



An Daras Trust
Igniting Curiosity Growing Capabilities



St Catherine's C of E School

Executive Headteacher: Mrs Louise Hussey

Head of School: Ms Pippa Warner

Telephone: 01566 772198

Email: stcatherines@andaras.org

WEBSITE – www.stcatherinescofe.co.uk

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Welcome back to all our families. We hope you had a good Christmas break and are fully recharged and ready for the new term ahead!

Values in Action

These wonderful pupils have been spotted demonstrating our school values in the last week:

Reception: Skylar-courage; Lydia-generosity.

Class 1: Arni-friendship, courage and responsibility.

Class 2: Keira-courage; Archie-patience and friendship.

Class 3: Joshua-thankfulness; Jack-friendship.

Class 4: Jessica-generosity; honey-friendship and respect.

Class 5: summer-perseverance; Phoebe-courage.

Class 6: Morwenna- generosity and compassion; Cerys-courage.

Good Learner

These are our star learners:

Reception: Harvey-responsibility; Amelia-resilience.

Class 1: Lillie-responsibility; Kevin-responsibility.

Class 2: Bill-responsibility; George-resilience; Phoebe-responsibility.

Class 3: Taran-responsibility; Millie-Rose-reflectiveness.

Class 4: Kubus-resourcefulness; Lola-resilience.

Class 5: Jamie-responsibility; Grace-reflectiveness.

Class 6: Riley-resilience; EVERYONE! – resourcefulness.

School Improvement – Attendance

I'm sure you are all aware of how important the issue of attendance is to school age children and young people, and the initiatives that the government and schools support to promote a positive attitude to this.

We thought you may find it interesting and thought-provoking to read some of the guidelines and advice as set out by the government on this issue and that it may help to clarify some of the requirements and the reasoning behind them. Our current school attendance is:

REC 90.4

C1 94.3

C2 94.9

C3 94.9

C4 95.5

C5 94.6

C6 96.0

Totals 95.0

(Information below is taken from "[indirect.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence](https://www.indirect.gov.uk/school-attendance-absence)")

School attendance and absence

Going to school regularly is important for your child's future. Parents are responsible for making sure their children receive full-time education. Parents are legally responsible for making sure that children attend school. If your child doesn't go to school, you could get fined or prosecuted.

Benefits of school attendance

Good attendance at school is not just beneficial, it's essential. Attending school is directly linked to improved exam performance which should in turn lead to further learning opportunities and better job prospects. As well as this, going to school helps to develop:

- *Friendships*
- *Social skills*
- *Team values*
- *Life skills*
- *Cultural awareness*
- *Career pathways*

- **Absence from school**
- *All schools must record details of pupils' attendance and absence at school. They do this at the beginning of morning and afternoon sessions meaning that each day your child receives two half day marks.*
- *If your child is going to be absent from school, (e.g. for an unavoidable appointment) then you should let the school know as soon as possible. If your child has been absent due to an unexpected event such as bereavement or illness then you must also let the school know on the first day of absence in accordance with the school's attendance policy.*
- *The school will then record the absence. If you fail to notify the school as to why your child has not been present then the school may record that period of absence as being unauthorised.*
- *The Education Welfare Service (EWS) has access to all attendance information for each pupil and if your child is missing school without good reason, schools and the EA have the authority to find out why.*

- **Attendance in figures**
- *Schools will advise parents of a child's attendance levels at least once a year. This will usually include a percentage attendance figure.*
- *Achieving 90 per cent in an exam or test is a fantastic result but if your child is at school for only 90 per cent of the school year then they will have missed 19 days - almost four whole weeks of school.*
- *For primary-age children, this can mean almost 120 guided learning hours. This is a big gap for any child to make up.*
- *If your child is a pupil at post-primary school, 120 guided learning hours is the equivalent of studying one full-time GCSE (normally taken over two years).*

How to prevent your child from missing school

You can help prevent your child missing school by:

- *having a routine from an early age and sticking to it*
- *making sure your child understands the importance of good attendance and punctuality*

- making sure they understand the possible implications for themselves and you as a parent if they don't attend
- taking an interest in their education - ask about school work and encourage them to get involved in school activities
- discussing any problems they may have at school and letting their teacher or Head Teacher know about anything that is causing concern
- not letting them take time off school for minor ailments or holidays during term time

To avoid disrupting your child's education, you should arrange (as far as possible), appointments and outings:

- after school hours
- at weekends
- during school holidays

Term time holidays

- Term time holidays have been increasing over the last number of years. Parents should make every effort to ensure that their child does not miss school due to holiday plans. Schools are not obliged to agree to you taking your child on holiday during term time. They are entitled to record such holidays as being an unauthorised absence

- **Support for parents**

- As a parent, if you find it hard to talk to your child about their attendance at school or other school-related matters, support is available.

- **Support from your child's school**

- Your child's school should have an attendance policy in place and made available to you, normally from the school website. As a parent or guardian, you should ensure that you adhere to the guidance provided in that policy regarding attendance and notifying absence.
- Your child's school is the first place to discuss any attendance problems. The school should try to agree a plan with you to improve your child's attendance.
- A school can refer your child to the Education Welfare Service (EWS) if they feel there is reason to be concerned at their level of attendance. The EWS is a specialist education support service which helps young people of a compulsory school age and their families to get the best out of the education system. The EWS can offer advice and support to help you and your child to have good attendance at school

- Support from the Education Authority

The [Education Authority \(EA\)](#) can also help if you are struggling to make sure that your child goes to
Support from other organisations

As well as school and the EA, you may also be able to get advice and assistance from other organisations. These may include your local community centre or local community group.

ParentingNI provide a wide range of helpful advice and resources as well as a [parent's helpline](#).

Parent Teacher Associations can also provide further information and resources through their website at **ParentKind**.

Home Learning Spring 2020

Just to confirm the homework expectations for Y1 to Y6 are as follows:



Spellings on Spelling shed and in homework Books; times tables practice on times Tables Rockstars and/or in homework books; reading independently or with families regularly; Knowledge organisers for new topics to share and learn for in-class quizzes.



Save for Kicks Count – Reminder



“Kicks Count” is a really worthy charity that aims to reduce the UK’s high still-birth and neonatal death rate by raising awareness of baby movements. They have set a challenge to local schools to help them raise money by collecting various items that can then be recycled and reused, therefore being a great boost to the environment too.

Our challenge is to collect as many **used toothbrushes, electric toothbrush heads and tooth paste tubes** as we can and try to beat other local schools along the way! So far we only have a few contributions so it would be great if we could collect more - just bring washed items into school where there is a recycling container to collect them in. Other items may also be required for recycling as time goes on.

Wellbeing & Community Action - Update 401 Foundation



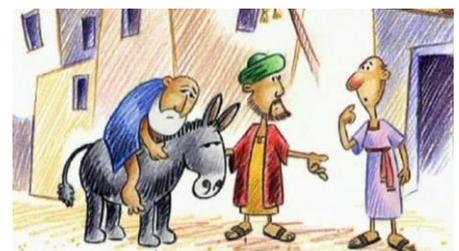
Last term we told you about a great charity, **the 401 Foundation**, who through small grants of between £100 and £3000, aim to support UK projects that help individuals build confidence and self-esteem and tackle mental health and self-development issues.

The foundation was set up by Ben, who has experienced bullying and depression and as a way to raise people’s awareness and money for projects, ran 401 marathons in 401 days! We are still determined to help with some fund-raising, by seeing how many miles we can run collectively around our school track or other places, but have decided to wait until March, when the children are in all month and hopefully the weather will be drier! It will also coincide with **Sport Relief**, which we always try to support as well. More details to follow nearer the time.

Church School Focus

This half-term, we will be exploring the **value** of “**courage**” in our collective Worship Theme.

As a Church School we are proud to assert that Christian values are at the heart of everything we do and who we aspire to be. They are there to support our relationships and are embedded within all our policies, enabling us to make decisions that promote not only excellence in education, but also the shared principles or convictions that act as a guide to our behaviour. At St Catherine’s we use the Christian tradition to give our values content and the story of Jesus to provide the moral landscape.



We use many stories from the Bible to help us explore the different values and always reflect on the meaning that they have for all of us today in our own lives. As a school, we have adopted the story of "The Kind Stranger" (Good Samaritan) as being a perfect illustration of the qualities we aspire to develop and the way we should all try to treat those around us.



The value of courage holds at its heart that God is with us in every situation, and therefore we can be brave and face all kinds of challenges, standing up for what we believe is right and supporting those around us.

All of us have things to face that require courage and faith and we aim to help each other in any way we can as we encounter these situations in our daily lives.

Confirmed Diary Dates:

Spring Term Dates 2020

Half Term: 17th – 21st February

Spring 2nd Half Term: Monday 24th February-Friday 27th March

Easter Holiday: 30th March – 14th April

Summer Term Dates 2020

Return to school: Wednesday 15th April

Half Term: Monday 25th May to 1st June

Summer 2nd Half Term: Tuesday 2nd June – Wednesday 22nd July

Summer Holidays 24th July – 6th September

Spring Bank Holiday

Just to forewarn you that the usual **Spring Bank holiday has been moved from the Monday to Friday 8th May.** This is so that the day can be added to a weekend of celebrations to mark the 75th anniversary of VE Day.

Enrichment

Year Six Three Course Meals



Wow - what an amazing team of cooks! You've been brilliant Year 6, lots of delicious food and great co-operation!

Last week, Year Six embarked on a DT project, to investigate, design, produce and present amazing three course meals for family members.

The children were in groups of three and worked very efficiently together, deciding how best to organise the activities between themselves and producing meals that looked and tasted wonderful! All the children thoroughly enjoyed the experience and gained valuable insight into vital life-skills they will need as they move towards becoming more independent and responsible young people.



All the parents who attended reported how good the food tasted and how impressed they were with the children's effort and skill and also what a lovely way to spend an hour in the company of others with fabulous food and a relaxing atmosphere!

It was a great team effort between the children and a small band of very willing helpers, all brilliantly co-ordinated by Mrs Phillpotts and Mrs Fisk, who worked amazingly hard to make the meals happen! A great demonstration of why we continue to be hugely proud of our amazing Year Six pupils!



An Daras Trust

For news about job vacancies within our Trust school please visit: <http://www.andaras.org/web/vacancies>

Parent Surveys

Many thanks for all the completed surveys returned so far. These are invaluable in helping us move forward and develop as a school. If you haven't yet completed one and would like to do so, please hand these in by Friday. We will share the results once they have been collated.

Pupil Voice at St Catherine's

For many years we have had a School Council at St Catherine's who meet to discuss ideas for improving school and who have been extremely able in organising events and welcoming visitors.

We have decided this year that we would like to try a different approach to pupil voice and rather than having one school council we are creating **four focus groups**: the **Ethos Group** (attitudes and aspirations as a Church School); the **Curriculum Group** (focussed on learning); the **Environment Group** (how we can protect the natural world and the places where we live, work and play) and the **Well-Being Group** (the right of everyone to be happy and healthy).

Two children from each class will be chosen for each group, and each group will meet for half an hour once every 5 weeks to discuss ideas, issues, set challenges and follow up from class discussions.

We think that organising in this way will make it easier for the children to have a real impact on the everyday life of the school and issues affecting the wider world and should provide great



opportunities for creative thinking and effective action.

We will update you in the weeks ahead with who are the chosen representatives and what each group has chosen to focus on.

Many thanks for all your continued help and support.

Ms Pippa Warner – Head of School