

The St Nicholas Post

2nd December 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

With only two weeks to go until the end of term, the school is now brimming with festive cheer! The sound of sweet singing fills the corridors as the children prepare for their performances—I am so excited to see the infants perform ‘Whoops-a-Daisy Angel!’ and the juniors Carol Service. We are so lucky to have access to the church for these events; it is such a beautiful backdrop, and we are so grateful to have such strong links with the church. It truly is such a magical time of year, a time that you and the children gain precious memories of ‘firsts’. 17 years have passed since my eldest stood on the stage swaying out of time with a fallen halo of tinsel but these are the memories I cherish. Make the most of every moment :)

Mrs Kennedy

As Promised, below is the first instalment of adding detail to the tips in the poster sent home.

Tip 1: Listen to them read

Timing

Choosing the right time can make all the difference. Each child is unique and tapping into when they are in the right frame of mind to read is crucial. Lives are busy so finding a time that works for everyone can be tricky but worth persevering. Research has shown that 2pm-6pm is the best time for memory retention so non-fiction and academic reading. Fiction is best right before bed as it takes the mind away from day to day life.

Get help

Your child may like reading with a sibling, a grandparent, a family friend, the pet! Children will often respond really well to reading with familiar adults and in fact like impressing them with their reading prowess. Try a Facetime call to a relative, or record a video to send.

Model

Be a reader, read books, magazines, papers, comics, anything. You are the biggest influence in your child's life and seeing you read or reading with them goes a very long way in showing them how important reading is.

Share reading

Reading together can engage children in reading, especially as they are developing fluency. Learning to read is hard work, having someone pick up half the load allows children to enjoy the break to simply engage with the story and then go back to it—take turns for each page or paragraph.

Mix it up

Don't always go for the most challenging, having a familiar easier read is really good, so vary difficulty. Try a range of books, non fiction can be really engaging especially if it is something they have an interest in.

Use the Library

A visit to the library is a free fun activity. Children love the vast array of books on offer and the sense of being in a special reading place. Did you know that the library are running a mini winter reading challenge? Follow this link to find out more: <https://summerreadingchallenge.org.uk/>

Carol Service, Monday 12th December



We are really pleased to be gathering back at the church this year for the Carol Service, there really is no better back drop to this moving service. There is a collection of carols woven through the story of the birth of Christ, culminating in St Nicholas at Wade's very own version of 'The 12 days of St Nicholas'.

Please arrive for 5:30pm for a 6:00pm start. There will be hot drinks and Christmas treats on offer from the PTFA.

Football Superstars!

A huge Well done to Ollie Hill and Jackson Aldridge for great sporting achievements. Both Boys belong to TSC and have been working really hard on their footballing skills.

Ollie has been able to showcase his talents most recently versus Gillingham, Chelsea, Crystal Palace and Southend and has been invited to play for Gillingham.

Jackson has been playing for Gillingham FC Advanced Academy and was recently scouted at a game and has now been invited in to train with AFC Wimbledon.

Well done—what a great achievement boys! We are very proud of you.



St Nicholas Day Celebration at Canterbury Cathedral: Reminder



Mr Guy and Mrs Palmer will be taking the school choir to sing at Canterbury Cathedral on Sunday 4th December. This is to Celebrate our school's namesake, St Nicholas; the service starts at 5:30pm. All are welcome to this, it is a wonderful service where schools come together to sing and celebrate! The setting of the Cathedral provides a simply stunning backdrop and a unique opportunity for the children in which to perform.

If you can't make it in person you can watch the service as it is streamed live:

<https://www.canterbury-cathedral.org/worship/our-services/online-worship/>

Crib and Christingle service at St Nicholas at Wade Church

This service will be held on Christmas eve at 4pm for any one wishing to attend.



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 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.