



Newsletter September 2018

THE CATHEDRAL SCHOOL
OF ST. SAVIOUR AND ST. MARY OVERIE

Welcome Back

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to you all. I hope you enjoyed a restful summer. A particular welcome to all new children and parents – we look forward to getting to know you all. As ever, we are looking forward to another busy and exciting year.

There are quite a few notices at the beginning of the year which are included in this issue for your reference.

Reading

It is very clear that success in reading and comprehension unlocks success in all areas of the curriculum. *The Independent Newspaper* put it succinctly: “Children who read a lot of books fast, ably and with high levels of comprehension achieve more in every area of the curriculum than those who don't.” As a school, we agree and can attest that this is certainly the case.

It is very sad to note then, that, nationally, the amount of time children spend reading on their own is on the decline as well as the amount of time parents spend reading with their children.

The school's recommendation has always been that children are listened to read by an adult every night to give children the best start in their lives. This should be recorded briefly in the reading record. Three times a week is a bare minimum. Also, we recommend, this should be accompanied by a grown-up reading stories in the evening or at bedtime. The role of the parent-read bedtime story cannot be understated for a whole raft of reasons, and we would certainly encourage this throughout primary school.

Older children who have finished the school's formal reading scheme, are expected to read widely and independently, and they are allowed to write comments themselves in their reading record. Parents should encourage and also continue to monitor these confident readers.

While we appreciate this can be difficult for parents who have work commitments in the evenings, we would ask them to ensure that whoever is providing childcare is making reading a priority.

As life in the 21st century becomes increasingly more demanding of all our attentions and presence, we must seek to ensure that Cathedral School continues to buck the national decline of reading and that our children make the most of their educational and life chances.



Speech, Language and Conversation

Generally, children who attend this school are able to talk to their peers and their teachers extremely well. Many parents, whose children now attend secondary school after Cathedral School, report a variety of ways in which they feel their children are 'better prepared' than others, and the high standard of articulacy and ability to speak well in public are frequently mentioned.

Of course, we recognise that our children's success in this area is down to factors **at home** as well as at school. However, we cannot ignore another national trend: *an alarming decline in language acquisition has been identified for four-year-olds across the country.*

One apparent cause is parents not talking or reading enough with their children, and that the explosion of 'screen time' for parents and children in the last five years has caused fewer conversations and much less talking.

I have to agree: in public spaces it is very sad to see mothers and fathers glued to their mobile phone screens while their child is repeatedly trying to get their attention. The child will invariably give up; or have to be satisfied with a no-eye-contact 'uh huh'; or, worst still, they will stop bothering asking questions and give up on being curious and inquisitive. Of course, occasional screen time is sometimes necessary in modern life, but if done constantly or if it begins to take the place of parental conversations and interactions, it will have a detrimental effect. A similar effect will play out if children themselves spend too long at screens: decreased concentration, lack of empathy and poor communication skills are some of the profoundly worrying side-effects of device overuse.

Sadly, a child's formative years for language development cannot be 'replayed'. Children are children only for a short while and in that time there is a limited window for important developmental cerebral connections to be made. Children need to hear and engage with language and conversation, and also pick up language from books - both at home and in school. (This does not necessarily have to be in English, it can be in the home language.) This is the most important thing parents can do for their child's education; not doing so can severely hamper their life chances and makes catching up to their peers a nearly impossible task.

Amanda Spielman, the Head of OFSTED, recently highlighted a disparity in the experiences of children in their formative years. She described some children as "lucky" - those who are given bedtime stories or taught the alphabet by their families. Others, she said were "unlucky", and do not get the same help at home." She continued: "We now have a situation where, aged four, some children have less than a third of the English vocabulary of their peers... These children arrive at school without the words they need to communicate properly. Just imagine the disadvantage they face, right from the start."

From this year, as many other schools across the country have done, we would ask anyone collecting children from school to greet their child with a smile and a conversation about the day – that is to say to not be on a mobile phone. We hope you will be supportive of this.

We would encourage all families this year to limit screen time to a minimum and instead encourage talk and reading more. Both are free and much more valuable.

Best wishes

Mr Scott, Acting Headteacher



Uniform

Uniform is considered extremely important and is a strength of this school.

We thank all parents for your support in this area. The Uniform Policy is on [the website](#). As a reminder, summer uniform can be worn until October half-term.

Please keep all your children's items of clothing labelled to ensure we can return lost items.

Absence

If your child is not going to be in school please let the office know by 8.45am.

Leave during term time

Parents are not entitled to take their children on leave during term-time. The Headteacher may authorise leave during term time for exceptional circumstances only. This will never be for a family holiday. If leave is taken without permission, or no application is made, parents/carers risk being issued with a Penalty Notice or being prosecuted upon their return.

More information is available from Southwark Council's website: <https://tinyurl.com/ycet9k7g>

Parents/Carers wishing to apply for their child to have leave from school should complete the "Application for Leave During Term Time" available via the office and return it to school for authorisation at least two weeks before the proposed leave.

Important Dates

Date	Event
W/B 24 th September	Clubs Begin
19 th September	Curriculum Evening EYFS & KS1
20 th September	Curriculum Evening KS2
15 th October	PGL Meeting (Year 6 Parents)
17 th & 18 th October	Parents' Evening (No clubs that week)
22 nd – 26 th October	Half Term Holiday
W/B 3 rd December	Last Week of Clubs

PE

You child will need a PE Kit (details found in Uniform Policy on the [school website](#)) for PE. The items should be plain with no logos. Children will not be permitted to participate in PE without correct uniform. You can bring in the PE kit on Monday for the whole week.

Additionally, if children are well enough to be in school, they are generally considered to be fit enough to participate in PE. There are exceptions (such as broken bones etc.) We ask please that all medical information in this vein should be given to the office in writing with details including duration of ailment. Children should not be expected to pass on verbally such information.

Morning Routine

Teachers are out to say hello and answer any inquiries from 8.40am. Once the bell goes at 8.45am, the teachers' focus is on the children and ensuring an orderly start to the day. If you wish to speak to the teachers, please do so before the bell or after school. After 8.45am the class' Learning Support Assistant however is on hand if you wish to relate something urgent to the class teacher. Teachers are always available after school during the week in an appointment made through the office.

In KS1, once the bell goes, the classes line up. It is at this point 'goodbyes' are said. The children then walk to their classroom with their teacher unaccompanied by parents. Parents should avoid walking to the classroom with their child as it can be disruptive. Thank you for your co-operation with this.



Scooters

Scooters are not allowed to be ridden in the playgrounds. Children should dismount them and they should be left by the fence or carried.

Friends of Cathedral

The school has a 'Friends of Cathedral School' group which organises fundraising events such as the Christmas and Summer Fetes. These events have been hugely successful. Sara Sutherland, the teaching assistant in Reception Class, is the contact for getting involved.

Suggestions

The Headteacher with the senior leadership team have responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school. They are available on at least one gate most mornings and at the end of the school day for informal chats. We also have a suggestion box in the reception area of the school.

We are open to new ideas and suggestions, though obviously cannot adopt every suggestion not least because any two suggestions may be contradictory: A suggestion for change from one parent may very well be for something that was working very well for another!

A couple of times a year we schedule a morning where you can make a more formal appointment with SLT to discuss a suggestion in detail. We often invite a school governor to these meetings. It is important to note that governors do not have responsibility for the day-to-day management of the school, this lies with the SLT. Governors have a responsibility for strategic oversight of the school vision, finance and progress of the school.

New Ship

A brand new ship has docked in the KS1 playground for use at break and lunchtimes. It is not to be boarded before school.

Correspondence

More of the school's correspondence (including letters about school trips) will be delivered by email this year. Please ensure that we have your correct details.

Collective Worship

The collective worship led by individual classes are a special time each term when parents can see their children contributing to assemblies in a Christian context. We greatly appreciate the parental attendance at these times.

A reminder though, as has been the policy for years, we cannot interrupt collective worship to allow late parents to enter the hall.

We recommend parents arrive at the hall at 8.50am. Collective worship begins at 8.55am. Thank you for your support in this matter.

Wednesday 3rd October – Class 3
 Wednesday 10th October – Class 4
 Wednesday 7th November – Class 2
 Wednesday 14th November – Class 1
 Wednesday 21st November – Reception Class

Years 5 and 6 lead Cathedral Services this term so do not lead Class Collective Worship.

Cathedral Services

The school is very fortunate to have six services every year at Southwark Cathedral. These are not published on the website.

September 2018 - New School Year - Led By Y6
 December 2018 - Christmas - Led by Y5
 February 2019 - Candlemas - Led by Y3
 March 2019 - Easter - Led by Y4
 April 2019 - Summer 1 Service
 July 2019 - Leavers' Service - Led by Y6



Curriculum Maps

You can see what your child is learning each half-term through the curriculum maps which detail what will be taught in each subject. These can be found on each class' website.

Please do contact your class teacher if you have any relevant knowledge, expertise, contacts or artefacts you would be happy to share.

Maths, Writing, Reading

You can see the year group expectations for your child on their class website in the 'Target' section. It is with these statements that we assess your child and determine whether they are working towards, at, or above expectations. These grades are given before Parents' Evenings in autumn and spring; and in the end of year report in summer.

Pupil Premium

If you think you might be entitled to the pupil premium please contact June or Janice in the office.

All children from Reception to Year 6 already have a free school dinner as part of the Southwark Free Healthy School Meals Scheme however the school receives extra government funding for some children - in the form of the Pupil Premium.

Your child may qualify for a free school meal if you are receiving one of the following:

- Income support
- Income based Job Seekers Allowance
- Child Tax Credit
- Guarantee element of State Pension Credit (sole source)
- Support under Part IV of Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- Employment and Support Allowance

Breakfast Club

We have a breakfast club open to all pupils. Please contact the office if you would like to book a place in advance. It is £5 per day. It opens from 7.45am and the last entry is 8.15am.

Curriculum Evenings

We will be running Curriculum Evenings for each class at the beginning of this term. These evenings have been designed to inform you about your child's learning this year, meet the teacher and teaching assistant as well as help you to support your child's learning at home.

- EYFS and KS1 will take place Wednesday 19th September between 3.30pm - 4.30pm.
- KS2 will take place Thursday 20th September between 3.30pm - 4.30pm.

There will be supervised activities for pupils during the Curriculum Meeting. Please collect your child as usual from their classroom. Then please come to the school hall where you can drop your child off with a member of staff.

Parents' Evenings

The dates for Parents' Evenings are:

Autumn Term

17th and 18th October 2018

Spring Term

13th and 14th February 2019

Parent Volunteers

We would like to thank all the parents who have been able to volunteer with trips in the past.

Please contact the office if you can give up your time to accompany classes on trips occasionally; or hear readers on a more regular basis.



FRUITS OF FRIENDSHIP WITH GOD

LOVE

JOY

PEACE

PATIENCE

KINDNESS

GOODNESS

FAITHFULNESS

GENTLENESS

SELF-CONTROL



THE IMPORTANCE OF READING WITH YOUR CHILD EVERY NIGHT

Child A

Reads

20 minutes
at home each day



3,600 minutes
&
1,800,000 words
per year

Top 10%

Child B

Reads

5 minutes
at home each day



900 minutes
&
282,000 words
per year

50th Percentile

Child C

Reads

1 minute
at home each day



180 minutes
&
8,000 words
per year

Bottom 10%

*Nagy and Herman 1987, percentages refer to performance in standardised tests

Which child would you expect to:

read better?

have a wider vocabulary?

be more successful in school?

know more?

write better?

be more successful in life?

PLEASE READ WITH YOUR CHILD EVERY NIGHT