

The St Nicholas Post

8th September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you have all enjoyed the summer and the more relaxed routines that it brings. The children seemed to have really recharged their batteries and have come back to school ready to work hard. The start to term has been fabulous—the, not so new now, earlier school day is fully embedded. From the moment the children step into the classroom their day begins. I walk around the school, once off the gate at 8:45, and every child is engrossed in learning; a calm positive and productive vibe can be felt in every corridor and classroom, so we are looking forward to a great year ahead.

I will continue to be present every morning and afternoon on the gate, this is so that I am able to welcome the pupils and adults every morning but also so that I am available to help with any questions, worries or feedback, please do approach me, no matter how big or small the query. Alternatively, please do email me directly on headteacher@st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk, working in partnership with you is very important to us so that we make sure that every child is happy at school and is the very best they can be.

Please be sure to check important dates on the next page, please note a change in time for the harvest celebration.

Mrs Kennedy

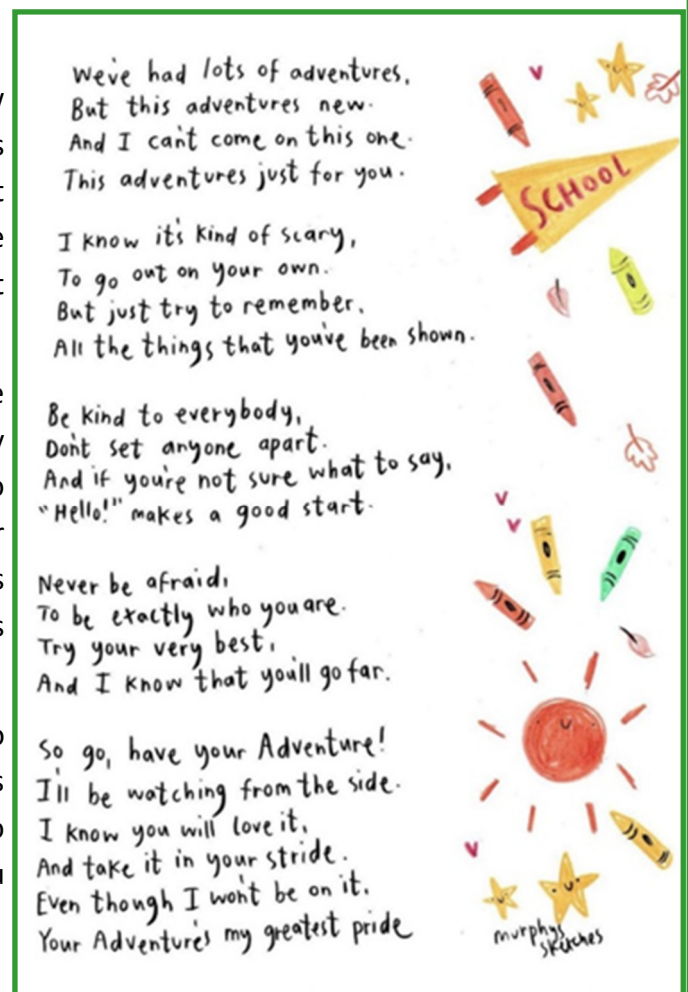
Our Newest Pupils!

We would like to extend a warm welcome to all of our new parents and children who will be joining our St Nicholas School Family. This week we have been visiting all the newest members of Buttercup Class on our home visits. We have loved meeting you all and can't wait to see you in school next week.

The Reception year is a very special one indeed. It marks the first formal year of education for your child and the Early Years Curriculum is specially designed to allow your child to develop a thirst for learning which will serve them for their entire life. Transitioning into the first year at school is important not only for your child, but also for you as parents and carers.

Please be assured that we will do everything that we can to ensure that the transition into school runs as smoothly as possible for everyone. Our door is always open so please do get in contact with Mrs Buckley our Early Years leader if you have any concerns or queries:

Hannah.buckley@st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk





As we start a new year, for some, thoughts of the next steps are already in mind! We take great pride at St Nicholas in knowing that we make sure our children are ready for their next steps. Our work on personal development as well as academic, means that children are courageous, resilient, kind, honest and hardworking young people. Schools will be holding open days for you to have a look at what's on offer, we strongly recommend you make the most of these days.

Key Dates for Kent Test and Secondary School Admission

Thursday 1st September: Secondary school applications open

Thursday 7th September: Pupils who have registered will be completing Kent Test assessments.

Wednesday 18th October: 11+ results will be emailed direct to parents (after 4.00pm)

Monday 31st October: Final day for secondary school applications

Apply online at:

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/education-and-children/schools/school-places/secondary-school-places>

If you have any queries regarding secondary school admissions or the 11+ (including the appeals process) please contact Mrs Kennedy or Mr Neal, who will be happy to provide further guidance.



Key dates—Terms 1 and 2	
11th Sept	Reception children start (1/2 days)
11th Sept	Meet the Teacher Year 2 (3:15pm in classroom)
12th Sept	Year 4 oral hygiene workshop (within school day)
13th Sept	Parent Reading Workshop for year R and 1 (2:30pm or 6pm main hall)
13th Sept	Meet the Teacher Year 3 (3:15pm in classroom)
14th Sept	Meet the Teacher Year 6 (3:15pm in classroom)
15th Sept	Meet the Teacher Year 1 (3:15pm in classroom)
18th Sept	Reception Children Full Time
18th Sept	Meet the Teacher Year 5 (3:15pm in classroom)
19th Sept	Meet the Teacher Year 4 (3:15pm in classroom)
19th Sept	Harvest Celebration at Church (2:30—3:00) Parents welcome.
21st Sept	Year 5 Dover castle trip
29th Sept	School photos
18th Oct	Parents Evening (1:30pm—6:30 pm)
19th Oct	Year 1 and year 6 astrodome experience
20th Oct	End of term 1
23rd-27th Oct	Half term

Meet the Teacher

At St Nicholas, we know that working in partnership with parents is fundamental to ensuring the best outcomes for children. We want you to feel part of your child's school journey and to build excellent relationships with all the adults in school, particularly their class teachers. We would like to invite you in, to have a small taster as to life in your child's class. You will get to chat with the teacher, see where they sit, their books, the things they are learning and importantly you will have a window into a part of their life that, years ago, was closed to parents. The very best part of it is that the children feel they are bringing you into their 'world'. Their pride and enthusiasm is always evident in their utter excitement. The dates are included in this letter on page 2.



Harvest Festival: Come and join us on Tuesday 19th September

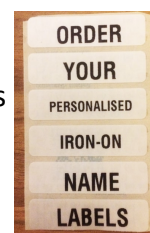
@2:30pm

Come and join the children and staff as we to give thanks to God for the crops, which have been safely harvested. We will be walking to the church for a 2:30am start. The children will offer up donations of food and will celebrate through prayer and song as well as hearing bible readings. We would love for you to join us!

Please can all donations of food arrive in school by Monday 18th September. The church donate these offerings to Thanet Foodbank. Thank you :)

Lost and Found!

Please can we ask that you double check that all uniform, lunch bags and bottles are clearly labelled with your child's name. It means that we are able to reunite misplaced items quickly. Please do ask at the school office if you need any school uniform—we have lots of donated items in excellent condition available. Using pre-loved items helps our environment and helps us to move away from a 'throw away' society. It's a win-win :)



Healthy choices!



A reminder that any snacks for break time should be healthy. Fruit, vegetables, cheese, houmous are all acceptable. Please see the link below for some good ideas. There should be no chocolate or crisps.

<https://www.nhs.uk/healthier-families/food-facts/healthier-snacks/>

Walking Bus

We are really keen to set up a walking bus, starting in Shuart Lane and coming across the bridge. We are looking for adults who would be happy to help us with this. Any offers would be really helpful from, even if you can only help one morning or every day! Please contact Mrs Howard in the school office if you are able to support in any way. We are hoping to trial this on Wednesdays to begin with.



St Nicholas at Wade Mini Golf Course

The new mini golf course is now a beautiful feature on the field and the children have begun using it. This is a great resource for the children who will gain enormously from the learning that it provides. They will develop skills in sharing and collaboration, they will show resilience and patience, they will add scores and compare them. Crucially they will have the opportunity to enjoy a sport that can turn into a life long hobby. Getting involved in a hobby now—especially connecting with the outside has positive outcomes for children's long term futures! Nothing we do at St Nicholas is on a whim, each action is carefully considered to make sure we are giving children the very best start in life. Here are some pictures and information



St Nicholas at Wade Mini Golf Course

Timetable

Day	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Break KS1	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 1	Year 1
Break KS2	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 4	Year 5
Lunch time	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6



School Lunch

A note to say that the cost of school **lunch has increased to £2.68**. School lunches remain **free to all children in reception, year 1 and year 2** and we encourage you to take this offer up. The lunches are delicious and there is also the offer of a baked potato if the main meal does not appeal! The roast is always a hit with empty plates all round! The kitchen are able to accommodate vegetarians and children with allergies.

Please follow [this link](#) to see the full menu.

Reading Squad

Do you have any time on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays to help with small reading groups? If you do and you want to make a difference please contact Mrs Buckley. Full training is given so the most important quality is enthusiasm and the willingness to learn :)



I have a question about...	Who to talk to:
Class activities, curriculum, lessons, homework	Your child's class teacher
School trips and payments	Mrs Howard office@st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk
Attendance and absence requests	To report an absence call: 01843 847253 To request approval for term- time absence complete the online form and return to: headteacher@st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk
School events and school calendar dates	Mrs Howard/Mrs Tremain (School office)
Special Educational Needs	Mr Neal (SENDCO) Tim.neal@st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk Mrs Moon (SEN Assistant) tracy.moon@st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk
Medical issues	Mr Neal: Long term illness/care plans Mrs Howard: Administering medication
After school Clubs	Mrs Howard office@st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk
The governing board	Mrs Taralee Kennedy

Home and school—A perfect partnership

1 Listen to them read

This is so important - even if it's a book they've already read, or you read some, they read some.

Share books together, make it enjoyable.

Model reading: It is so vital



2 Try to find out about their day

You'll be met with the inevitable 'nothing'.

Ask questions around it:

What sound did you do in phonics?

Who did you play with? What made you proud today? What did you learn in maths?



3 Don't push if they won't tell you

Try feeding them before you ask them. Wait a while and try a different question later. They may need some down time before they talk to you about their day.



Chose your time :)

4 Home work—if it's a battle, stop

It doesn't help anyone to have a screaming session regarding homework. If it is causing your child to be upset—stop and talk to the teacher about it. It can be hard enough fitting it into busy family life without tears—sometimes from both parties!



5 Get both sides of a story

If your child has come home upset, of course you want to know why. Ask the school for their view.

Children don't always tell it exactly how it was.

When we work together we will more likely have all the information.

6 Use our website

Our website has lots of resources for you to support your child. Like the calculation policy, reading suggestions and questions to support reading.

Videos, links and dates for you to attend workshops.

<https://www.st-nicholas-birchington.kent.sch.uk/>

7 Raise a concern early

Don't let it fester! We don't want you to have a niggle that could grow. Talk to us straight away, a 5 minute chat could save a lot of worry later. We want to resolve issues as much as you—but we need to know them.



8 Ask how you can help

We are always happy to pass work your way! Be specific, ask about a particular subject, how can I help with their spelling? What can I do to help their adding? What vocabulary do they need for this topic? What sounds are they finding hard...

9 Don't moan in front of the children

We are all allowed to have a moan—I know I did about my children's schools (only occasionally)

Don't let the children hear, they listen to everything and it shapes their view of school. We must be a team and be seen to be a team.



10 Remember...

We want the same as you! Happy, safe children who learn and work hard. A school where kindness is the default and our school family is united.

We may not always get it right, but we never, ever set out to get it wrong.