

City of Rochester School Newsletter



Autumn 2 2021 – Academic Year 2021-2022

Introduction from the Head

It has been a very busy and exciting term with pupils in the secondary school sitting our first set of public exams in English and Maths. Pupils have behaved impeccably and really have risen to the challenge. I look forward to sharing the results with parents in due course.

We have started our fund-raising activities this term to raise money to help towards the refurbishment of our playground. Staff and parents have been active and we have had a number of donations that we will raffle off to support our cause. Thanks to everyone who has been helpful.

This term has certainly been another challenging one with a new strain of COVID beginning to emerge. We continue to operate as safely as possible in school and please be assured of our commitment to ensure school is a place of safety for our school community.

We wish you all a pleasant and restful Christmas break and I hope you have an opportunity to spend time safely with your loved ones. We look forward to welcoming our pupils back to school on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

Alicja Emmett
Headteacher

Community Engagement:

Chosen Charity. Pupils have designed a staff quiz and the money for this will be saved and eventually donated to the local mental health charity that pupils have chosen to support this year (Medway Area Rethink Support Group (MARS)). www.rethink.org. So far, the pupils have raised over £50 and Kian did a fantastic job collecting all the donations.



Coffee Mornings: We are in the process of organising face to face parent/carer and community coffee mornings at St Francis Church in Strood – COVID depending of course. This is an exciting opportunity for you to come to share, gain valuable knowledge and insights from other parents and have a chat in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. There will be a small charge for tea, coffee, and cakes. This will cover costs and raise money for the school charity fund.

Key Dates

Half Term:
25/10/21-
05/11/21

Term 2:
08/11/21-
15/12/21

Christmas Break:
16/12/21-
04/01/22

Term 3:
05/01/22-
11/02/22

Term 4:
21/02/22-
31/03/22

Term 5:
19/04/22-
27/05/22

Bank Holidays:
27/12/21
28/12/21
03/01/22
15/04/22
18/04/22

Community Engagement:

We will be running fundraising events as well and would love you to contribute ideas for this to be a success. Young children are welcome to come along with you as there is a space for them to play. Please let us know if you would be interested in coming along. Dates are yet to be confirmed and further information will be sent out nearer the time. Thank you to all local businesses and organisations who have donated items for the school. These businesses include: B&Q, Tesco's Gillingham, Cumin Club, Love Lane Photography, Hollywood Bowl Rochester, Greene King Ash Tree lane and one of our parents, Maria Smith.

Parental Reminders:

Attendance. A large number of our pupils have achieved 100% attendance this term. Well done to them and I thank those parents who have ensured their child attends school regularly. Unfortunately, this is not the case for all pupils. Pupil attendance should be a minimum of 97% and this means that they should not be absent from school for more than 6 days across a whole school year. We do appreciate that COVID has had an impact this term.

Vaccinations. Unfortunately, the COVID Vaccination Programme at school was postponed by the Local Immunisations Team and they have not yet given us another date. If your child is eligible and you want them to be vaccinated, we do recommend that you have this done locally.

All pupils are being sent home with a box of lateral flow testing kits at the end of term. Please do test regularly over the Christmas period and if you or your child starts to show symptoms (High fever, Sore throat, Lack of taste/smell) then please make a booking for a PCR test.

Curriculum Highlights:

We have had a number of pupils – Kian, Ollie and Theo who have all received awards for their reading accomplishments this term. Congratulations to these pupils. When Kian received his award, he took the opportunity to make a speech to the rest of his class and thanked his family and friends who made it all possible! It was a very moving and funny moment.



School Council has taken place and pupils have made some excellent contributions to school life. Pupils have suggested.

- To take part in a Therapy Day to enable pupils to self-regulate at home
- To have a tuck-shop
- To organise a bring and buy sale
- More fruit at breakfast club
- Theo would like more balloons in his classroom!
- Extend lunch-time and break-time clubs

The experiential curriculum this term has been swimming. Those pupils who chose to engage have thoroughly enjoyed their lessons and for some pupils it is their first time learning to swim. Fantastic!

During Term 2 pupils from Neptune, Sun, Jupiter, Earth, Mercury and Pluto class have been enjoying weekly swimming lessons at Cascades Leisure Centre in Gravesend. Pupils have been taught by a qualified instructor, Vicky, who has helped to develop the children's confidence in the water.

Pupils have enjoyed learning new skills each week including water safety, practising different types of strokes, learning to swim with support and unaided, diving through objects underwater and confidently jumping into the pool independently.

For those pupils who were reluctant to get in the water, the opportunity was provided for them to sit and watch on the side to familiarise themselves with the routine and setting.



Bluewater Shopping Trip:

Some of our secondary students were able to take part in a trip to Bluewater Shopping Centre. This enabled the students to plan, budget and navigate a busy shopping centre to buy a Christmas gift for a loved one. The students were given a budget and were responsible for choosing the gift, managing their money as well as checking change and obtaining receipts. They chose where they would like to eat for lunch and some students even chose to play crazy golf!

Equality & Diversity Calendar:

Anti-Bullying Week was brought together with Children in Need. Staff and pupils wore odds socks to celebrate our differences, one of our core values in school. The theme for the week was 'One Kind Word' and staff spoke to pupils about how kindness is more important today than it has ever been. The isolation of the last year has underlined how little acts of consideration can break down barriers and brighten the lives of the people around us. In the hall there was a display of each student and staff member. Everyone added kind words or comments, filling the display with positivity. Everyone got to keep their poster afterwards.



Christmas Celebrations:

Pupils decorated our donated Christmas trees with Christmas messages and wishes for 2022.



On **Christmas Jumper Day** pupils and staff joined in wearing their best, or worst, jumpers and enjoyed a fun day that included a delicious Christmas dinner with classmates. Pupils learnt about Save The Children so that they understood where their donations were going. We raised a grand total of £84.00!!!



Christmas Celebrations:

Our school concert took place (COVID safely) where we had performances from all classes. Highlights included an original jazz-style piano piece by Lenny, the first ever performance from the Signing Choir and Mercury Class signing 'We Will Rock You'. It was exciting to hear performances from our staff members as well as our pupils, everyone enjoyed the afternoon and the opportunity to sing along!



We will be releasing a video of our concert that will shortly be available on our website.....Watch this space!

Christmas Card Designs: -

The students had the opportunity to design and sell their own Christmas cards to sell to family & friends in aid of the Magic charity. These designs were also used for this year's School Christmas Card



Other News:

Staff: - This term we sadly say farewell to the following staff members – Jeni Boyns, Tim Force, Katie West, Sarah Deacon and Tony Heathfield. We wish them all the best in the next stages of their careers.

We would also like to welcome the following new staff members Becky Clark, Michael Flynn and Debbie Sibbons.

Clarks: - Clark's shoe shop have contacted us with their newsletter which includes details for those children who may benefit from a quieter environment, we offer 'quiet time' appointments, just ring the store to book! Please see the attached leaflet for more details.