



Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December 2023

Dear Parents/ Carers,

As we begin our Christmas holidays, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the school community for their continued support, throughout an action-packed term. Since the start of the year, the children have experienced a range of enriching opportunities, which have supported their academic and personal development. These have included visits from African dancers, wellbeing professionals, performing arts specialists and Dog Trust members. There have also been some memorable child-led events, such as our Year 5 Macmillan Coffee Mornings, the Year 6 Remembrance service, our Community Ambassador Harvest presentation and our Diversity Ambassador 'National Diabetes Day' assembly.

More recently, the children have been immersed in 'all things Christmas', and have participated in parent carol concerts, Christmas Church services, nativity plays and Christmas care home visits. We even had a festive performance from our choir, who sprinkled some Christmas spirit throughout St Katherine's, with their wonderful performances at the school gates this week.

My first term, as Headteacher of St Katherine's, has been incredibly rewarding and has passed by in the blink of an eye. It has been lovely to get to know all the children, staff and the wider school community over the past fourteen weeks and I am excited about the journey ahead.

Please take the opportunity to spend some quality time with your families over the holidays. Laugh a lot, play lots of games, lay in (if possible) and have a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! We all look forward to seeing the children refreshed, rejuvenated and raring to go on

**Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024!**

### Christmas Festivities

St Katherine's has been 'stepping into Christmas' over the last few weeks, and we have captured many of our festive events below:



### Christmas Fair

Thank you to our dedicated PTA members for organising an excellent Christmas Fair. It was an extremely busy event, which included a number of stalls, face painting, arts and crafts, present wrapping and, of course, the big man himself was busy meeting and greeting children throughout the day. I am delighted to say that **the event raised £1500 for the school!**



## EYFS Concert

Well done to our Nursery and Reception children for their amazing Christmas concert that took place last week. They sang their hearts out in front of parents and carers, who were beaming with pride and thoroughly enjoyed the performance. Thank you to all the staff that were involved in planning and preparing the children for the event.

## Pilgrims Way Care Centre Visit

Our Reception children also demonstrated the school values of compassion and community by visiting a local care home and performing Christmas songs this week. The residents enjoyed joining in with the children, dancing and even a few tears of happiness were shed. It was beautiful to see the impact the children had on our local community. Long may this continue!



## KS1 Production

Our talented Year 1 & 2 children performed their Christmas nativity play 'Prickly Hay' to parents and carers this week. It was a pleasure to watch the children perform so confidently and with such vigour and enjoyment. Parents and carers were clearly dazzled by the performances:

Thank you for allowing our children to shine ✨

Wonderful performance, I loved every moment. Well done Everyone & MERRY CHRISTMAS 🎄

Amazing concert. Thank you so much.

Well done on a fantastic christmas concert! I don't know if the children or parents smiled the most! We loved it. Thank you for all your hard work. It is so appreciated.



Thank you to all of the staff that contributed to such a wonderful performance.

## **CRIBS**

We were fortunate enough to be treated to a theatrical performance by CRIBS, who used songs, acting and puppetry to retell the story of Christmas. It was another opportunity for the children to experience learning through 'the arts', which helped them to reflect and consider the importance of the Christmas story, during this week's celebrations in school.



**Pupil Voice:** *I enjoyed the production as it was funny, especially the puppets. It helped me to understand the story of Christmas" (Bella – Year 6).*

## **Christmas Lunch**

Children had a merry old time during our Christmas lunch, as they sang a range of Christmas tunes, pulled crackers and generally had a fun and festive time.



## **St Katherine's Got Talent**

To end the term on a high, our KS2 children were invited to showcase their talents through the school's first ever talent show – and all participants shone brightly! We had performances from comedians, artists, jugglers, athletes, singers and magicians, who stepped up to the plate to entertain the masses. Congratulations to everyone that took part in the show. There are many acts that will stay long in the memory!



## The Wider Curriculum

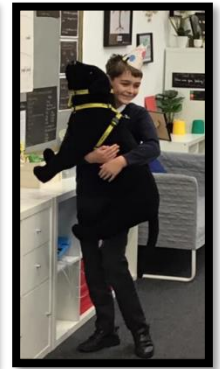
### The Dogs Trust

To develop children's awareness of how to stay safe around dogs, we were visited by a member of the Dog's Trust, who led workshops for children across the school. During the workshops, the children also learnt how to take good care of a dog and how to make our canine friends feel happy and safe. Phil, our instructor, sent the following email, following his visit:

*Thank you so much for inviting me to visit St Katherine's – I had a busy 4 days with you!*

*Please thank all those that looked after me this week.... and a special thank you to the children – I know they have learnt lots, as many have spoken to me the day after their workshop.*

*One child even told me how she used what she had learnt when she saw a dog without an owner!*



### Geography Field Work

Year 3 and Year 6 children recently participated in local Geography fieldwork, which involved them carrying out some resident surveys in relation to the following inquiry questions:

- Year 3: "What makes Snodland a good place to live?"
- Year 6: "How have housing developments impacted the local environment?"

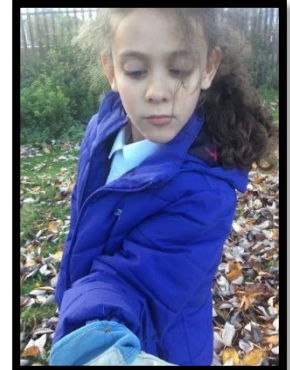
The general public were delighted to take part in the fieldwork and were extremely complimentary about the children's behaviour and attitudes to learning.



**Pupil Voice:** "My fieldwork results told me that most people think the new housing development has had a positive impact on the town of Snodland. I also got a certificate for good manners during the fieldwork!" (Dami – Year 6).

## Forest School

The children have had a great time expressing themselves at Forest School recently. They found interesting flora and made paint from natural resources, including berries. Others enjoyed a bug hunt and got up close and personal with nature by holding rather large spiders! They also played a game called "find my tree", which helped the children build trusting friendships and develop their confidence.



**Pupil Voice** "Look I can see fairy dust!" (Jessica – Year 1)

## Reading For Pleasure

### Reading Vending Machine Winners

Congratulations to **Rosanna in Year R, Jacob in Year 2, Jayden in Year 4 and Grace in Year 5**, who were drawn from the St Katherine's hat on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> December, to become the latest reading vending machine winners. They were each awarded a raffle ticket by their teacher for either consistently reading at home, making good progress at school or helping others to read. The next vending machine book raffle will take place in the new term. Good luck and keep reading throughout the holidays!

## Scholastic Book Fair

To continue to promote reading for enjoyment, we recently held a Scholastic Book Fair. Our Reading Ambassadors took responsibility for running the Book Fair each night, and it proved a great success as we raised nearly £600, which will be used to replenish books in classrooms.

Thank you to all the parents, carers and children that visited and bought a book or two. We hope that you can enjoy them over the Christmas holidays.



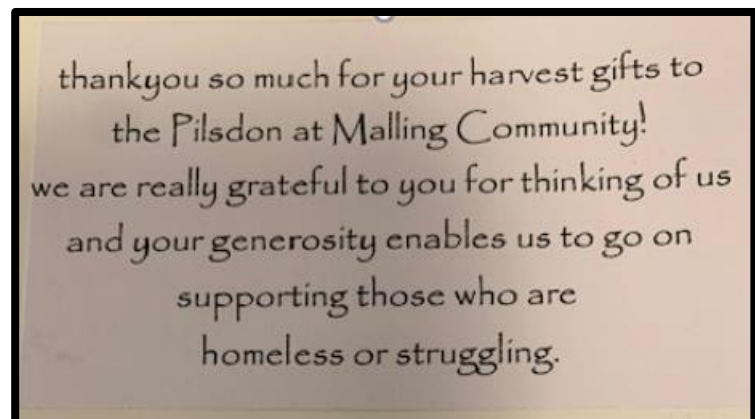
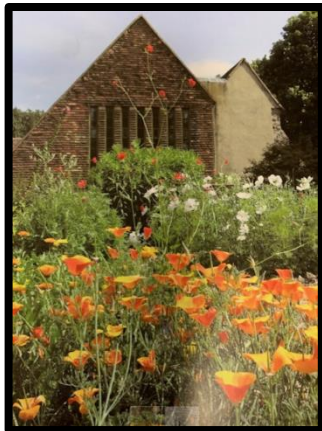
## Sports News

Congratulations to our Year 1 and Year 2 football team, who thoroughly enjoyed the experience of playing in a recent tournament, despite the snow and freezing cold weather! Everyone showed excellent teamwork and respect. We are all very proud of the team for coming 4<sup>th</sup> in the Tonbridge and Malling tournament, well done!



## Thank You

It was lovely to receive a 'Thank You' card this week from Pilsdon at Malling Community, for donating our harvest gifts to them. Thank you to all those that supported us with our Harvest Celebration, your gifts were gratefully received.



## Quiz Night

Thank you to all those that came to the recent St Katherine's Quiz Night, organised by the PTA – it was a resounding success and fun was had by all.



I would like to take this opportunity to thank the PTA for their continued efforts. Their fundraising has already helped contribute towards key events, such as the African dancer visit, Wellbeing Workshops and our CRIBS Christmas performance. They have also bought a new sound system for the hall and will be funding a new stage and repairs to our stage lights. Their fundraising this year has already contributed significantly to school improvements. Thank you!

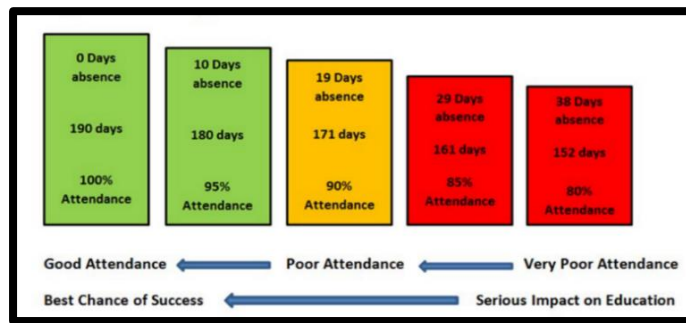
**Starfish Swimming**

Please note that Starfish Swimming is offering children to 'start the new year with a splash' with swimming lessons at St Katherine's Primary School and Nursery. Sessions are for all ages and abilities and include both group and private lessons. There are also parent & baby options.

For more information, please contact Jan on 07487 243340 or email [starfishswim@hotmail.com](mailto:starfishswim@hotmail.com).



**Attendance Matters!**



Year	Classes		
N	Acorn 99.5%		
R	Bramley 96%	Gala 98.2%	Pippin 94.4
1	Peach 95%	Pear 90%	
2	Cherry 94%	Quince 95%	
3	Almond 94%	Hazel 91%	Walnut 94%
4	Spruce 93%	Pine 90%	
5	Cedar 92%	Teak 96%	Mahogany 93%
6	Ash 91%	Oak 90%	

**School Target: 95%**  
**Whole School Attendance: 93.4%**

Please be reminded that the Department of Education dictates **attendance below 95% is poor and that below 90% is 'persistent absenteeism'**. The reason for this is clear; good attendance is vital for the success of pupils and their wellbeing. Our own school data, as well as that issued nationally, makes clear that **poor attendance results in poorer outcomes for children**.

### **The Law**

Children must attend school under the Education Act 1989 (revised). Poor attendance at school can result in one or more of the following:

- a Parenting Order
- an Education Supervision Order
- a School Attendance Order
- a fine (sometimes known as a 'penalty notice')

Please note that **persistent lateness is also detrimental to children's achievement and progress**.

**It is my duty as Headteacher to address poor attendance and the duty of my Governing Body to hold me accountable for it. St Katherine's has always had a firm stance on attendance matters and will continue to do so. Your cooperation in this matter is both a necessity and greatly appreciated.**

### **Uniform Reminders**

Our school uniform is important to us. Our children look smart in their uniform, which reflects the tone and ethos of our school. It is one way in which we identify ourselves as a school community and it promotes a strong, cohesive identity, which supports high standards and expectations in all areas of life.

I have noticed that towards the end of term some children were not wearing the correct school uniform, particularly in relation to **school ties**, **school shoes** and **plain silver or gold stud earrings**. I kindly ask that parents address this when the children return after the Christmas holidays.

- Please note that children will be asked to remove any earrings that are not plain silver or gold studs.
- If a child does not wear their school shoes into school, they must have a note from their parents/ carers explaining why.
- Letters will be sent to parents whose children do not wear the correct uniform into school.
- Parents of individuals who persistently do not wear the correct uniform into school, will be invited to meet with members of the Senior Leadership Team to discuss the reasons behind this.

If you have any difficulties in purchasing school uniform, please do not hesitate to contact the school in confidence to discuss how we can best support you.







## Key Dates

EVENT	DATE
End of Term	Friday 15 <sup>th</sup> December
INSET DAY	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> January
<b>Start of Term</b>	<b>Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> January</b>
Achievement Assembly	Thursday 4 <sup>th</sup> January
Parent Reading Workshop	Wednesday 10 <sup>th</sup> January - 2.30pm
Times tables Workshop	Thursday 17 <sup>th</sup> January - 2.30pm
Young Voices at the O2 Arena	Friday 19 <sup>th</sup> January
Happy Shoes Day	Friday 26 <sup>th</sup> January

Have a lovely Christmas break.

Mr. Lang  
Headteacher

