

6<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Dear Mums, Dads and Carers,

## **Welcome back to Christ the Sower at the beginning of a new term!**

I trust you have made the best of the holidays, the weather, and the time you have had together as families. It has been super to see all the children back with us today, ready for learning! A very *special welcome* to those many families who are joining us for the very first time. We would love to get to know you better over the next few days and weeks. If you have not yet had a tour of the school, please ask at the office and we will make arrangements for one of us to show you round. If you are a parent who has been involved in the school for some time, we would appreciate you **noticing new parents**, introducing yourself and **seeing how you can make them feel more at home here**.

**This morning we met as a school and the children took their class banners back to their classes as they start their 2-week study of the Christian value that belongs to their new class. Do ask your children what they learn about this!**

There are a number of **important things that are NEW or DIFFERENT this term**, so this letter contains a lot of information and I would be grateful if you read it carefully.

**New teaching/TA staff** in the Middle Learning Phase:

- **Mrs Summerfield** is teaching in Pumpkin class as a job share with Mrs Etherton.
- **Mrs Worster** has joined us as a member of the one-to-one support team in Clover Class.
- **Mrs Nicholls** has re-joined us after a 5 year absence (!) and is the PPA Cover Supervisor, taking over parts of Mrs Birkett's old role.

**The Kitchen is opening!** Many thanks to you all for your patience, but over the holidays we appointed **Mrs Lisa Lowther** as our school chef. She begins work on Monday 12<sup>th</sup> September and will spend the next

6 weeks ordering, getting utensils, planning menus, talking to children, planning taster evenings (watch out for those!). It is a big ask – we have to get the kitchen up and running from scratch and vastly improve the take up of school meals. **WE WILL OPEN ON TUESDAY NOVEMBER 1<sup>ST</sup> 2016. You will definitely hear more about this!**

**“Welcome to Year Group” Meetings.** Next Thursday evening (15<sup>th</sup> September) we are having “Welcome to Year Group” meetings for parents with children in Foundation to Year 5. These are your opportunity to find out how your child's class operates, when the PE days are, how homework will operate in your child's class, how you can get involved in class, and an introduction to all the wonderful events, trips and learning that will take place over the year:

- **Year 1 & Foundation:** talks start at 4.30 pm
- **Year 2 & Year 3:** talks start at 5.00 pm
- **Year 4 & Year 5:** talks start at 5.30 pm

There will be a presentation (15-20 minutes) in each year group, and then you will be free to look around the year group and ask questions of the staff there. Year 6 will have their *Welcome to Year Group* meeting on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September at 6 pm, combined with the Quinta meeting (see below), so that parents do not have to come out twice.

**Parents of Y6 children going to Quinta.** There will be a FINAL briefing for parents of children going to Quinta Hall at 6 p.m. on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> September. However, it is ALSO the meeting where we will tell you all about SATs in July, about spelling, and about the maths and English curriculum for Y6. So even if your child is not going to Quinta later in the month, it is VITAL that you attend.

## Admin Information from the Office Team

Nadiya Hussein Live Webcast Event. Tomorrow I will write to you with information on an exciting event at Christ the Sower on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. Nadiya Hussein, winner of last year's BBC Bake-Off, will be interviewed by CBBC presenter Katie Thistleton at school as part of a live streamed webcast to thousands of children around the UK. Please watch for tomorrow's letter because it requires you to take action and give consent for your child to be involved.

Parent Council. We'll contact you shortly also about being involved in the school with the Parent Council. This is a group of parents who provide advice and suggestions directly to the school leadership. We like to have two representatives from every class in the school, and trust that this year we will get that! I know that there was a lot of interest expressed at the Foundation Open Day last term, so I hope that all of those who expressed interest will come forward. Our first meeting is on Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30 pm.

Friends Together (PTA). Friends Together is the school's Parent Teacher Association, responsible for raising thousands of pounds every year for your children. We are holding the Annual General Meeting on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> September, and all parents are invited. We meet at 3.30 pm in the staffroom. We will provide crèche support.

**Syrian Refugee Support. A number of us at Christ the Sower have been involved in supporting Syrian refugees over the past two years (many will remember the knitted squares you made for the blankets we were putting together for the winter). We have a great opportunity to contribute to the British Red Cross' effort to feed and house those coming to Milton Keynes. We have agreed with the Red Cross that we as a school would raise the money to pay the initial food costs for a single family. This requires us to raise between £900 and £1000 by January 1<sup>st</sup> 2017. The fund stands at £250, but if anyone wants to contribute, please talk to myself or the office staff.**

- Cash in school. Please make sure that any cash you send in, whether for lunches, trips, uniforms or anything else, is in a sealed envelope with your child's name on it, and the purpose for which it is being sent (trip, lunch, uniform, etc). **NO CASH will be received either in class or at the office, UNLESS IN NAMED, SEALED ENVELOPES.**
- Holidays in term time. Thank you for taking seriously the school's position on term-time holidays. We don't want to implement the fixed penalty available to us should a family take more than 5 days of holiday during term time, but it helps us if you write fully the reasons you wish to take a child out of school. Emergencies and very special family occasions will be considered, but holidays, in general, will not.
- Bike Permits. Children cycling to school must reapply each year for a bike permit. These can be got from the office. Alternatively, you can simply hand your old (green) one in and get a new (orange) one. If you still have a blue one, you are two years out of date!!!
- Contact Details. If you changed your phone number recently, can you please let us know? It is frustrating trying to find you in an emergency and finding the phone is no longer in use.
- Collecting children from school. If you need to ask a member of your family or a friend to pick up your child after school at 3.15 or from a club later in the evening, you **MUST DO** two things:
  1. Phone the office before 3 p.m. and let us know.
  2. Ensure that whoever is picking them up has a form of ID on them *if they are somebody with whom we are not familiar.*

Yours, with gratitude and encouragement for a fruitful year of cooperation,



Huw Humphreys  
Headteacher