



Tuesday 29 August 2023

Dear Parents/ Carers,

It's hard to believe that I am writing to you in the last week of the holidays – where has the summer gone? Whether you have travelled abroad, holidayed in the UK or enjoyed days out with the family (as I have), I do hope that everyone has had the opportunity to spend some quality time with their families.

As we approach the start of an exciting new year, I would like to take the opportunity to update you on a few developments that have occurred over the last five weeks at St Katherine's.

School Values

It is my pleasure to introduce you all to our new **School Value Characters**, who represent our key values that were chosen by the whole school community at the end of last year.



Raffi Respect



Rocco Resilience



Reggie Responsibility



Katia Community



Conner and Callie Compassion



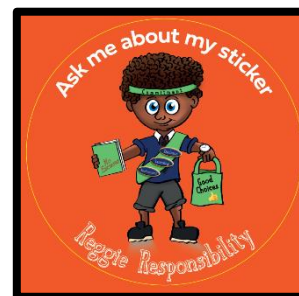
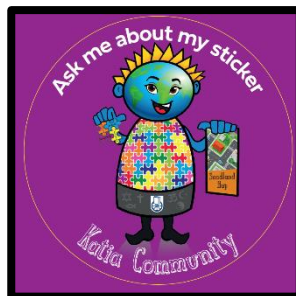
Ella Excellence

The children will quickly become familiar with the characters, as they will be participating in a number of activities and team challenges next week, in order to develop their understanding of each value and recognise their importance to our school.

The value characters have also been integrated into the school's new rewards and sanctions procedures, where children will be recognised when they demonstrate each value through stickers, weekly certificates and half termly Head Teacher value postcards. On occasions, where children's behaviour may fall below the expectations of the school, they will have the opportunity to reflect on our school values, which will help them to evaluate their actions and support them to move forward.

All of the new processes are designed to recognise positive behaviours in our children, and help them understand the importance of our values to the school community and wider world.

Over the holidays, changes have been made to the school environment to reflect our new values, with murals being updated in the main reception area, the hall and the indoor Reception provision. Please see some of the designs below, along with example school value stickers and a certificate:





Community Work

Throughout the holidays, I have been liaising with Mr Nichols (manager of the local Co-op store in Snodland) to strengthen links within the local community. I am pleased to say that **the store has already contributed £450 towards two new football kits** for our Year 6 girls' and boys' teams, which will be forming at the beginning of the year.



I am also in the process of discussing how Co-op can contribute to our community food bank and how St Katherine's can support our local store through choir performances, display work etc. Watch this space!

Premises Developments

A huge thank you to Mr Coombs and Mr Young (our premises team) for all of the work they have carried out over the summer holidays. This has included **creating a new meeting room for staff and parents**, which is situated by the main reception, **painting and renovating areas throughout the school** and overseeing **the installation of a new floor in the hall**, amongst many other jobs. They have worked tirelessly to ensure that the children return to an outstanding learning environment – thank you!

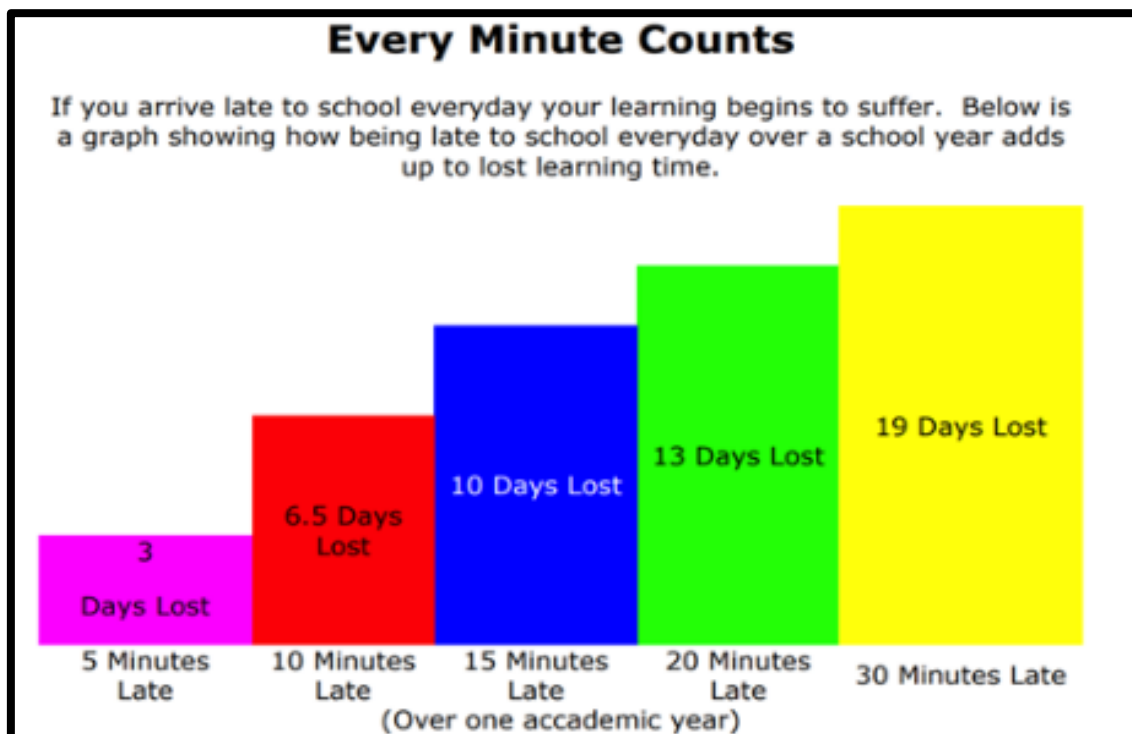
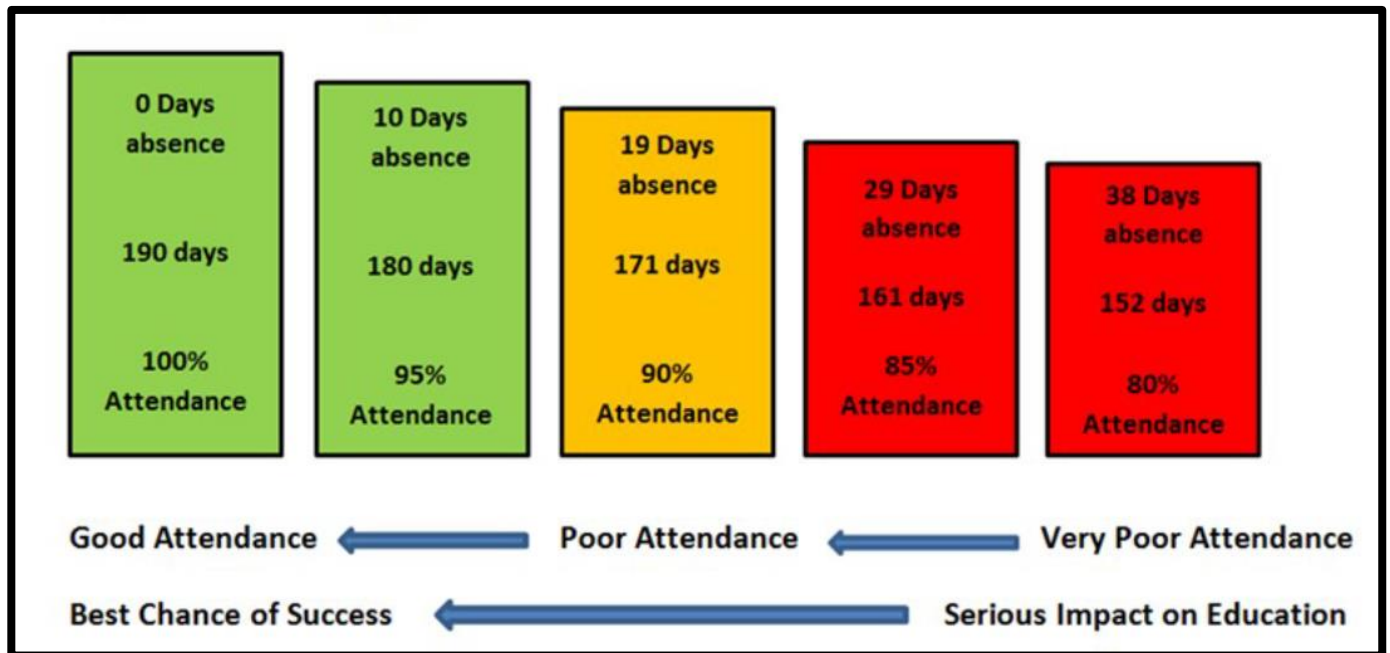


Meet the Teacher Presentations

The start of the new academic year brings much excitement, with teachers eager to meet their classes and children starting exciting learning journeys in their new year groups. We will also be organising 'Teaching and Learning' presentations during the first few weeks back, to give parents/carers the opportunity to meet with their child's teacher. During the meeting, teachers will share key information about the year and provide an opportunity for parents to ask any generic questions. If parents have specific questions relating to their own children e.g. queries about SEND, they should organise to meet with the teacher at a separate time. **Please note that the dates of the meetings will be sent to parents on Friday 1st September, after I have met with staff during our INSET day.**

Punctuality & Attendance

In order for children to make good progress in their learning, **it is vital that they maintain good attendance and arrive to school on time.** The tables below outline how poor attendance and punctuality results in lost learning for children. Please remember that every minute counts!



This year, to reward children for good attendance, individuals **who maintain a high level of attendance throughout the year will be drawn in a half termly raffle to win one of the following prizes, of their choice**, courtesy of Maidstone Leisure Centre:

- A family of four ticket to 'Swimming' and the 'Aqua Challenge Obstacle Course' (approximate value - £45). Children have to be aged 6+ and be able to swim 25 metres.
- A family of four ticket to 'Swimming – the Family Fun Pool' and the 'Soft Play Area' (approximate value - £30)
- A family of four ticket to the 'Sky Trail' & 'Dino Golf' (approximate value - £50). Please note that these activities are only open at weekends and school holidays from April to October.



Thank you to Mrs Still (manager of Maidstone Leisure Centre), for agreeing to provide the half termly raffle prizes on behalf of the school.

Parent Teacher Association

The PTA play a key role in giving something extra to the children of St Katherine's. They work in partnership with the school to raise funds, which contribute towards school development projects. Next year, **as well as providing funds to help develop the playgrounds, the PTA have also committed to helping the school broaden children's learning experiences**, in order to support their personal development. This includes **part funding a visit from the Zamble Dance and Drumming group**, who will bring the vibrancy of Ghana to St Katherine's, as part of Black History Month. They will also be **subsidising part of the cost for children's Virtual Reality experiences**, which will link to an aspect of the curriculum that they have studied. These contributions, amongst others, will clearly enhance children's learning experiences, whilst also ensuring that the cost of the activities are kept to a minimum for parents/ carers.

A reminder that the PTA are extremely keen to hear from parents, who would like to help support the school by joining the committee. To find out more please visit: <https://www.facebook.com/SKSSPTA/>



Reminders...

Change of INSET Dates

I wrote to parents at the beginning of the holidays to inform them of changes to this year's term dates. The INSET days that were originally scheduled to be on the 3rd & 4th June 2024 **have now been moved to Monday 22nd and Tuesday 23rd July, so the children will now finish the academic year on Friday 19th July.** Please refer to my previous letter for further information regarding the change of dates.

School uniform

Children can choose to wear summer or winter uniform up until the October half term.

After this point, children will switch to their winter uniform. Please be aware that if there is a significant change in the weather before half term, in the interest of the children, we may need to move to the winter uniform at an earlier point in the term.

Please note that **school uniform is a fundamental part of school life at St Katherine's.** I have high expectations that children should wear the correct uniform **at all times**, as this reflects the tone and ethos of our school. School uniform is one way in which we identify ourselves as a school community and it promotes a strong, cohesive identity, which supports high standards in all areas of school life. It also promotes harmony between different groups represented in the school, and it enhances security when off site.



In coming to St Katherine's, **parents agree to support our uniform policy**, which is summarised below:

WINTER UNIFORM:

- Grey skirt, grey pinafore dress and grey trousers
- Grey or white socks and grey tights
- Plain white shirt
- Navy blue jumper (preferably with the school logo)
- School tie (not required in Nursery)
- Black shoes



SUMMER UNIFORM:

- Grey skirt, grey pinafore dress, grey trousers or grey shorts
- Navy blue and white checked dress
- Grey or white socks and grey tights
- Plain white shirt
- Navy blue jumper with logo or without
- School tie (not required in Nursery)
- Black shoes



*Please note that children **are not permitted to wear trainers** as part of their school uniform.

PE & SPORT:

- Navy blue shorts
- T-shirt (colour of house – **red, green, yellow or blue**)
- Black plimsolls / Trainers
- Plain trainers for outside only and trim trail
- Swimming trunks/shorts or swimming costume (not bikini), swimming hats
- Navy blue tracksuit



*Children should **wear their PE kits into school on the days they have PE. Class PE days will be sent to parents on Friday 1st September.**

Uniform can be purchased by visiting the store at **Unit 7-8 Granada House, Lower Stone Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JR** or ordered via their website, whereby you will have the option for your order to be delivered to your home or to the school. For more information, please go to <https://pages-schoolwear.co.uk/Products/Index?schoold=64>

Please note that we also have our **Community Wardrobe** that has second hand school uniform available for free or for a donation.

Finally...

Congratulations

Mr Young, our caretaker, and his wife recently welcomed their new baby daughter into the world. Both mother and baby are doing extremely well and we look forward to seeing their new addition to the family very soon.



Good Luck

We wish Miss Enston the very best of luck as she completes 'The Big Half' marathon in London on Sunday. We will all be routing for you!



I look forward to seeing everyone return to school on **Monday 4th September** to begin their new and exciting learning journeys.

Kind regards

Mr Lang
Headteacher