

*Everything we do is focused on giving every child the best teaching, environment, experiences and opportunities regardless of background and circumstance.*



NANSTALLON SCHOOL



17<sup>th</sup> October 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

As we reach the end of the first half term I write to thank everyone for their support during the adjustments to the changes in our school.

I have always been guided by the most progressive educational thinkers and I know that everyone associated with the school a year ago knew that the culture had to shift. In the words of Sir Ken Robinson, 'to shift culture it takes two things: habits and habitats – the habits of mind, and the physical environment in which people operate.'

At the beginning of the term I wrote that, 'the start of a new school year can be both exciting and daunting for children, teachers and parents alike.' There are so many positive benefits to change and here are but a few:

1. It takes us out of our comfort zone and it's only when we are out of our comfort zone that we grow
2. If we always do things the same way, we inevitably achieve the same results

<b>Then</b>	<b>Now</b>
Attendance wasn't good. Our attendance at this point last year was <b>95.3%</b>	<b>98.3%</b>
The school was tired, cluttered and disorganised	We have a spacious cared for environment with low pupil to adult ratios
Early Years provision and environment was not fit for purpose	Our new indoor and outdoor learning areas are geared up for challenge and for curious young minds to thrive in – it is attracting a lot of interest from other schools in Cornwall.
Year 6 outcomes were below national and progress was in the bottom 12%	Year 6 outcomes are in line and above national and progress has improved. Reading progress places us in the top 25 schools in Cornwall and top 25% nationally.

I can't stress enough how important investment in the Early Years is. Whilst there isn't anywhere near enough investment nationally, at Nanstallon I have made this a priority. That is why our children now have the best teaching, environment, experiences and opportunities.

The foundations and building blocks for learning continue here from the family home and preschool and have a significant impact on pupils' life chances. This is why we have taken the decision to develop child-led characteristics into the curriculum beyond Early Years. This means increased autonomy and responsibility for pupils so that they can become increasingly

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independent and resilient. We will hold a parent information session on our new curriculum approach next term. As we are trying to promote independence, there is no need for parents to be putting their child's belongings in the lockers or on their pegs. Please also note that should you wish to drive and drop off your child in the car park by the front entrance some days this is most acceptable. Myself and Mrs Ellery will ensure they safely make their way in.

As part of our new sport, health and wellbeing strategy, we are looking to gauge the measure of children's self-perception of their self-esteem and wellbeing. They will be completing a questionnaire in school as a baseline to guide our future actions. We have also prepared a parent survey to gauge your perceptions of your child's self-esteem and wellbeing. Look out for the Survey Monkey ParentPay notification or follow this link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/6JVCPC3>

Whilst we are eager to start the school day promptly between 8:55am and 9am, we do make ourselves available every day where possible to ensure that you can communicate with us. However, I am aware that Facebook and social media is all too often a forum where negativity is allowed to magnify. This year I will start a Parent Forum. This will be a positive forum for nominated parent representatives from each class to have a constructive and strictly positive voice. I will send further details following the break.

After half term we will hold our first pupil and parent teacher consultations (parents evening). With an increased emphasis on pupil voice at the heart of our school and curriculum, it is important that parents' evening is a partnership meeting involving children and parents.

Next term we will also hold parent and teacher learning sessions for Year 1 and Reception focused on phonics and early reading.

During the first half term the children have had many opportunities including:

- Year 6 visit to the North Cornwall Book Festival
- Y5&6 Poetry Workshop Day with Matt Windle
- Y5 went to Bodmin Fire Station for life skills safety sessions
- Y2 visited The Royal Cornwall Museum to explore their Egyptian Topic
- Universe Class visited Cornwall Regimental Museum for their War Topic
- All classes have increased PE/sport
- Y5/6 pupils are leading games at playtime and lunch both on the playground and in the Early Years outdoor area
- More environmentally proactive children recycling and composting. This week we only put out  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a wheelie bin of rubbish compared with  $2\frac{1}{2}$  previously
- Rainbow Stars and Flamingos are fortunate to have weekly Forest School Sessions

Many of these experiences can be seen on our school twitter feed. Follow us @NanstallonSch

Next term:

- Year 6 will have their bikeability training sessions – please have a check of their bikes this half term to ensure they are roadworthy
- The choir will be performing at St Petroc's Christmas Tree Festival and the St Petroc's service in Truro Cathedral
- Twenty of our pupils will be performing at the St Austell Poetry Festival
- We will be planning our Christmas topic and events – the Christmas Dinner and Cinema Trip to the new Bodmin venue are booked on 12 December supported by the PTA
- The PTA will hold their Christmas Fayre on 5 December
- The PTA will hold a joint fundraising 'Gin Night' in November with the Preschool

Finally, I am pleased to report that our most recent monitoring visit by School Effectiveness Cornwall found good teaching across the school and significant improvements evidenced of our Ofsted Improvement Targets.

Warmest Regards,



Mr B Stephenson (Headteacher)

### **Diary Dates**

Monday 28 October	Y1 & Reception Parents' phonics & reading information session (2:15pm)
Tuesday 29 October	Parent/child and teacher consultation meetings (3.30 – 6pm)
Wednesday 30 October	Parent/child and teacher consultation meetings (3.30 – 6pm)
Thursday 7 November	Pupil Photographs
Monday 11 November	Curriculum Information Evening (6pm-7pm)
Friday 22 November	The Book People Book Fair Bus Visit
Monday 25 November	Y6 Bikeability Training
Tuesday 3 December	Choir singing at Bodmin Christmas Tree Festival
Thursday 5 December	PTA Christmas Fayre
Thursday 12 December	Cinema Trip and Christmas Dinner
Friday 13 December	Choir singing at Truro Cathedral
Friday 20 December	School closes at 1:15pm for Christmas Break

*Dates for class / school Christmas presentations and/or performances to be confirmed*