



Join the faith and learning journey



Headteacher: Mrs H McGowan BSc (Hons) NPQH

6th September 2024

Dear families,

What a wonderful first week back! I love the summer but I've missed the joy of being with the children and having the great privilege of educating them. All the children are so energised and trying their best. Thank you for sending them back to school so smart and happy.

We are still riding high on the back of **amazing end of KS2 results** all of which were in line or above national average. This is testament not only to the outstanding Year 6 staff who did a fantastic job but also to the efforts of our whole teaching team. The knowledge and skills are built from the moment they enter nursery- I am very proud to work with a great staff.

As you already know, we are all about improving the whole person, not just the academics. This week saw the launch of our very own **St Antony's Five Wells University (SAFWU)**. Children will work towards credits in each of 5 areas: Mindful, Creative, Physical, Social and Charitable. Credits in all areas will build awards culminating in a graduation ceremony at the University of Central Lancashire! The excitement is building! Credits can be gained through clubs and pupil leadership roles in school- anything extra a child chooses to take part in to improve their self-development.

Attendance has been great this first week back! Thank you for supporting us in this important drive to improve our attendance. It kills me that our persistently absent numbers are below national average- being in school is the only way to make best progress and thrive socially. Governors are in agreement that with the new legislation in place that...

- NO HOLIDAYS will be authorised during term time and any sporadic absence without good reason will be deemed unauthorised.
- You must bring children before and back into school after local appointments and never let them miss school because of your own appointments. On site breakfast and tea time club mean we offer wraparound care from 8am until 6pm with the cheapest rates in the area by far.
- Random days off will be counted and questioned. Home visits will be made.

Uniform is gorgeous at the moment- I know you will help us to keep our standards high. Everyone needs a tie and black shoes. Missing ties or wrong jumpers (like PE hoodies mixed with normal uniform) will result in **yellow cards from Monday**. Presentation is key to good first impressions- this value needs to be taught.

After much discussion with the staff, we have decided that **NO EARRINGS** is the rule. No studs, no plastic holders, no nothing, just ears. The plastic holders were becoming a fuff and some had sticky out edges worse than earrings. This is in line with public liability insurance for games and play. Plasters are allowed until Friday 13th, from Monday 16th September, ears must be bare.

In line with presentation priorities, we want the **best presentation** in books. A fluent, flowing handwriting style is essential. We are inviting all **Year 3 and Year 4 parents to attend handwriting sessions** in class with their children first thing each Tuesday from 17th September. Please come along – the sessions will be for about 20 minutes and will help you to support your child and see how they are in the classroom!

Coffee mornings for parents will resume on Fridays for next week. Gather up as mums, dads or grandparents and come in and have a brew and a biscuit after you drop the children off. Come in to the Creative Hub through the main reception. It's a chance to meet other parents and have a catch up. Our school parent governors, Jo and Naomi will often be there to lend an ear and hear your suggestions to improve our school. You might even paint a picture if you fancy it! Babies and toddlers welcome, we can put some toys out too. Friday is also library morning for KS1 so come and change your reading book to share at home for the week.

Risky play is needed for collaboration and resilience! You may have heard about the new sandpit and extra space in the woods. We are encouraging our children to play and share together, make decisions, take risks (under watchful eyes of course) and really enjoy their playtimes. Your child may have the odd scrape or dirt on their trousers from good old-fashioned play, where they can build dens, climb trees and make swings. **I firmly believe that learning to take sensible risk and being able to collaborate without falling out are vital life skills.** Children should be able to make a den from crates or a car from old pallets and tyres and use their imaginations together. Imaginations will be soaring and children will learn to play sensibly and take care of one another. If an adult spots danger, toys or privilege/ the items in uses are lost. The children will learn responsibility for their own actions. If anyone has old wellies they can donate for damp days, please send them in, much appreciated.

Help needed! We are aiming to increase our Nursery hours to 30 to start on 30th October! If we can have applications and numbers in place it will go ahead, otherwise we will need to wait until January. Please advertise and share this information with friends and family and tell them to contact Mrs Saunders in the office to apply.

I believe lots of you did a big shop last night- **we have already raised £70 with the Asda Cashpot!** Thank you so much – we'll have a stage and a minibus very soon if we keep going like that! I'm off to link my Asda rewards app to **St Antony's RCP School BB1 2HP** now! I'm off shopping tonight!

A huge thank you to each and every one of you wonderful families. Together, we make this school an incredible place to be. **Thank you for working in partnership with us.**

I hope to see some of you in Church on Sunday for Education Sunday St Joseph's 11:15am.

*This is our school, Let it be filled with love, Love of one another,
Love of life itself, But most of all, the love of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. AMEN*

Kind regards



Heather McGowan
Head Teacher