



Wednesday, 10th January 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

A very happy New Year to you all! I would firstly like to take this opportunity to thank the many pupils, parents and carers that gave gifts and cards to the staff at the end of last term. They were all very much appreciated, particularly the lovely messages in cards. I do hope that you have had an enjoyable break spent with family and friends; I can see that your children have rested well over the holidays and have returned to school with a renewed vigour to learn and achieve.

The Michaelmas term saw each year group throughout the Primary Phase visit some rather special locations, each one supplementing their academic studies. Thank you to our wonderful parents and carers who have attended these trips and provided invaluable support; these visits would not be possible without your assistance.

Year 1 began the academic year with a Science trip to Cuerden Valley Park, which even included a Teddy Bears' Picnic! Year 2 most recently took part in a very successful school exchange where they explored culture, religion and diversity. Our Reception classes have welcomed parents and carers in every Monday to their Story and Rhyme time, and I know how excited the pupils are when we have visitors! In Key Stage 2, Year 6 visited Quarry Bank Mill, examining the working conditions of children during the Victorian period; Year 5 observed and recreated the work of LS Lowry at The Lowry, Salford Quays; Year 4 handled artefacts at The Roman Museum in Ribchester and Year 3 studied Forces, Flight and Light at the Museum of Science and Industry. The subsequent write-ups clearly demonstrated the positive impact that each of these trips had on every pupil's learning. These trips undoubtedly enrich and enliven the curriculum that we study in the Primary Phase.

By the end of today, the pupils in Key Stage 2 will already have taken part in the annual Verse Speaking Competition. I look forward to reporting back to you about those pupils successful in winning the Year Group awards and the overall winner for the Key Stage 2 Award.

In the penultimate week of last term, Key Stage 2 visited the Octagon Theatre, Bolton, to watch A Christmas Carol. It was evident that the pupils, staff and adult helpers took great enjoyment and pleasure from viewing this version of such a classic tale. Those budding actors, actresses and public speakers amongst our pupils will certainly have enhanced their own skills and performances by observing these professionals close up. EYFS and Key Stage 1 also reported having a magical and unique experience at King George's Hall when immersing themselves in the tale of Beauty and the Beast.

The EYFS and Key Stage 1 Nativity 'The Bossy King' was met with rapture and applause. I am always taken aback by the confidence that exudes from some of our youngest pupils! There was a large turnout of families, and it was lovely to see everyone embrace togetherness at this special time of year. In addition to this, our Reception pupils through to Year 3 took part in a Christingle Service led by Mr Hargreaves (Head of Year 7), which explored an alternative, and memorable, breakdown of the significance of the orange during this celebratory event.

'Santa Sings the Blues' was splendid. As usual, it truly showcased the tremendous talent that we are nurturing here at QEGS. The acting and singing was confident and secure; undoubtedly the support and guidance from Mrs Mitchell ensured that this was always going to be the case. I was particularly pleased to hear how the children coped with minor technical issues; as always they took it all in their stride and carried on regardless! It is again heart-warming to have the tremendous support we have



from you, our parents and carers. This certainly helps us to continue to build and encourage our values of 'Standing Together' and 'Believing in Ourselves'.

In addition, the pupils have enjoyed numerous clubs and activities outside of curriculum time such as Chess, Space, Nature, Latin and Knitting Club. On the sporting front, many of our pupils have taken part in Netball and Cross-Country events. The Football Team is due to be announced this week. Mrs Bamber will also be holding the Upper Key Stage 2 Swimming Gala in March, so we look forward to welcoming you to this event.

Our Primary Phase Governor, Mr Clark, visited us on a number of occasions last term and commented on the confidence and politeness that our pupils always demonstrate. The pupils are great ambassadors for us, with each and every one of them making our school great. We are all exceptionally proud of the pupils' performances, both inside and out of the classroom, throughout the Primary Phase, and with all of their achievements throughout last term.

Lent Term

Looking forward to the term ahead, you will find attached a copy of the dates for the Lent Term. Please do take the time to record these in your diary. More detailed information for each event will follow in the form of a letter as required.

Our pupils continue to strive to be the best that they can be when approaching their academic studies: they are keen to do well and work hard, developing a lifelong love of learning. We look forward to meeting with you to discuss your child's/children's progress and attainment at the termly Primary Phase Parents' Evening on Tuesday, 20th and Wednesday, 21st March; should you wish to speak with your child's Form Teacher in the meantime, then please do not hesitate to make an appointment via Primary Reception at a mutually convenient time.

Winter Clothing

May I take this opportunity to remind parents and carers about external garments. The pupils should now be arriving to school each day dressed accordingly in appropriately warm clothing. Winter coats should be a plain and appropriate colour with any logos as small as possible. The pupils may also wear a regulation scarf, hat and gloves or they may be plain navy or black (woollen). Further details can be found on page 3 of the Pupil Planners. Such reminders are also important in order to maintain the high standards of our school in relation to uniform. Should your child need to wear a thermal top, please ensure that this is plain white. Just occasionally, when the weather is particularly bleak, the rule concerning footwear for safety reasons will be relaxed. The Head, Mrs Gammon, will make it clear on the website when such footwear is permissible. In addition to this, please note that school trousers, socks and tights should be plain grey.

Pupil Attendance

May I also take this opportunity to remind parents and carers about attendance. To ensure the smooth running of the Primary Phase and for the safety of all children, parents and carers are asked to inform school before 10.00am if their child is to be absent. Please telephone Primary Reception on 01254 686311 each day your child is absent. On return to school, the child should bring a signed note from their parent or carer explaining the cause of absence. For the welfare of all children, parents and carers should notify school immediately if their child is suffering from an infectious illness, or has been in contact with a serious infection.

Absence from school for any reason other than illness is not allowed without obtaining prior written permission from the Head. Failure to report a child's absence, or failing to seek permission for an absence, will result in an unauthorised absence being recorded.



I would also be grateful if you could ensure that your child/ children arrive at school promptly: school begins at 8.40am and all late absences are recorded. The school gate closes at 8.50am; after this point pupils will need to be dropped off by you at Main Reception, accessed via West Park Road. Mrs Tighe will then collect any late pupils at around 9.15am. Please be aware that this causes significant disruption to all parties. Children frequently arriving late to school find that it has a detrimental effect on their learning for the whole day and it is incredibly disturbing to all other children in the class. Parents and carers of pupils who are persistently late or absent can expect further formal contact from the school.

Appointments during the School Day

I am sure we all agree that attendance at school is key to pupils achieving the success we all want for them. Might I remind you, therefore, that all medical appointments for your child must be made outside school hours. Just occasionally, we recognise that appointments have to be made during the school day; in circumstances where missing school time is deemed unavoidable, an appointment card or letter will need to be shown. A copy of the appointment card or letter, with a request for absence should then be sent to the Head. This will ensure that our records show that we are making appropriate checks in order to maintain high standards of attendance. If permission is not sought from the Head, then the absence will be recorded as unauthorised. By organising appointments outside of school hours, you will avoid disrupting your child's education and causing a detrimental effect to their and others' learning.

I look forward to seeing you at the many events arranged for this term. I am confident that your child/ children will continue to thrive in the Primary Phase in the safe and stimulating environment that we provide. As always, if you do have queries or concerns about any aspect of your child's education, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us, usually via the Form Teacher in the first instance.

Thank you for your continued support.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs K O'Donoghue
Joint Head of Primary (Teaching and Learning)