

Dear Parents,

It is so brilliant to have the children back in school following such turbulent times and I have loved hearing all about how they spent the holidays. The enthusiasm and maturity with which they have begun the last leg of their Primary School journey has buoyed me and reminded me that I really am fortunate to do what I do. Hopefully the days of Home Learning are behind us and we will be able to move forward in a much more conventional manner ☺.

I would like to take this opportunity to explain a little of what your children should be able to expect from their final year of primary education. One certainty is that Year Six remains different to any other year group: in many ways it is the most challenging, but at the same time it is often the most rewarding. I am confident that in July 2022 your children will leave our school with many life-long memories to treasure.

I feel that it is only fair, since I find out so much about your children and their loved ones, that I tell you a little bit about me. I grew up in York and now live in Marske-By-The-Sea. In my free time I love to run, read and have adventures with my family.

My teaching career began at a small rural school with three years in Early Years, after which I enjoyed five years in Key Stage One, before two years in a mixed Y3 / 4 class. This is my seventh year as the Year 6 teacher at St Paulinus. I have held many additional responsibilities in school, and I am currently Curriculum Leader for PE and the school's SENDCo.

FAQs

Which adults will my child be working with? I am delighted to say that **Mrs Hopkinson** remains very much the other half of the Year 6 teaching team. I have been teamed with Mrs Hopkinson for most of my time at St Paulinus; she has a wealth of experience supporting this age group and knows your children very well from her time with them in Year 5. My out-of-class PPA and leadership time will be covered by **Mrs Milner**, who will deliver a range of subjects for which she is very much an expert. **Mrs Davidson** will also provide some additional support to our class twice a week.

What will my child be learning? As a school, we place the children's happiness and well-being at the heart of all we do. As we continue to tackle the impact of Covid-19, our curriculum will have a focus on PSHE as well as key skills in reading, writing and maths. Our RE Units are *Loving, Vocation & Commitment* and *Expectations* and we will be learning about The Vikings and subsequently South America through our topic work.

As part of group reading sessions, children will be heard reading several times a week and learn to develop their abilities to question, clarify, predict and summarise. Since they are unlikely to be heard regularly on a 1:1 basis with their self-selected 'home readers', it is vital that reading for pleasure continues outside of school.

I will set and assess spellings every week based on rules taken from the National Curriculum English Appendix 1. The first spelling sheet has been sent home and the children will be assessed on Fridays. Your children can post their spelling homework on Google Classroom by the day before their spelling quiz.

What are arrangements for PE? PE will take place on Mondays and Tuesdays. PE kits should be worn to school on those days. Please continue to ensure names are written in all items of clothing, which may be removed during the day (e.g. jumpers and cardigans). We recommend jogging bottoms and sweatshirts during the winter months as we try to do as much outdoor sport as possible.

What do I need to know about SATs? SATs quizzes are scheduled for the **week beginning 9th May 2022**. It is likely that I will offer a number of after-school 'booster' classes in the lead up

to SATs week. In some cases these sessions will focus specific areas of learning for a target group of children, but many sessions will be open to all. I will provide more details in the Spring Term of the booster classes and I will also try to offer a SATs information meeting for parents.

What do I need to know about the residential visit? I am delighted that a booking has been made for Peat Rigg Outdoor Centre for **March 7th - 11th 2022**. You will already have received some details about the cost and payment arrangements of the visit and we will pass on everything that you may want to know early in the Spring Term.

Is there a process of transition between primary school and secondary school?

Most, but not all, of our children move onto Sacred Heart or Laurence Jackson. Dates of Open Evenings or other opportunities to find out more will be shared with you as we receive them as will details of any transitional experiences, which they may be able to provide towards the end of the school year. You may wish to keep an eye on the websites and social media outlets for up-to-date details.

What homework will be set? In addition to the familiar expectations that children will read, practise spellings and revise their times tables, I provide children with a half-termly homework menu, which has already been given out. They will have a choice of activities to complete and a set period of time in which to do so. This approach to homework has proved popular with children and promotes independence and personal responsibility - which are vital skills for secondary school. I encourage children to complete as much as they can on their iPad / home computer and email it for feedback directly from myself. If the task cannot be completed this way, then often a photo can be taken and emailed to me instead. Please encourage children - as I do - to choose a variety of different types of tasks and to adopt a 'little-but-often' approach to completing their homework menu.

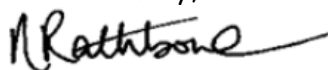
Although I avoid setting large-scale 'project' homework (as a parent myself, I realise that these tasks can result in untold stresses!), there is the opportunity - for those who wish - to produce one or two bigger pieces of homework. Children can easily complete their menu by doing a selection of small tasks. Please use your own judgement as to how to best support your children with their homework.

I will occasionally set additional Maths homework for children to complete on their ipads / home computers (provided they can access the internet, they should be able to complete these tasks on any device). If for any reason children are unable to access this outside of school, they will be able to use part of a playtime to complete it in school.

I value the relationships I establish with parents and invite you to contact me if you feel that there is anything which you think may help me to better understand your child and do my job as well as possible. Having already spent a cracking opening week with your children, I am excited and confident that we will enjoy a very successful year together.

Since we are not having the usual Welcome Meetings this year, please be assured that this newsletter contains all of the main points which would have been covered. However, if you have any queries, then don't hesitate to send in a note, email me, request a phone call or, for those of you who are able to, grab a word with me at the end of the school day.

Yours faithfully,



Nick Rathbone.

rathbone.n@stpaulinus.npcat.org.uk