

From Mr Spens:

It has been fantastic to welcome back all of the children after the summer break and particularly exciting to welcome our brand new Reception children to St Helen's. They joined us on Tuesday and have already made a great start, settling in really well to school life. We also welcome five other new children, who have joined us in different classes across the school. Mr Leeming and Miss Hurd joined us in Year 6 and Year 3 and it has been great to get to know them during our INSET days and over the first week too.

As ever, the children have come back ready and raring to go and as I've dropped into classrooms across the school, I've seen that they've not wasted any time in getting started with their learning. A new school year is always full of expectation and we are all looking forward to seeing the children grow and learn together and we are sure they will make the most of all of the different opportunities which will come their way.

The children have come back to school looking incredibly smart in their uniform and I'd like to pass on my thanks to parents for their support in this.

Over the summer, you may have noticed that we have had some significant building work on the site. The swimming pool and changing rooms have now been demolished. We have a little more fundraising to go before we can build the MUGA and we will be letting you know over the next few weeks how you can get involved in this. You will remember that Western Power were also doing some work on the site over the summer and the power lines which ran across the field and playground have now been buried underground and the telegraph poles have been removed.

Have a great weekend!

School Camp – next week!

Our Year 6s are departing on the annual school camp to the Forest of Dean on Monday. They will be doing all sorts of exciting activities while they are away from canoeing to orienteering, to caving. We all hope that they have a really fantastic time away as a class! Technology permitting, we'll be sharing photos and updates from the trip on twitter. Twitter users can follow us @sthelenspri, or you can visit www.twitter.com/sthelenspri.



Learning and Life Skills launched at St Helen's – Name our owl!

This term sees the launch of 'Learning and Life Skills' at St Helen's and over the summer each classroom was invaded by an owl who made a home on a classroom display. The owl is our mascot for the new 'Learning and Life Skills' programme that we are adopting to explicitly teach important life skills such as team working, independence, learning skills, speaking and listening and more. We'll talk more about this to parents at our 'Back to School' evening on 20th September.



Today, we're launching a competition to name the owl who'll be helping us learn these important skills for life. At the end of the newsletter is a slip for children to complete and return; we're allowing each child to have one vote. Please send the entry slip back to school by next Friday, 16th September. The winner will win their own cuddly owl to take home.

Volunteers' Meeting

We're really grateful for all of the volunteers that we have in school. They carry out all sorts of different roles and support the learning of many children across the school. This year, Mr Spens will be leading a 'volunteers' briefing' on Friday 23rd September at 9.15am and all school volunteers are asked to come along. If any volunteers are not able to make this date, please contact the school and we will arrange an extra session. The briefing will contain important information about volunteering at St Helen's as well as other important safeguarding up-dates.

Back to school night

There's a lot of information to communicate at the beginning of the school year and so we would like to invite all parents and carers to our 'Back to school' evening on Tuesday 20th September at 6.15pm. We will be talking about some of our plans for the new academic year and then providing an opportunity for you to visit your child(ren)'s new classroom to have a look around and meet their teacher. Unfortunately we do not have space to allow children to attend with their parents. We will meet in the hall from 6:15-6:45pm and then teachers will be in classrooms from 6:45-7:15pm.

Meetings with Mr Chappell

Please do get in touch if you'd like to make an appointment to see Mr Chappell, our Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator. He would be pleased to meet with you to discuss any concerns about your child.

Friday Celebration Service

Our collective worship on Fridays (3pm to 3.20pm) is a celebration service when we award certificates to two children from each class who have really stood out for their amazing attitude to learning, their superb behaviour or anything else that they might have achieved. To try to make this time even more special, if your child is going to be awarded a certificate that week, we will invite you by text message to join in our celebration. We will text you on the Wednesday before the certificates are given out on the Friday. We'd ask you to keep it a secret, but if you are able to come and join us at 3pm to celebrate your child's achievement, then you would be most welcome.

INSET day reminder: Monday 26th September will be an INSET day and the school will be closed to the children.

School meals

We can confirm that the cost of a school meal will remain at £2 this year. Payment should be made in advance, by cash or cheque payable to 'South Gloucestershire Council', either daily, weekly or for the whole term. The children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will continue to receive free school meals. A reminder that parents of children who are in Year 3 will now need to pay for meals!

Changes to catering provision

You will be aware that Mr Spens has been working with a few governors to assess a number of different catering providers who were keen to provide school meals at St Helen's. Before the holidays we invited 'Eden' to come and present their school dinner offer to children and parents and their hot food, salad bar and sandwich options were very well received by children, staff and parents alike. We concluded a tender process in July and made the decision to move our catering provision to Eden (www.edenfoodservice.co.uk) during this academic year. We will write to you with more information about this over the next few weeks, but wanted to give you advanced notice of this change.

introducing... **The Greens**



Values – thankfulness

This term, we will be thinking about the value of 'thankfulness' in our collective worship, in class assemblies and around the school. Coming home tonight with this newsletter is an information sheet for families with more information about this value.

Harvest

Our harvest service will be on **Tuesday 20th September**. We would appreciate donations of non-perishable food items for the 'Loaves and Fishes Project' organised by The Community of the Sisters of the Church who distribute food to those in need in Bristol. Contributions of tins (in date please!) of tuna, meat, rice pudding, fruit, custard, baked beans, soup and vegetables, and also tea and coffee, would be most welcome. Donations can be sent into school any time until the 20th, when we will be taking the goods into church. Unfortunately, due to space restraints, we are unable to invite parents along to this service.



Congratulations to our certificate winners this week:



Year 1 – Emma and Charlie
Year 2 – Kyle and Poppy
Year 3 – Beatrix and Kenzie
Year 4 – Lily-Rose and Jamie
Year 5 – Evie and Peter H
Year 6 – Jake and Charlie



Dates for your diary

Monday 12th September – Year 6 school camp
Tuesday 20th September – Harvest service
Tuesday 20th September – ‘Back to School’ evening – 6.15pm
Friday 23rd September – Swimming lessons start for Year 6
Monday 26th September – INSET day 3
Monday 3rd October – PTA AGM, 7pm, The Ship at Alveston
Tuesday 11th October – School photographer (individual & family photos)
Friday 21st October – end of Term 1
Monday 31st October - start of Term 2

Term	Starts	Ends	2016/17 INSET DAYS
1	Monday 5 th September 2016	Friday 21 October 2016	Thursday 1 st and Friday 2 nd September 2016
2	Monday 31 October 2016	Friday 16 December 2016	Monday 26 th September 2016
3	Tuesday 3 January 2017	Friday 10 February 2017	Monday 20 th February 2017
4	Monday 20 February 2017	Friday 7 April 2017	
5	Monday 24 April 2017	Friday 26 May 2017	The date of the final INSET day is to be confirmed.
6	Monday 5 June 2017	Friday 21 July 2017	

Out of school achievements

- Alice H in Y3 achieved her 800 metres distance swimming award and then went on to achieve her 1000 metres too! She has also been awarded the swimming challenge Gold Award.

PTA – Annual General Meeting

The PTA are holding their AGM on Monday 3rd October at 7pm at The Ship, Alveston
Please do come along!

Name the Owl competition!

We'd like you to come up with a name for our school owl who is going to help us learn important learning and life skills over the next few years. Think of a great name and write it below. Bring the slip back to school before Friday 16th September for your chance to name our owl and win your own one for home!



Name: Class

I would like to name the owl: _____