

Building Each Other Up in Love and Learning

18th December 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

The end of term arriving in such a sudden and unexpected way seems to me to be symbolic of what has been, for everyone, an exceptionally challenging year. I want to start my letter by thanking you for the support you have shown to the school and staff at St Stephen's. The many messages of support that you have sent have been greatly appreciated by the staff. I also want to pay tribute to the staff who, without exception, have worked extraordinarily hard to ensure that the children were in a setting that was as COVID-19 secure as possible – it was fantastic to see the hard work recognised by the HSE when they undertook an inspection and stated that it was "Gold Standard". I wish to express huge gratitude to everyone member of the staff team for their dedication and commitment.

As I reflect on a year that has been an unprecedented time with us all having to face many unknowns and constant challenges and changes, St Stephen's as a school and community has risen to the challenges it faced admirably. Despite the interruptions St Stephen's has had a very successful year – a comprehensive online learning offering was delivered where required and we feel very fortunate that the vast majority of children have been able to remain in school for the entirety of the autumn term. The children have all adapted very well to the new normal at school and it has been wonderful to hear the happy chatter and hustle and bustle of school emanating from the classrooms and playground.

I was also delighted to see the hard work that the staff have undertaken over the years recognised at a national level in the Sunday Times Parent Power Tables – resulting in St Stephen's being ranked 99th in the country out of over 15,000 primary schools. This is a huge achievement and reflects the planning undertaken over the years coupled with the determination that each child is given the opportunity to be their very best. It is especially wonderful that the data used to rank St Stephen's at 99th was from the first cohort of children that started at St Stephen's in reception.

Like many other schools, businesses and individuals in the current situation, St Stephens has suffered a significant loss of income from lettings (c. £12,000 to date) and this is compounded by increased costs to ensure the safety of the children and staff. If you have not already committed to donating to the St Stephen's School Trust, and are able to do so, please do consider doing so now. Over the coming months and years, the school will need extra donations in order to sustain the current provision to children. <http://vmgiving.co/donation>

Wishing you and those you care about a Happy and Healthy Christmas and New Year!

Best Wishes,



Alice Bishop
Chair of Governors.



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

St Stephen's CE Primary School
is a member of the RFU Education Partnership