

The St Nicholas Post

3rd February 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

We head into the final week of term 3 and we are half way through the year. While that seems to have passed by so quickly, for the children in school, they have worked tirelessly hard, being the best they can be in all aspects, just as we would expect and I am sure they will welcome the rest. However, maintaining progress during the break is important so please do encourage the children to complete the reading and maths challenges that will come home at the end of term—working in partnership with you means that we achieve the best outcomes for the children.

Mrs Kennedy

Parent Questionnaire

Thank you for taking the time to complete the questionnaire sent home, the feedback you give means that we work together to be the best we can be! The results were really positive, we have a fabulous school community with dedicated and approachable staff, supportive parents who are involved and enjoy working with us, and children who work hard with a great attitude towards their learning and are kind to themselves and importantly others!

The results showed us that you are proud to send your children to St Nicholas and you (Without exception) said that we held high expectations for the children. This is really important to us; it is these high expectations that tell children that we care about them, we will insist they are the best they can be because this will give them the 'can do' attitude they will need as they move through their school career and beyond! Learning is hard—we know this but we make sure that the children have the resilience and tenacity they need to achieve great things.

We have listened to your views on clubs and we are working to provide a wider range that are available to all year groups including reception. We have also responded to requests for Maths to have the same emphasis as English and we are looking forward to seeing how this complements the current provision with the first challenge coming home next week.

Thank you so much for all your kind, supportive words. The children hearing positive things about their school is incredibly powerful in influencing their views of school and therefore their outcomes. Please always speak highly of the school and the teachers in front of the children—this doesn't mean you have to agree with everything we do—but speak to us first so we can get things right. We will always want the same as you: the children being safe, happy and successful. Just like any relationship the children must not see us 'bickering', we are a strong team and that provides safety and comfort.

Moon Zoom!

Year 2 continue to explore Space, Mrs Adams reported: 'We have been investigating air propelled rockets. On Tuesday, the children made rockets using a straw. They had to select a different material to make their rocket. We investigated if the material would make a difference to how far each rocket travelled. Today, we have been investigating if the size of a balloon would affect the distance a balloon rocket would travel.'



A mystery to solve in Year 3

Children came into class to discover that a crime scene had been taped off! The curious children looked at the clues to identify what on Earth had happened. An axe, some beans seeds and gold coins... I only hope the culprit is found!

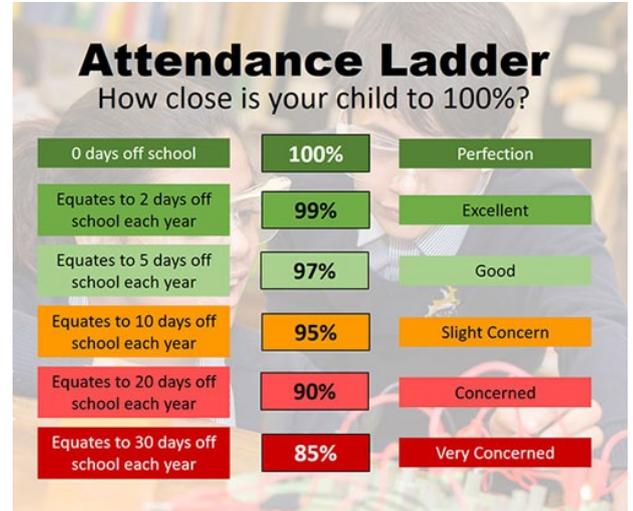


Attendance Matters

Good attendance means being in school at least 97% of the time. We are doing really well as a school at just below 96% - please help us to reach our target 97%.

The benefits for children with good attendance and punctuality include:

- Higher motivation to learn and attend school
- More confidence in themselves and their learning
- Greater opportunities to experience extra curricular opportunities available to them at school
- Positive self esteem that comes with knowing they have achieved their best at school
- The ability to make and maintain strong friendships



We want children to form good habits for their punctuality and attendance—this will encourage a strong work ethic, reliability and organisation, key skills they need for their futures. Inevitably there will be times when your child really is too unwell for school.

Holiday Requests

I have recently received a significant amount of requests for holidays during the school term. Please be aware that **no holidays in term time will be authorised** unless there are exceptional circumstances.

There are 175 days a year children are not in school—plenty of days to book appointments and holidays.

Quex Cross Country



East Kent Coaching are hosting a series of training sessions for primary school children (Years 3 to 6) during the February Half-Term holiday. These will be ideal for children planning to take part in the Cross Country race at Quex Park on 5th March. [Click here](#) for details.

You are the most important people in your child’s life—so a strong positive relationship between us is crucial in making sure children are happy and thrive at school. A few tips:

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 wont tell you

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



Choose 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.