



The Richard Clarke First School Newsletter
Friday 7th January 2022
Issue: Spring 1:1

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HAPPY AND HEALTHY NEW YEAR TO OUR WHOLE SCHOOL COMMUNITY!
Welcome back to everyone and we hope you had a wonderful Christmas. We send you all our very best wishes for a happy and healthy new year and we hope for another successful term here at Richard Clarke.

All staff would like to thank you all for your lovely messages, cards and gifts at the end of last term, you were very generous and we feel appreciated and refreshed to face the next set of challenges, thank you.

Dates for the diary: (could be subject to change. Always check newsletters & website)

Week beginning 10th January-clubs begin

Thursday 17th February GANAS share-details to follow

Friday 18th February BREAK UP HALF TERM

Monday 28th February BACK TO SCHOOL

Friday 4th March World Book Day - details to follow

Week beginning 7th March - Parent consultation meetings - details to follow

Friday 8th April BREAK UP FOR EASTER

Monday 25th April SCHOOL CLOSED INSET DAY

Tuesday 26th April school open for pupils

Deadline for new starters - spread the word.

As many are aware, applications for children to start school in September are done on-line through Staffordshire County Council. The deadline for applications is **15th January**. We have been informed we have some places left, so if you know anyone who may still be unsure as to where the best start for their child's education should be, then suggest they apply to The Richard Clarke First School. We do take many families from out of catchment too when there is space. Please ask them to contact the school office if they have any questions.

Prompt starts - reminder

Please could we politely request support for our new year resolution to begin lessons as promptly as possible so as to maximise valuable learning time during the Spring term. Even a couple of minutes lost every morning soon adds up over the year to quite a chunk of learning time missed. To help us in this quest we would ask you to make sure your children arrive so they are in class for:

Rec/Y1/Y2 8.50am

Y3/4 9.00am

If you need to speak to your child's class teacher about anything, please can we ask that you come to school a little earlier at 8.45am in order to do this. Alternatively, please leave a message with the school office that can be passed on to teachers at break time so that they can call you back. Or, if it can wait until the end of the day, ask to see teachers then please. We appreciate your support and understanding with this and please be assured that a member of staff will always make time for you if the matter is urgent.

GANAS PROJECT HALF TERM

Ganas means:

Desire, urge; from the Spanish verb ganar, to win or gain. The term was popularized among English speakers by the LA mathematics teacher Jaime Escalante as played by Edward James Olmos in the movie Stand and Deliver.

"You're going to work harder here than you've ever worked anywhere else. And the only thing I ask from you is ganas. Desire... If you don't have the ganas, I will give it to you, because I'm an expert." (from Stand and Deliver)

The GANAS projects should be more child led. The teacher will provide a list of suggestions for lines of enquiry and suggested activities (on learning zone, class Dojo or Google classroom). But the project should be the child's choice and anything goes. The focus of learning may be science, geography or history but the medium for presenting learning may be technology, English, art or design & technology. The project can then be shared with other children and parents on our 'Ganas' days to celebrate our achievements and teachers and children can give feedback on the success of the projects.

Advantages of this type of homelearning:

- Children will develop a whole range of essential life skills such as time management, organisational skills, independence, exploring different ways of presenting learning, researching and finding things out, creativity
- Children will be able to choose their project and will therefore hopefully develop a curious mind and a life long love of learning
- We hope children will be passionate about the project and get a lot of self satisfaction and pride in their outcome
- Families can work together and learn things from each other
- Children can then develop their communication skills when they present their projects to the rest of the school on sharing day
- Children can be inspired by each other's passion and successes

Save the date - GANAS homelearning project share - THURSDAY 17TH FEBRAURY

We would normally invite parents, carers and friends to come into classrooms to admire our homelearning Ganas projects. We may have to find another way of doing this, maybe through online slide show or through our google meet if restrictions are still in place. TBC It's great to share our passion for learning! Learning is infectious!

CLUBS FOR THE SPRING TERM SPACES STILL AVAILABLE

Payment for clubs is via ParentPay unless otherwise stated (£24 per 6 week block)

PLEASE LET SCHOOL OFFICE KNOW BY EMAIL IF YOU WISH TO JOIN ONE OF THE CLUBS

All starting week beginning 10th January 6 week block

MONDAY: Street Dance/Hip-hop/Creative dance Y1-4 (BACT)

TUESDAY: Handball/Dodgeball skills Y1-4 (PB Sports) 25 max

WEDNESDAY: Dance Rec/Y1/Y2 (Miss Salt and Miss Hartshorne) max 30
Fencing Y1-4 (Ext provider-separate pricing) FULL

THURSDAY: Board Games Y1-4 (Miss Wain) max 30
Gymnastics Y1-4 (BACT)

COLD WEATHER

As the weather turns colder, please ensure the children are appropriately dressed. They need a winter coat, gloves, hat, scarf for outside play. Also, because of the need to ventilate, we have to have doors and windows open, so it is colder in school than is ideal, so please dress your children with layers, a vest/skin, a jumper etc. We are happy for them to wear a body warmer in doors for particularly cold days.

Thank you.

CORONA VIRUS UPDATE

I know you will all be following the national picture and will be aware of the rise in cases of the new Omicron variant of C19. With this in mind we will be asking you to adhere to all advice and lateral flow test twice weekly if you can, keep an eye on the children for symptoms now including runny nose, headache, fatigue, sneezing and sore throat.

Government advice is that people who are fully vaccinated, or aged under 18 years and 6 months, and identified as a contact of someone with Covid-19, whether Omicron or not, should take a lateral flow test (LFD) every day for seven days to help slow the spread. In addition to LFD testing, sibling and other household contacts are encouraged to stay at home until a negative PCR test result has been received, to protect other pupils/staff and families. □

In school we are maintaining our hygiene, sanitisation and extra ventilation routines. We now have new CO2 monitors in all classroom to monitor air quality. All staff and visitors are asked to wear face coverings in communal areas and we are suspending whole school indoor gatherings and face-to-face staff/parent meetings until the picture improves.

REMOTE LEARNING

We are of course concerned about absences of both pupils and staff and the impact this may have. With this in mind we have updated our remote learning plan (see attached) in case we have to move to this. Obviously will only move classes to remote learning as a last resort if safe staffing is unachievable. Please ensure you know how to access either class dojo (Rec/Y1/2) and/or the Google Classroom as the majority of learning can be accessed through these platforms.

We're planning for the worst and hoping for the best!!!! We continue to thank you for your patience and understanding.

READING NAG ALERT!

Reading with and to your children is INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT! Having read with the children this week, we are aware many children have not read with anyone over the holiday and they have inevitably slipped behind in their progress.

I urge you to make time to read with your children and find a routine place and time for regular reading. The benefits are endless and increased reading with your children will make such a difference to not only their progress in school but to the children's life chances in the future.

If you need any support with reading with your child and how to make it a good experience, please talk to your child's class teacher for help. We will also be putting together a parent workshop later this term, as restrictions allow, about reading and the importance of vocabulary, so look out for this.

I know life is challenging and busy and we can all have reasons and excuses for not always managing it but it's time to make it a priority please! New year, start the way you mean to go on!

Thank you, nag over. With the greatest respect, Mrs Hanson

ROCK STEADY

Would your child like to play in their very own rock band?
Rocksteady in-school band lessons are the perfect opportunity for your child to learn new skills, develop friendships and have the time of their life.
Watch this short video to see what learning in a band could do for your child's well-being:

<https://www.rocksteadymusicschool.com/watch-video/>

Happy to talk about this when I'm next in on Thursday, so feel free to come and find me for a chat or ask at the school office for more details.

Many thanks,
Holly Fitzgerald, Band Leader

