

November 6th 2009 School Newsletter



From Justin Stone
Head Teacher

Phone
01392 276854

E-mail
**admin@st-
thomas.devon.sch.uk**

Dates

- ◆ w/b 9/11/09 – target setting evenings
- ◆ 19/11/09 – Jump Rope
- ◆ 20/11/09 – School Photographs
- ◆ 20/11/09 – PTA Quiz Night
- ◆ 28/11/09 – Christmas Fair
- ◆ 8&9/12/09 – Infant nativity
- ◆ 11/12/09 – PTA Disco
- ◆ 16/12/09 – Junior Carol Service @ 7pm
- ◆ 18/12/09 – Last day of term.
- ◆ 5/1/10 – Non-pupil day.

SEAL (Social Emotional Aspects of Learning)

The theme for this half-term's work on developing children's social, emotional and behavioural skills is 'Getting on and Falling out'. Over this half-term we will be helping the children to learn about and understand friendship and the best ways of learning together. The theme also tackles some of the difficult and sensitive issues around bullying and we will be aiming to do some of this work during the national anti-bullying week which begins Monday 16th November.

This theme will start with an assembly and will be followed up in class during circle time. I have included one of the family resources on the back of this newsletter for you to do with your child if you would like to get involved with the theme at home. Children learn so much from the adults around them about how to make good friendships but also how to resolve situations when there is a falling out.

Parents Evenings

Next week the teachers will be available to meet with you to discuss how your child has settled into their class but will also be setting targets for the rest of the year. Teachers have put appointment times outside their classrooms for you to book as explained in the letter sent home on Monday. These meetings are seen as an important part in reviewing the children's progress through the year and I would encourage all parents to take the opportunity to meet with the teachers.

Attendance

I am really pleased to announce that the school is no longer being targeted by the Local Authority for persistent absence and our levels of attendance are matching national averages. I would like to thank everyone for their help in this matter and for your understanding when it has been necessary to talk about attendance.

In order to maintain and even improve the current situation all the schools in the West Exe area have been working together to make sure there is a consistent approach to managing attendance. There are two areas at this stage that I would like to bring to your attention. Firstly, if your child's attendance, for whatever reason (including illness), drops **below 90%** I will not be able to authorise holiday. Should the holiday be taken this could lead to a fine. Secondly where a child is absent from school for more than **5 days** the school may ask for medical evidence. Our registers are checked every four weeks by the Education Welfare department and they will work with families when attendance drops below 85%. As I know you are all aware when a child has good attendance at school it can help prevent gaps in their understanding and enable good progress and enjoyment.

PTA Quiz Night

On the **20th November at 7:30** the PTA are hosting another quiz night in the school hall. This event was very popular earlier in the year and a good time was had by all. If you would like to enter a team then please see one of the PTA members, they will be on the benches outside the main entrance and outside the infant entrance at the end of the school day. They will also be selling **Disco Tickets** and tickets to see **Father Christmas** at the fair.

Year 5 - You may recognise some of the characters to the right! Year 5 have been using Wallace and Gromit to gain an understanding about animations. They have been thinking about their own characters, designing backgrounds and will be storyboarding and writing scripts to ultimately produce their own animations.

