



School & Nursery Newsletter February 2010

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A word from the Head Teacher!

We have had the most successful start to an academic year since the school and nursery opened back in 1990. Our full Ofsted inspection of both the nursery and school which took place at the end of January 2010 has been a very positive experience. The Inspectors were staggered that the school has not only maintained the high standards established in past years but has further developed them despite a very difficult summer in 2009.

Nursery numbers have returned to their traditional growth trend which we last saw in the 1990's after an extended period where we did not really market the nursery as perhaps we ought to have done. This means that both baby and toddler rooms are moving close to capacity between now and April. We are having to recruit new staff to support this and I am delighted to welcome Katy to our core qualified Nursery team in Younger Toddlers.

In school the new admissions this term and last have surpassed all previous years. We are pleased to extend a really warm welcome to all the children who have joined us in Reception class, Year 6 and Year 8. Our small community looks forward to involving all our new families in school life.

Two of the key events in my Autumn Term diary every year are the End of Term Reports and our Christmas Production.

Again I have to say it has been a remarkable term. The children have made outstanding progress in all subjects and we can look forward to great success next term. The Inspectors loved the reporting format and the good to outstanding progress which they identified that pupils make at school.

I must single out the astonishing achievements of our Reception Class for particular praise. Their attainment in literacy and numeracy continues to be exceptional.

The Christmas Production which took place on Thursday 17th December at Albany Science College was a stunning success. Every pupil performed superbly and the production was one of the very best that we have ever done and with 100 tickets sold we had terrific support on the night from all of our school parents, friends and families.

It is appropriate for me to thank all the staff team who have helped make these achievements possible and to extend my further thanks to our active parents and children who have helped to transform our small, but rapidly growing, school community.

My heartfelt thanks to all our staff and parents who have contributed to make this Term such a great success for all our children

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Ofsted 20th-21st January 2010

I have uploaded the final Ofsted Report to our web site. It can be found at the foot of the Home page.

As always the report is in Ofsted 'speak' and has to be read carefully. We had a 'Good' report for school in 2007 but I am delighted that we have made further progress and improved in

many key judgment areas.

Ofsted found that the school curriculum had been further developed and extended beyond the 'satisfactory' level in 2007 to a 'Good' Level with strengths in key subject areas.

Pupil Progress was 'Good' overall with many pupils achieving 'outstanding' progress.

Even more importantly Ofsted determined that the hidden curriculum which is so important to the development of a happy, well adjusted and successful child was outstanding. This resulted in 'outstanding' pupil conduct. They really enjoyed the dynamics of the small class, small school environment where children of all ages were able to interact more freely.

Teaching and learning was 'Good' to 'outstanding' and our attention to all the safety and welfare regulations was satisfactory. The only minor drawback in the report was that we were in the process of reviewing all our whole school and nursery policies and procedures following the changes over the summer and as this had not been completed we could not receive a

'good' judgement in this area. However the Inspectors did try to explain this in the report.

This is an excellent report and a great platform for us to build on. We believe we can secure 'outstanding' in every area in three years time.

It is perhaps worth mentioning that the Inspectors had a great time in our school and found some of our innovations to be really exciting. They were astonished at what we have achieved since June 2009 and had to admit that they had not expected to find such substantial further improvements on an already sound educational model as inspected in 2006 and 2007.

Some Recent and Forthcoming Events

Halle Performance for Youth— January 2010

The Junior and senior school pupils enjoyed the Halle performance at Bridgewater Hall in January. Pupils were presented with a range of styles of dance music played by the Halle orchestra. The finale was undoubtedly observing Mr Ruaux attempt to join in the bossanova dancing in the aisles at the end of the event!

Lancashire Schools Fencing Competition—January 2010

The Fencing Club took representatives of Rivington Park to the new venue at Stonyhurst where the team produced some great results snatching medals galore from our big rivals at Stonyhurst and Arnold School. Well Done, especially to Krishan Patel (Yr 8) who secured a Bronze medal in the boys U14 Sabre and Jack Pendlebury (Yr8) who came 5th. Full details of all the club medals are posted on the school website. We are looking forward to the British Youth Championship Qualifiers which take place at Arnold School in Blackpool in March.

Aosta Skiing Trip—PILA Italy—February 2011

The school has booked 20 places for pupils in Years 3-10. I have received confirmations from most pupils in school that they will attend so the trip will definitely proceed. I have some availability of places for children intending to join school in September 2010 or earlier. If parents wish their child to attend and have not yet booked a place, please contact me via email at school or ring school to confirm. I have some months before I have to confirm final numbers but would like to be sure that I have sufficient staff numbers accompanying the trip in case of a

last minute rush!!

Outdoor Pursuits Trip -May 2010

After Half Term I shall confirm arrangements for the residential outdoor pursuits programmes. Separate trips will operate for Senior Pupils and Junior Pupils. As usual school will contract in the adventure training elements and the trips will be led by Mr Ruaux and based in the Lake District.

A Midsummer Nights Dream—The Octagon

All Senior school pupils are attending the production of A Midsummer Nights Dream next month.

Swimming Resumes —Pre-school and Reception Class

The Pre-school and Reception classes will resume swimming lessons after Half Term. We have reverted to Swims-mart in Standish. The pool may not be quite as new at Swims-mart but we all felt that the instructors more than made up for that!

Gifted & Talented Withdrawal Programme Resumes after half term (Year 5-9)

The school will recommence a single withdrawal lesson for pupils that meet the Gifted & Talented criteria. Mr Phillips will work on critical thinking skills with this cohort. Parents have been contacted if their children fulfill the criteria. The children also understand that irrespective of their CAT outcomes, if they demonstrate the requisite aptitude then they can be invited to join this group. So hard work and progress can result in an opportunity to take part in this withdrawal programme.

Nursery Parents Evening—Tuesday 23rd February 2010- 6.00PM

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We are due to have a nursery parents evening. Parents can meet their child's key worker and discuss all aspects of their child's development and progress. It is also a chance to find out a little more about how nursery operates and meet the staff team. Refreshments will be provided. Appointments can be made with key workers in each room.

Healthy Child—Some developments

We have decided to make some improvements which we hope parents will like. After Half Term Teatime will move slightly later to 3.30PM and a mid-afternoon fruit break will be intro-

duced. The fruit platter will include some more unusual fruits for children to try out.

Cereals or fruit will be available as an alternative breakfast to toast in all nursery rooms after Half-Term.

Dental Health

We have ordered some individual toothbrush holders and tooth brushes for all children in Older Toddlers, Pre-school and Infants. We would like to introduce after meal brushing for all children. As a healthy routine we think it is a good habit to encourage.

