



# ST. MARK'S C. E. JUNIOR SCHOOL

## NEWSLETTER 10

Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> January 2010

### Important Dates for this term

Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February  
Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February  
Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February  
Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> February  
Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February  
Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> February  
Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March  
Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> March  
Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March

Non-uniform day (£1 donation) for Haiti appeal including 'Hats for Haiti'  
Re-scheduled maths session – for Y3 parents (library) – led by Ms Doyle  
Uniform order date; Tea and chat with PSA  
Bookings taken for Parents' Evening  
NL11 out  
Last day of Term 3  
First Day back for children – Term 4  
Written confirmation sent out regarding Parents' Evening bookings  
Parents' Evening 5-8 pm (late session)  
Parents' Evening 4-7 pm (early session)

### Parent Support Adviser (PSA)

[n.hallett@st-marks.wilts.sch.uk](mailto:n.hallett@st-marks.wilts.sch.uk) or mobile - 07873 427658

The next Tea and Chat session will be on **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010** at 9.00 am in the Green Room. If you would like to know more about the school, meet other parents, or just fancy a drink and a biscuit, please just drop in.

### Parent Governor Update

Regrettably we still have received no nominations or even approaches about the Parent Governor Vacancy that arose just before Christmas. This is a vital role for someone to represent the interests of parents and help have a strategic role in our school. One of our current Parent Governors writes...

'Do you want to support the school? Then why not be a parent governor? Governors decide on the school's policies and priorities in consultation with the head and other staff. You don't need to be an expert, just to have the best interests of the school and children at heart. The key role for any governor is to be a 'critical friend'. This means being supportive and constructive but willing to ask questions and express opinions. It is very important that parents' views are represented on the governing body, so can you help? If you'd like to know more, then please feel free to phone me on 503405 or see Mr Flemington. Honestly it's not that bad! Diana Melville – Parent Governor'.

### Uniform Order Date

Please be advised the next date (three out of six) we will be sending off uniform orders will be **Friday 5<sup>th</sup> February 2010**. All completed forms (available from the front entrance or via the download section of the website) with the correct money need to be with the office by this date. We anticipate orders will be ready for collection when we return w/c/ 22<sup>nd</sup> February for Term 4.

### Parents' Council

Our next meeting will be on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> March 9.00 am. All are welcome.

### Christian Club (Imitate)

Our new after school club, Imitate, had its first session this Monday. It proved to be popular across the school. The Club looks at biblical stories in a fun way using action-packed games. There are still places available for those interested in this fun and faith filled opportunity. Please contact the office.

### Performing Arts Club

Details will soon be released about an exciting new after school opportunity, beginning in term 5. I have been in negotiations with Sam Holloway, who ran her own Stagecoach School in London. She has recently moved into the area and is keen to offer dance/drama/singing to our children.

'Just so you know who I am...! I trained at Laine Theatre Arts for three years and graduated with full teaching qualifications in ballet, modern and tap. I then went on to dance professionally in Theatres, TV and Cruise Ships for 10 years. In 1998 I was asked to be the Theatrical Agent for Stagecoach Theatre Arts Head Office and in this role I found professional work in the Theatre, Film and TV world for hundreds of children - including roles in "The Lion King", "Chitty, Chitty Bang, Bang" and "The Sound of Music". In 1999 I opened my own Stagecoach Theatre Arts School and within a year had 350 budding performing arts students and eight teachers. I had many students in professional pantomimes, TV Programmes such as MI High and the Disney Channel and at the last count I had ten students in the West End production of "Oliver". After much consideration I sold my Stagecoach Theatre Arts Schools to move to Hanging Langford in September 2009. So now I am looking forward to working with the lovely children at St. Mark's. In the sessions the children will be doing an hour of singing, having a short break and then 55 minutes of dance one week and the following week drama, if we are working on a Musical Theatre Piece the drama and dance will be combined. Sessions will be on Thursdays for two hours at a price of £8.50 per week. A formal letter for parents to sign up will be released at the beginning of term 4.

### Y6 Trip to Milestone Museum, Basingstoke

Many thanks to our parent helpers, who enabled us to run this valuable school trip.

### Admission to Secondary School

I have received a reminder from the Principal of Wyvern College (Chris Tomes) that if parents of any Y6 boys have not already secured a place for Y7 through County e.g. new to the area, undecided etc, they should contact County Hall Admissions Team (01225 713000) as soon as possible.

### Adventure Playground Update

You may recall that last March we had the 'old adventure playground' removed because it had reached the end of its useful life and had been condemned. The Friends of St Mark's have been feverishly fundraising to replace it with something newer. The intention has been to apply for funding that would match the Friends' – providing potentially £20,000 to put in something worthwhile for all the children. However we have been stymied by bureaucracy, changes in who allocates grants etc. We have just completed the latest application form – all 17 glorious pages, and are awaiting an answer. Apologies in the delay in providing much needed equipment. More details as soon as we get them.

### Parents' Evenings

The second scheduled Parents' Evenings are **on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> and Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2010**. The first is the 'late session' (5-8 pm) and the following day the 'early session' (4-7 pm). The headteacher, deputy headteacher and PSA will be available in the hall for parents to join for coffee, informal discussions etc. Please note that the meetings are scheduled for parents and teachers to formally discuss progress, targets, attainment etc. Many parents bring their children along, often because they have to. Children are welcome to be here but should wait in their respective 'waiting' area – the designated classroom where trays of work are on display for parents to share. Appointments can be made by phone, by completing the slip on the formal letter or in person. All bookings are dealt with via the office staff. We endeavour to give everyone their preferred times but sometimes we must 'tweak' timings to accommodate reasonable requests. Bookings can be made from **Monday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2010**. Written confirmation will be sent out on **Monday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2010** – this allows a two week 'booking window' either side of half term.

### Football Tournament

Congratulations to both football teams who took part in the Wiltshire County Finals for the Under-11s 7-a-side Schools Football Cup. We are very proud to report that the boys' team performed splendidly throughout the day, and won their cup, competing against 9 teams from across the county.

Members of the team were:

**see paper copy for full details**

Congratulations also to the girls, who came 5th overall in their competition, having lost only one match, by one goal, during the day.

The girls' team comprised:

**see paper copy for full details**

Both teams were congratulated on their behaviour and sportsmanship, and everyone remained positive and enthusiastic on a bitterly cold day (Mrs Bale). I sincerely thank Mrs Bale and Mr Hamilton for organising, coaching and encouraging all the children taking part – without staff input such events would not be possible.

### After school languages club

Miss Worrall will be offering an after school languages club in term 4. More details out shortly.

### School Development Plan (SDP)

Schools endeavour to do the best they can – we are no different. As part of our mechanisms we have a SDP which is published for staff and governors each year. Currently, our cycle runs from January to January each year. The plan sets out how we intend to keep standards up and improve identified areas. As part of my preferred approach we want to share the four main areas we think will help develop and improve our school. These are:

1. Vision and values      Revisiting what we believe is paramount in the school
2. Parental Engagement    Working in partnership to improve shared understanding
3. Community Cohesion    Exploring more links with groups locally, nationally and globally
4. Teaching and Learning   Looking at guided reading and assessment provision throughout the school

### Haiti – fund raising

All week, pupils from Y5 have been raising money for the disaster appeal by selling specially crafted badges and bookmarks. All money raised will be sent to the appeal to help in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake, several weeks ago. Congratulations and well done to **see paper copy for full details**

for their commitment and enterprise in putting others first. So far they have raised in excess of £60.

### Non-uniform Day

Following on from the fund raising by children, I was initially approached by two Year 4 boys about a whole school response to raise some money for the national appeal. Following Andrew Kettle's and Dan Orchiton's suggestion we will be holding a non-uniform day on **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2010** – with the additional theme of 'Hats for Haiti'. Children are welcomed, even encouraged, - the wackier the better. Alternatively, children are not expected to wear hats unless they choose to do so. As always, attending in non-uniform is purely voluntary but we are asking for a £1 donation for the appeal. Thank you in anticipation.