



"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together"

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Dear parents and carers

It has been a busy start to the new school year. The children have now settled well into their new classroom routines and are engaging well with their learning. By now you will have received some information about the learning focus for the term ahead from the class teachers. I am keen to ensure that you get the information that you require in order to support the learning process, so please do let us know what else would be useful. I will be available on both parent consultation evenings if you would like to offer any suggestions.



October – Mary's Special Month

It has been lovely to join together with so many parents and children for the Rosary at 8.40am Monday to Thursday. We've even managed a decade in the prayer garden this week whilst the hall was being set up for another event! Please do join us if you can.

Children as Ambassadors

Your children are always great ambassadors for the school. We were so pleased to hear such positive comments following the Year 6 visit to Bhaktivedanta Manor, a Hindu temple in Aldenham, as part of their RE curriculum. The year 6 pupils showed great respect, demonstrated impeccable manners and behaviour and showed a real enthusiasm for their learning about the faith journey of our Hindu brothers and sisters. All of these aspects were commented on by individuals that they met in the temple. Well done Year 6!

This week Yr 5 are preparing to visit the Relic Image of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St Hilda's. The relic arrives at St Hilda's this evening and will be received by Bishop Paul McAleenan at 7pm. All are welcome!

PSA – your committee – thank you!

It was great to see the children enjoying their Welcome Back Disco recently. They danced the night



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away and had great fun. This event made a fantastic £960 profit which is amazing – thank you. Our brilliant PSA committee members have worked hard to support luxury items (including lollies and water for Sports day) as well as daily expenditure (such as maths resources, reading books and ICT equipment). With increased pressures on school funding we couldn't manage without the PSA's valiant efforts and your support of their events. If you could help by donating even a small portion of your time, please do speak to your PSA class reps or seek out Theresa Taylor-Brookes. This is YOUR committee and your help is greatly appreciated, leaving a lasting legacy for your children. Please do get involved if you can. Events to watch out for – Bonfire Night Soup Stop, Class Cake Sales & the Christmas Fayre – more details to follow.

Celebrating Everyone's Achievements

The high point of my day is always marked by a conversation with one of our pupils either about a special moment in their learning journey or about another significant moment (e.g. exceptional effort, noticeable compassion or another key achievement). If your child comes home with a 'Headteacher's Award' sticker there will be a story to tell ... please do ask! We are always interested in the children's achievements beyond school too – during our Monday assembly there is an opportunity for children to share certificates, trophies and badges earned outside of school should they wish to – please encourage them to bring them into assembly each week.



Use of St Joseph's Car Park

By now you will have received ParentMail news that St Joseph's car park will be closed for use by parents from Monday 9th October. This is due to the difficulty of ensuring that there are enough volunteers to make the management of it sustainable. Currently, the volunteers feel that they are having to make a significant commitment, and at times, have to manage difficult situations with those wishing to make use of the facility. This is unfair. If the system is to work, we need to expand the number of volunteers so that the load can be shared fairly and we need to embed a culture of respect by all users of the facility which has a finite capacity. When more volunteers are available it is possible that we will be permitted to use the facility again. I was shocked this morning to see the disregard for safety by many travelling along Bedwell Crescent. Please protect all of our children by abiding by the Highway Code at all times. Thank you to our band of stalwart volunteers who have done a fantastic job over many months, regardless of the weather. Thanks also to those who are committed to other means of travel – it really helps!

Our **Junior Travel Ambassadors** have met with a Hertfordshire County Council Adviser recently to plan the next stages of their campaign to encourage safer and healthier transport to school. They will soon be ready to communicate their ideas and suggestions again. Please avoid parking outside of the school if you can, remembering that there are car parking facilities near to the Noah's Ark



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Nursery, via Sinfield Close (a short walk to school using the footpath and entrance at the rear of the school) and a further car park near to the top lake off Fairlands Way (former Digswell Arts Trust).

Safeguarding

We take all matters in relation to safeguarding very seriously. If you are ever concerned about anything in relation to this please do speak to a member of staff. Mr White is the Designated Safeguarding Lead. Over the past two weeks, the NSPCC have presented their **Speak Out, Stay Safe** assemblies and workshops throughout the school. This is an excellent opportunity for our children to focus on practical solutions to staying safe and reinforcing routes to get help when things go wrong. Please do talk to your children about their learning from these valuable sessions.

Communication

Clear and effective communication is essential to any successful organisation. Our website provides much essential information and we are currently looking for ways to improve the quality and range of information that it provides. If you have any great ideas I would be pleased to know more. Please email ideas, suggestions and feedback to head@stvincent.herts.sch.uk. You will notice on our website that there are links to our Twitter feed (@svdp_school) and our class blogs. Over the coming year, I aim to increase the quantity of information available about what is going on at school through these platforms. Please do engage with the information available. Some parents have already told me that a simple picture online of a class activity helps to open up a conversation at home and avoids the dreaded usual response to a 'what did you do at school today?' question! Again please do let us know what you think about these platforms for communication.



Thanks to Year 1 for their fantastic **Harvest Assembly** today. The Stevenage Haven will really appreciate everyone's generous donations.

I am hoping that our Mini Vinnies might soon be re-established and perhaps their duties could include coordinating a regular food bank donation.

Watch this space!

St Vincent de Paul

I spent time over the summer reading about our fascinating patron saint who teaches us much about generosity of spirit and love when dealing with those most in need. I pray today that our lives are enriched by the great example of St Vincent de Paul so that his example becomes ours in the world. St Vincent de Paul's compassion for the vulnerable truly calls each of us 'to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together.'

Thank you for helping us as a community to fully realise this mission.

God bless you and those most dear to you,

Mr Jon White
Headteacher



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Pray for us

