



St Ives Infant School

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Dear Parents/Carers

We are at a very exciting point in our school journey and I thought it would be beneficial to share some changes that have already happened and things we are currently working on to keep you updated.

Wider Curriculum

We are currently redesigning our whole curriculum to take advantage of our rich, cultural history and geographic location. On our last inset day we began to redesign our offer to children, taking into account the requirements of the national curriculum and our context. We are particularly keen to ensure our pupil offer ensures progression in learning from Nursery onwards. In turn this means our afternoons will be structured differently with more specific learning outcomes planned, whilst also encouraging child led aspects of learning within it. The main reasons for this are as follows:

- To ensure we are meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum.
- To support progression of skills and knowledge through our school and for the next stage of our children's education.
- To personalise our curriculum to ensure it is relevant and relatable for our children.


Picture News

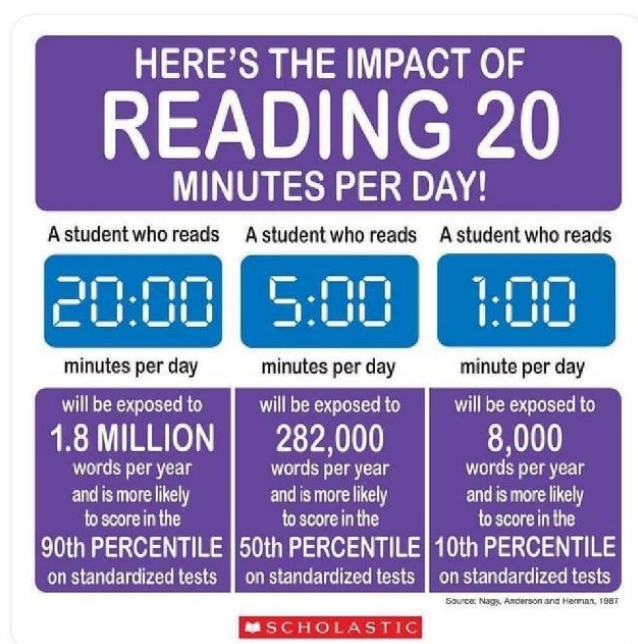
We now hold regular 'Picture News' assemblies. These support us in extending our curriculum beyond the technical, academic or vocational. It provides us with materials to discuss current news stories and share viewpoints. The materials cover a range of current issues including political, religious, cultural, environmental, social, moral and spiritual. It is always discussion based and empowers children to have the opportunity to share their view point on a range of topics. It make our values relevant and meaningful and develops links between personal, school and community values.

Reading

It has never really been off the agenda but there is a huge focus on reading in schools at the moment. The main focus of the latest Ofsted Inspection framework focuses on the importance of reading in a school, the promotion of reading for pleasure and the associated phonic skills. Reading is seen as the gateway to all areas of the curriculum which is why it is proving to be very topical at present. To ensure we are fully meeting the needs of our children we are currently auditing our teaching of reading, our resources and our phonics delivery.

You will have seen the following image on the last couple of newsletters. This really emphasises the impact of reading regularly and why it is so important our children are reading in and out of school.

Want to get ahead? Read. 



We are currently focusing on –

- Auditing our home readers and reading for pleasure books
- Reviewing how we teach reading
- Updating our training on teaching reading for all staff
- Recruiting 'reading friends' to listen to individual children and support access to the library at lunchtime
- Developing reading cafes/workshop opportunities for parents across school
- Developing our classroom reading areas

There are many useful websites to give usual suggestions of suitable books for each year group and linked to specific book topics.

<https://www.waterstones.com/the-waterstones-childrens-book-prize>

<https://www.lovereadings4kids.co.uk/genre/pw/All-Shortlists-and-Winners.html>

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>

<https://www.penguinrandomhouse.com/books/award-winners-childrens>

<https://www.booksfortopics.com/>

M.A.D Day

We are planning our first **Make a Difference** day on Saturday 28th March. For lots of reasons we have areas around school which lack a bit of love and attention. The drive behind our M.A.D days is to gather a willing band of volunteers to spruce these areas up so our building and environment reflects the dedication of our whole school community to offering the very best for our children. Our areas of focus will be The Elliotts and the Early Years Courtyard. Experience is not necessary just a willingness to 'muck in' - in return we will offer refreshments on the day and be extremely grateful!

Key jobs are;

Gardening, painting, building pallet resources, reorganising current resources, scarecrow building – hopefully something accessible to everyone.

It would be fantastic if you could offer your support. On the day we will have a staff member project managing an area. If you could let us know in advance if you are able to attend and have specific skills or resources you could offer that would be great.

Communication update

Further to our recent survey asking for how you preferred to be communicated I have reviewed the suggestions and made changes to our procedures. Thank you for your responses.

You Said/We did

- General information to be shared in a regular non paper-based newsletter- Facebook, Website
- Sharing posts of interest – Facebook
- Key Dates to be communicated via Facebook, letter, website
- Reminders re dates – text/Facebook

We do not yet have the facility to email parents as this is something we would need to buy in. As we are considering updating our website in the near future, this is something we can look at then as different web designers offer different routes of communication within their offer e.g. text and email services.

Parent's Evenings

Our next parents meetings will be on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th March, 3.30pm – 6.00pm, with the exception of Heron class, who will conduct meetings on Wednesday and Thursday instead due to teacher training. Appointments will be 10 minutes and provide an opportunity for the teachers to share where children are academically and for you to discuss your child. All access will be through the main entrance and we will have a few stands for information as well as refreshments available in the hall. Sign-up sheets will go up after the holidays but as it is such an important meeting I am sure you will want to attend, we wanted to make you aware of days and timings as soon as possible.

World Book Day

We will send out further information nearer to the date (March 5th) but we wanted to let you know that as a school we have decided not to dress up as a book character this year. The staff have taken this decision to limit unnecessary spending for parents but also the day seemed to have lost its focus with children coming as film and TV characters which defeats the aim of the day – to promote reading!

Instead we are going for a 'cosy reading' theme: onesies, PJs, joggers etc. Look out for further information soon.

Values and Vision

We are still encouraging parent interaction for our values and visions consultation. Information has been provided on the newsletter for several weeks and we would really appreciate your input into this very important statement.

Kind Regards,

Leisa Farrar (Headteacher) and Dawn Stevens (Chair of Governors)