding the severe financial position of schools such as ours. Schools with more deprivation are getting more money and while this is important and valuable, the difference between us and another school with the same number of children is as much as half a million pounds. This differential is not fair. We need The Friends' fund raising more than ever.

Years 1 and 2 Phonics – Years 1 and 2 have been working a little differently this week. Following extensive assessments last half term, the children have been grouped by their phonics ability and so for their phonics lessons they have been moving to different rooms and working with different adults. They will be assessed again in six weeks and grouped again, so if your child says they're with a different adult or in a different room to usual, that is why!

Winter uniform reminder – All children should now be wearing a white shirt with school tie. Please also ensure that PE uniform is dark green – children need tracksuit bottoms and sweat top for the colder weather – all in the same shade as the green school jumper – a variety of colours have started to filter in. Trainers are to be worn with PE kit, but otherwise BLACK school shoes. Low ankle boots will be allowed for the colder months, but not long boots. Also – again, please can all items of clothing be labelled with your child's name. Thank you

Christmas Card orders – Christmas cards have been sent out to all your children today. You only have a week to get your order in. All commission goes to The Friends. Thanks in advance for any purchasing.

Parents' Evenings next week – You have an opportunity to meet your child's teacher next week. This is a ten minute appointment, so please stick to the times. On Wednesday Usborne books will be on sale from 3.30pm in the school hall, do come and have a look. See attached flier. There will also be 2nd hand uniform available to take/buy – Take if you need, donate if you can.

Late to school – If your child has been late to school a few times this term, Tracey will have sent you a letter. Please check your child's bag.

Assemblies – On Monday we announced an opportunity to become a School Councillor. Children from Year 1 upwards are invited to write their manifestos for a class vote next week. On Wednesday we had Mass in school for the Feast of All Saints. Thanks to Miss Sterlini for stepping on the piano as Mr Charles-Nelson was absent.

Help for hunger - One of our parents Rosie Hurdall, is organising "Help for Hunger" for yet another year. There is more need than ever before but help is slow coming in this year. Please see the attached flier about donations that can be brought to THE INTIMATE THEATRE, next to St Monica's Church in Palmers Green on Tuesday 28th November. If you would like to make a cash donation, click here

https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/helpforhunger2023?utm_term=3a6A2X5vV

We will also be doing a cash donation day in school - details to follow next week.

If you know any family who would appreciate a hamper, please let Rosie know in confidence (details on the flier).

Also, 'R'voices, a local choir which some of our staff sing in, are hosting a fundraiser for Help for Hunger on **Thursday 9th November**. If you would like to attend, please see the attached flier. The link to purchase tickets is here www.ticketsource.co.uk/help-for-hunger.

Diary Dates

Parents' evenings all next week - please make sure you have made an appointment to see your child's teacher

Monday 6th – Non uniform day for St Cecilia's Team (red team)

Friday 10th – Happy Bag collection – drop your bags of unwanted clothing etc outside school in the morning

Saturday 18th November 11.15-12.30 – **Chance to try and learn to play the drums** (see attached flier)

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards
Kate Baptiste
Headteacher