



St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

Diocese of Clifton

Inspiring everyone to **REACH** through
Faith, Hope, Love

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Head Teacher: Mrs Wendy D'Arcy

6th September 2018

Dear parents/carers

Welcome back! I do hope you had an enjoyable summer break - didn't it go quickly!

I do hope that your child/ren were full of enthusiasm after their first day back! As a school, we are starting the year with a whole school topic on Planet Earth. In an Encyclical Letter Laudato Si (Praise be to you) Pope Francis refers to St Francis of Assisi who 'reminds us that our common home is like a sister with whom we share our life and a beautiful mother who opens her arms to embrace us.....through our Sister, Mother Earth, who produces various fruit with coloured flowers and herbs. This sister now cries out to us because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods with which God has endowed her.' I'm sure you are aware of the issues that we humans have created in our world including deforestation, plastic waste and air pollution and as a result, many creatures/species are under threat of extinction. We all have a part to play in this and as we look ahead, it is clear that 'Care for nature is part of a lifestyle which includes the capacity for living together and communion.' Therefore, learning this term will focus on God's Creation and what we can do and put into action, to understand and discover it, as well as protect it. This was the reasoning behind our visit to the aquarium as a stimulus for learning and discovery.

I wanted to update you on a few changes that we have put in place for this academic year. As I am sure you are aware, we have revisited our school vision in collaboration with parents/carers, children, governors and staff and have created REACH as a result. REACH (resilience (never give up), empathy (love one another), aspiration (we are the future), confidence (give it a go), high expectation (be the best you can be)) will be used going forwards as our reward system to include certificates and 'REACH Points.'

The children can be rewarded as individuals. They can earn reach points by demonstrating any one of the 5 values. These point will be collected on a reach star card that they will keep in their drawer. When they have earned 25 points they will be awarded a bronze star, 50 points a silver star, 75 points a gold star and 100 points a badge with REACH on it.

During our weekly celebration assembly 2 children per class will be chosen to receive certificates. These will be awarded to children who have stood out for demonstrating any one of the five values. The children will still be in their house and marbles can still be collected as house points.

In EYFS and KS1, all children will start the day with 15 minutes REACH time. This will be awarded at the end of each day. In line with the school behaviour policy, a child can lose 'REACH time if they do not demonstrate REACH or keep to the School Rules - this is the same as last year. Equally, they can earn their REACH time back. If a child has lost any reach time the class teacher will share this with the child's parents at the end of that day. Therefore, for our younger children, rewards and sanctions are much more immediate and each day is a new day.

In KS2, the system is very similar to last year, however REACH time will be reduced to a quarter of an hour on a Friday. As before, children can lose and earn their time back. For ALL of our children, some behaviour choices will require the immediate loss of REACH Time including:

- swearing
- violence to other children or adults
- deliberate damage to school property
- disrespect during worship activities
- discriminatory behaviour/derogatory language

However, I would like to emphasise the fact that such incidences are rare here at St Joseph's and we pride ourselves on the outstanding behaviour that our children demonstrate. When a child has lost REACH time, they will spend that time reflecting upon the choices made, impact on others involved (if at all) and how to avoid this situation again.

As part of our broad and balanced curriculum, on Fridays, we are offering a wide range of 'practical' activities that the children can apply skills from across the curriculum into different contexts. Such activities include: outdoor learning, charity work/fund raising, PE, design and technology, debating/public speaking and gardening to name just a few. We will be trialing this for a half term and collecting feedback from everyone involved. Therefore, we ask that ALL children (Reception children to join in after October half term) wear their PE kits to school on Fridays. As the weather may change, you will be asked to provide waterproofs etc.

As a growing school, we have some new members of staff who have joined us. I am sure you will make them feel welcome as always. Megan Browning (Y4 teacher) Katharine Piper (Teaching Assistant in Reception) and Chrissie Neville (providing outdoor learning) have all joined the team.

We also have a new and user friendly website. Please do take time to look at it as it is intended to be the 'go to' with the most current and up to date information on.

Finally, if you have any concerns with regard to your child, please in the first instance speak to the class teacher/teaching assistant. If your concern is not resolved, then please contact the SLT either via e-mail or through the school office. Please ensure that communication to ALL staff is sent to seniorleadership@st-josephs.gloucs.sch.uk. Please **DO NOT** send it directly to 'head@' due to the fact that I am not always on site and therefore, may not pick up your communication however senior leadership e-mail is shared and will therefore be responded to by Mrs Howells, assistant headteacher.

Thank you for continued support.

Yours sincerely



Wendy D'Arcy
Headteacher

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