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No 5

April 2006

**Y**ear Six did us proud in leading Stations of the Cross at St Bartholomew's last Friday evening. A number of the congregation described the service to me afterwards as one of the most reflective and moving they had attended. The children brought the meaning of Easter home to us in a very special way for which I thank them and the staff, in particular Mrs Berkeley-Agyepong, Mr Kenny, Mrs Scott Cree and Mrs Reynolds for all their work. I would also express gratitude to Mr Brown for once again giving of his time to provide musical accompaniment. Thank you also to all parents and friends who attended including those who had only returned from the Year 4 and 5 residential visit an hour earlier.

It is also good to report another successful Year 4 and 5 residential visit which saw 58 children enjoy a good week on the Isle of Wight with warm, sunny days but cold nights. In addition to the trips and activities most came back more knowledgeable about bed making, the difference between a duvet and blanket and the need to make compromises when sharing accommodation. The group did us proud and received numerous compliments in regard to their good manners. Thanks to the staff who made this possible, Mrs Cefai, Mrs Grabiec, Mrs Lawless, Mrs McGuire and Miss O'Brien – their stamina is commendable. We also appreciated Joe's support in driving the coach during the week. Plans are now in hand for next year's visit and Year 3 and 4 children have received notification of these plans.

#### **STAFF PROMOTIONS**

This is becoming a habit but I am nonetheless pleased to offer sincere congratulations to Mrs Tammy Lawlor on her appointment to the Deputy Headship of St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Beckenham, under the Headship of Mrs Vassallo. We will be extremely sorry to see her go but wish her every success in her new post which she takes up in September.

#### **DEPUTY HEADSHIP – ST JAMES THE GREAT**

I am very pleased to advise you that the Governors have approved the promotion of Mrs Claire Murphy to the post of Acting Deputy Headteacher of St James the Great as of the start of the summer term. Our thanks to her for taking on this role.

#### **GIFT AID**

I record my appreciation to all parents who currently gift aid payments to the school. We have just received a cheque from the Inland Revenue for £4,570 under the gift aid scheme. School budgets continue to tighten as costs increase more than income and the gift aid income is a significant source that assists us in maintaining the best provision possible for your children. As this is at no cost to yourselves I very much hope when we issue our gift aid forms next term those of you who are tax payers but not yet gift aiding will do so. If you have any queries about the scheme please do not hesitate to contact me for more information.

### **SCHOOL FUND**

In addition I would also thank those of you contributing regular payments to our school fund which impacts on the gift aid reclaim noted above. Again we will be contacting those not yet supporting this scheme to enquire whether you might now consider doing so.

Sadly without the above funding streams our school would be much less able to provide the range of opportunities we do for your children. Please help if you can.

### **VISIT BY MARTYN ROONEY**

We were very grateful to Martyn Rooney, a past pupil of the school, who played a very successful role in the recent Commonwealth Games. You will no doubt have heard that the children watched his races excitedly and certainly appreciated his visit. My thanks to Mrs Murphy for arranging this.

### **READING HELPERS**

We would very much appreciate more reading helpers in Key Stage 1. If you could give a fixed amount of time per week from an hour upwards this would be much appreciated. Please drop a note into school or contact Mrs Lawlor directly if you are able to offer some time to help with this valuable task.

### **BLUE PETER BADGE**

Congratulations to Aron Awofadeju in Class 4.1 on gaining a Blue Peter badge in a story writing competition on this programme. To our knowledge he is the school's first Blue Peter badge winner. Well done Aron.

### **LITTER**

I recently received a complaint from a local resident regarding the amount of litter she is finding in her front garden. Whilst not wholly attributing this to our school she has asked me to draw attention to this issue and I feel it would be worthwhile reinforcing with your children how environmentally unfriendly it is not to dispose of litter in an appropriate way.

### **PARKING**

This continues to be a major difficulty at arrival and departure times and has been exacerbated by the road works underway in Apostle Way. A number of parents have brought in registration numbers to me of cars parking on the zig zag lines or inconsiderately in Apostle Way and Windsor Road. On a number of occasions this has also caused Joe considerable difficulties in getting the coach into and out of school. I am not keen to go down the road of publishing registration numbers but would ask you to be as considerate as possible in regard to this matter. If necessary it would be helpful if you would park a small distance away from the school and walking the final lap!

### **END OF TERM ITEMS**

#### **EASTER LITURGY**

This short service takes place tomorrow, Thursday 13<sup>th</sup> April, at 9.45 am and all are welcome to attend. Tea and coffee will be available and a 200 Club draw will take place at the end of the service.

School closes at 2 pm; please ensure your child is collected promptly.

Nursery closes today, Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April and school re-opens for all year groups on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> April.

*We extend all our good wishes to everyone for the Easter season.*

