

Dear Parents and Carers,

A warm welcome back to the new term after our Easter break and with the recent good weather continuing it is good to see the children back and really enjoying themselves today. As is always the case in the new term the noise and excitement levels are up as the children rush to greet their friends again and catch up on all the news. As always there is a full term of learning and activities ahead of us and plenty to look forward to in the weeks and months ahead.

I am aware that the families across the country will have received their letters regarding admissions for Reception classes in September 2019 and central to us of course, is how the admissions policy has been applied here at St Gregory's and how this has affected the many applicants for our 30 places. I am extremely disappointed to note that not all of our siblings have been successful this time around. This is very upsetting but there is little we can do other than to follow the policy to the letter in terms of every applicant and this has been the case this time. Any parent / carer who has been unsuccessful initially does have the right to appeal and the school will do our best to assist. Of course there is just a chance that an applicant may turn down a place thus freeing someone on the waiting list. Appeal forms are available on line at the Diocesan website or via the school. Please let us know if you require a form or assistance as Mrs Rochford will be happy to help.

Looking back, it was with great sadness that we had to say goodbye to two of our pupils, brother and sister in R and Y1, but these were circumstances beyond anyone's control. We wish them every happiness after a difficult time. We were also sorry to see Miss Elham and Arsha leave for Canada and a new life across the Atlantic. Miss Elham was a very popular and hardworking member of staff, ever cheerful and she leaves with our very best wishes. We hope that the family settle well and enjoy their new adventure together. As one door closes another opens as they say and we today welcomed another little boy into Reception and with a place available still available in YR and technically another freed up in Y1, we may have some other new arrivals before too long. Please let the school secretary know if there is anyone interested and has a child eligible for YR or Y1.

Y6 as ever, will be the centre of attention in this first part of the term as the final weeks hurtle by to SATS week itself WB May 13th. It has been a pleasure to work alongside this very pleasant and talented group of children and watch them as they have grown in confidence and they have a growing determination to do their very best and no one can ask for more. We will approach everything in the usual way and I can say with certainty that the week itself will fly past and that the children will be supported and encouraged throughout. It is not the be all and end all, though it is a very important milestone and we can make the experience positive and then look forward to all of the other things that are planned across the this, their final term here at St Gregory's - what a miss they will be but a new chapter awaits and they will be well

prepared. Thanks also to parents and carers for their cooperation across Y6 - it has been a very good team approach.

Recruitment is still an ongoing task for the governors with key meetings scheduled for later this and early next month as we look to appoint a permanent KS2 teacher and we are also trying to attract a specialist Classroom Assistant for a specific post. We would hope to see progress on both fronts as the term moves forward.

Some of the key dates for events across the coming weeks are set out below for your attention:

(Please note that there will be at least two Masses held in school this term and these will be added to the schedule as soon as we have confirmation from Father Weymes)

Looking ahead then there are a number of dates that you will want to make a note of:

- Week Beginning April 23rd: Catch Up Themed Week across the school - each class following their own topic across the week
- Monday May 6th - May Day Bank Holiday - school will be closed
- Week Beginning Monday May 13th: Y6 SATS week
- Wednesday May 15th: FGB meeting: Budget Setting 2018/19
- Thursday May 23rd - Themed Day
- *Friday May 24th: School closed for pupils / Staff CPD
- *Half Term Week: Monday May 27 - Friday 31st
- *Monday June 3rd: School closed for pupils / Staff CPD

*Note: This has been organised to provide an opportunity for those parents / carers who may want to take a holiday at this time. School is closed from Thursday evening May 23 and reopens on Tuesday June 4th - a break of 11 days including weekends. All holiday requests in term time have to be refused unless the exceptional circumstances criteria are clearly met.

- Saturday June 8th: 10am: First Communions
- Wednesday June 12th - New Reception Induction Afternoon 1
- Wednesday June 19th - New Reception Induction Afternoon 2
- Friday June 21st: Outdoor Learning Themed Day

- Monday 24th to Wednesday 26th June: Y6 Trip to Berwick / Edinburgh
- Wednesday June 26th - Reception Induction Afternoon 3
- Wednesday July 3rd: FGB Meeting 4pm
- Thursday July 4th: Admissions Appeals Day
- Thursday July 5th - Y6 Leavers Mass at St James, Hebburn 10 am
- Week Beginning Monday July 8th - Open Evenings Week (Individual Appointments nearer the date - please note these will need to be adhered unless there are exceptional circumstances. Thank you for your cooperation)
- Thursday 11th and Friday 12th July - Y6 Transition Days (Pupils make their own way to their secondary schools each day)
- Tuesday July 16th - SAPA Sports and Fun Day from 09.15
- Wednesday July 17th - Reserve Sports Day (in case of inclement weather)
- Thursday July 18th - End of term Mass and Leaver's Assembly - times to be confirmed
- Friday July 19th - Reserve Leaver's Assembly slot
- Friday July 19th - School breaks up for the Summer Holidays.

There will be further additions to be made as we settle into the term with dates to be set for the Y6 production of Macbeth and the usual trips and visits that take place later in June and July. We will look to keep in touch via newsletter and the website, the latter being very well populated with events from the Spring Term at the moment but there will be plenty of activities and enjoyment to be shared as we move through the summer.

I look forward to seeing you as the term progresses.

Best Wishes.

Yours Sincerely,

K J Smithson.

Head Teacher.

**Mrs Rochford has asked me to remind parents / carers who pay milk money termly (£9.10) that this is now due as the order has been placed.