

Friday 3rd September 2021
steeplemorden.cambs.sch.uk



THE STARLET

"Be brave, be kind, be the best you can be."



Message from Mrs How

Welcome back to you all at the start of another school year, and a big welcome to those parents and carers of the children who are joining us anew. We hope that this year will be much more settled than the previous two and are doing all we can to ensure that is the case. This is not a normal Star; after only two days in the teachers have little to share about their classes other than how well everyone is settling in and lots of comments about how much the children have grown over the summer.

Instead I have included various pieces of information and explanations about arrangements for this term. Please browse through to find out more about:

- Year Ahead Meetings
- Uniform
- Playtime and lunchtime arrangements
- Parents Evening
- Assemblies for this term
- Our current plans and hopes for Christmas celebrations

As I keep reminding people, we now have fewer restrictions on how we behave but Covid is still around. This term we are facing a mix of Covid, flu and all the usual tummy bugs and germs. Please help us to keep everyone safe and well by taking a cautious approach. If you are able to take regular LFTs please do and if you or your child show any of the Covid symptoms let us know and book a test as soon as possible.

We know this is a joint effort and together we can make sure that this school year goes ahead as planned.

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*"Success is the sum of small efforts,
repeated day in and day out."*

Robert Collier

PTA News



August Lottery Club winners

We are delighted to announce the names of our **AUGUST** Lottery Club winners:

1st: (£21.02) Maureen Haigh (107)

2nd: (£16.35) Kyle McClelland (61)

3rd: (£11.68) Georgia Lees (29)

The winners will be contacted directly to arrange the transfer of prize money. Thanks to Mrs How and the office staff who witnessed the draw.

A huge thank you to families for supporting our 2020/2021 Lottery Club by purchasing a number/s at a cost of £12 each for the year which were entered into monthly draws over a 12-month period.

We sold 146 numbers raising £1051.20 for our school fund and paid out an additional £700.80 in prize money over 38 draws from Sept 20 to Aug 21.

As this is a simple, fun & rewarding way to raise funds (we love thanking our supporters by transferring their winnings), we would like to run the Lottery Club again from Sept 2021 to Aug 2022.

The PTA will be reaching out to existing club members via email shortly asking if they would like to renew their membership. There will also be an opportunity for new members to join by completing a registration form which will be sent out via Parentmail.

Thank you for your continued support.

The PTA

Year Ahead Meetings

These will take place for years 1 to 6 during the week commencing Monday 20th September, with Reception class the following week. Teachers have arranged days and times to avoid any parent needing to be in two meetings at once.

This is your opportunity to find out about the topics and skills the children will be learning over the coming year and how you can support this at home. Teachers will also talk you through any planned trips or visits that will be taking place.

As last year these meetings will again take place via Zoom. Times will be published in next week's Star and Zoom links will be sent out prior to the meeting.

Uniform

Over the last couple of years, we have slightly relaxed our uniform expectations to take into account periods of lockdown. We understood the challenges of buying new clothes and shoes near the end of term and online shopping delivery times were not always helpful.

This year we need to be back to our standard expectations for uniform and this information can be found on the school website. While we will continue to make as much use as possible of the field at play and lunchtimes it may be a good idea for children to have a pair of trainers in school that they can use if playing football etc (this was a revelation for some year 6s yesterday who opted to take their new school shoes off and play in their socks!).

Although we have now changed the names of our school houses the colours remain the same. If your child was in the blue house previously they are still in the blue house now. Our uniform supplier will take some time to change the names on t-shirts bought through them so please do not worry. We know this is a period of transition; we are working on the colour of the t-shirt rather than the writing on the back.

Playtimes and lunchtimes

Your children may have already told you that they now have a larger area to play in and they are able to include children from some other classes in their games.

With the relaxation around single class bubbles we are taking some careful steps towards children mixing in larger groups. Initially children in years 1, 2 and 3 are able to play together and the same for children in years 4, 5 and 6. We have divided the playground and field into two large spaces (as opposed to the seven smaller areas last term) and children now have more space to run and spread themselves out.

Lunchtimes are still slightly staggered to maintain a steady flow of children through the dining room and each class will still have a designated 'Dinner Lady' each day. We found last year that this really helped with any behaviour issues or friendship worries as one adult was able to maintain an overview across the week and build relationships with the children in their class.



Parent's Evenings

The Local Authority guidance for this term is to continue to hold parent's evenings remotely, so we will be offering times for you to sign up for a Zoom meeting to meet your child's new class teacher(s) and see how they have settled into their new class.

After last year's Zoom parents evening there was a lot of positive feedback from parents who found this easier than trying to physically come into school. Not having to leave work early, no issues with child care or bedtimes, both parents being able to attend from different locations and generally better time keeping were all cited as benefits. As a result, we were already planning to offer a choice of remote or face to face appointments and hope to be able to do this in the Spring term.

School Meal Charges 2021-22

Daily:	£2.35
Weekly:	£11.75
1st half term	£86.95
2nd half term	£79.90
Whole term	£166.85

Please make payment for school lunches via Pay360 (formerly SIMS PAY) **in advance of meals taken.**

We are now a 'cashless' school and will no longer accept either cash or cheques. If you need to set up a Pay360 account, please contact the office at office@steeplemorden.cambs.sch.uk

Assemblies

There are no longer restrictions on children being physically together for assemblies, but again we are taking a slow and gentle approach. It is over eighteen months since we squeezed 180 children and a couple of dozen adults into the hall and I'm not sure any of us is quite ready for that just yet.

The end of term assembly in July where we all met outside and under the shade of the trees was lovely, and remains an option if the weather allows.

Initially most assemblies will continue via Zoom, especially the whole school ones, but smaller key stage assemblies will start to take place in the hall over the coming weeks. As we all become more used to being together we will move to a mix of some children in the hall and others on Zoom and by the end of term (December) the plan is to be back to those whole school assemblies and collective worship that are such a key part of life at Steeple.

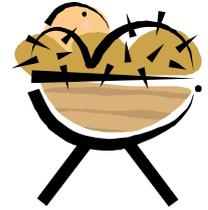
Term Dates 2021-2022

Autumn term begins	Thursday 2nd September 2021
Autumn half term	Monday 25th October - Friday 29th October 2021
Autumn term ends	Friday 17th December 2021
<i>INSET Days</i> (pupils not in school)	<i>Wednesday 1st September</i> <i>Monday 1st November</i>
Spring term begins	Wednesday 5th January 2022
Spring half term	Monday 14th February - Friday 18th February 2022
Spring term ends	Friday 1st April 2022
<i>INSET Day</i> (pupils not in school)	<i>Tuesday 4th January</i>
Summer term begins	Wednesday 20th April 2022
Early May Bank Holiday	Monday 2nd May 2022
Summer half term	Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June 2022 (Bank Holidays 2nd and 3rd June to commemorate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee)
Summer term ends	Friday 22nd July 2022
<i>INSET Days</i> (pupils not in school)	<i>Tuesday 19th April</i> <i>Monday 6th June</i>

Christmas

Yes, I know it is only September but life in school means that we are already thinking about how to recognise and celebrate this Christian festival.

At the time of writing we are both hopeful and optimistic! We want to be in a position to invite parents into school to see a performance by Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children based on the Nativity and we want to allow parents to join us in the church for a Key Stage 2 Christmas celebration service. We hope to have groups of children in school sharing a Christmas dinner together and we are really hoping that Father Christmas is able to visit in person (although his Zoom calls last year were lovely).



Obviously that will all depend on any specific advice given by the Local Authority or Central Government. The focus this year is about keeping all children in school and providing an uninterrupted education. Should any restrictions be reintroduced it is likely to be around limiting visitors into school and avoiding large gatherings such as performances. There is a plan B in place should this happen (we had to be creative last year so we know what our options are) but I am keeping everything crossed that we won't have to resort to that.



We desperately need a volunteer to help in the school library.

This would involve returning books and tidying the library.

An hour a week would be most helpful.

Tea, biscuits and a warm welcome provided.

Please email the school office if you are able to help.

Many thanks

Reminder - we aim to be a Nut Free School

Please remember that we aim to be a 'nut free' school. We have both staff and of children in school who suffer from potentially life-threatening allergies to nuts and it is important that we all take necessary precautions. Please check carefully the ingredients of any items your child has for packed lunch or snack, particularly cereal/snack bars. If your child has a medical need for handcream, please check that this doesn't contain any nut oils.

Many thanks for your help in keeping all our school healthy.



Parking at school drop off and pick up times

We take the safety of the members of both our school and local community very seriously. Due to the location of the school and the volume of traffic outside school at the start and end of the school day, we rely on the cooperation of parents to help us reduce the risks presented and show respect for our neighbours on Hay Street.

If you are able to walk or cycle with your child to school and avoid using a car, we would be very grateful. If, however, you need to use your car, **please try not to park on Hay Street or surrounding roads near the school.** There is a car park with plenty of space to park, just a few hundred metres down the road, adjacent to the village recreation ground. This provides safe parking and is just a few minutes walk from school. From this car park you may use the footpath at the rear of the recreation ground to gain access to the school via the rear gate, thus avoiding road traffic.

In addition, we are grateful to the Landlord of the Waggon and Horses who has given permission for parents to use the pub car park as an additional drop-off car park for the start and end of the school day.

We'd like to reiterate that we ask you **to avoid parking on Hay Street;** we have been advised of situations where residents are unable to safely leave their property or gain access due to cars parked in the vicinity.

Thank you for your support.