



St Leonard's Catholic Primary School

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Newsletter no. 14

10th March. 2023

Dates for your diary:

Term time

The Spring term runs from 9th January until 31st March, 2023.

Spring term 2023

- 14.3.2023 – Year 3 Liturgical prayer (parents welcome)
- 21.3.2023 – Year 4 Liturgical prayer (parents welcome)
- 28.3.2023 – Year 5/6 Liturgical prayer (parents welcome)

Dionne Dunn
Headteacher

Dear parents and carers,

Teachers' Strike Day 15th & 16th March, 2023

I have been informed by all relevant members of striking unions that they do not intend to strike on the above days and, therefore, **school will be open as normal**. I appreciate that some of our children have siblings in other schools where staff are striking, but this does not mean that our pupils should stay off. Please ensure that all pupils are in school, and that the office is informed before 9.15 am of any reason why pupils would not be attending. Thank you for your continued support with this matter.

The school day

I have had the opportunity to speak to a number of parents and carers regarding the extended school day proposal. Please note, this will start at the beginning of the next academic year: September 2023. If you do have any opinions or concerns that you want to share, please email the office.

Pupil Premium Eligibility

As a school, funding for pupil resources is always very tight. In St Leonard's, I am very surprised at the low numbers of pupils that are registered as being eligible for Pupil Premium Funding; especially in Year 1 & 2. This funding is vital to ensuring that pupils, parents and the school receive the support that they are entitled to through Government Funding. I sometimes think that there is a stigma for parents who have children in receipt of free school meals (one of the many advantages of being eligible for PPF), but let me assure you that this is not the case. The systems for choosing a school meal are exactly the same for children who are entitled to a free dinner as that for those who pay for dinners – it isn't like the old days when children were signalled out by not having to hand in their orange envelope! I have enclosed further information about eligibility; please look again and, if you are in receipt of any of the benefits listed, please do apply for this funding to help support you and your school. If you have applied previously, and you were declined, please reapply as we have been informed that there were some errors in the system and the wrong decisions sent to people who applied. If you need help, please get in touch and we would be happy to support you.

The perils of success!!!

Whenever a school goes through significant improvements in the way St Leonard's has, there are always subsequent changes in staffing. As a result of the widely reported excellent teaching in our school, members of our staff have been 'poached' by other schools and services.

Miss Bates is a valuable member of our support staff who has worked closely with children across our whole school, especially those in need of extra support at times. She has a passion for working with pupils with Special Educational Needs and I am delighted that she has been successfully promoted to work as an HLTA in the Autism Outreach Team. I know you will join me in wishing her every success in her new role when she leaves us next Friday. In her place, we have been fortunate enough to employ a class teacher, Miss Brickle, who will teach Reception class moving forward; enabling school to split the Reception & Year 1 pupils for the immediate future. I am delighted to have Miss Brickle join the team

Ms Lipscombe is also leaving the St Leonard's family. Ms Lipscombe has been awarded a permanent post at one of our other Trust primary school, St Joseph's School in Jarrow, which is closer to home for her. Ms Lipscombe is very sad to be leaving us at Easter and will be greatly missed. Year 3 will be in safe hands moving forward though, as Miss Abigail Gilland (who is currently working in Year 3 in another of our Trust schools) will join us. I am sure you will welcome Miss Gilland and you will have the opportunity to meet her at the open mornings planned for next term.

And finally...

There has been a great deal of muttering and queering going on around the Year 1 class, regarding a potential new arrival. I am delighted, therefore, to confirm that **Miss Boyd** is expecting her first baby towards the end of July! We are so excited for Miss Boyd and her devotion to 'doing her part' to fill our future Reception classes. Miss Brickle will cover Miss Boyd for the final days of the Summer term to ensure a smooth transition for all.