

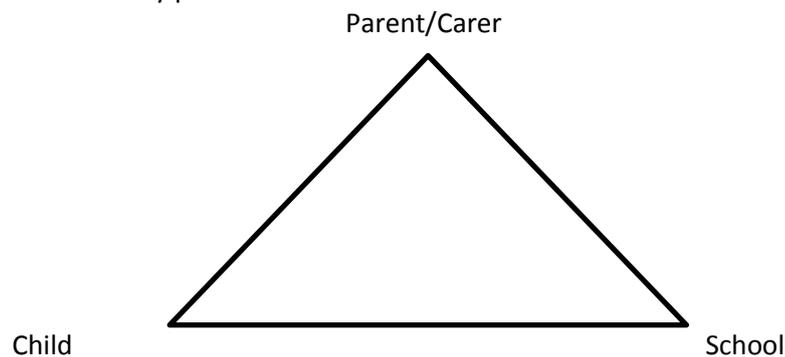
St Stephen's CE Primary School  
September 2016 – Newsletter

Dear Parents/Carers,

This is our second week back in the new academic year and the children are taking great delight in seeing their friends again and meeting in their new classrooms with their new teachers.

In our worship this half-term, we are talking about new beginnings and how to embrace the changes that lie ahead of them. I know that the children are ready to learn and that they will wholeheartedly supported in their learning by you, the parents and carers.

The education of your child is a three-way process.



Parents, carers, children and teachers work together to ensure that the child achieves his/her best in every area of learning. All three show enthusiasm, dedication and motivation to achieve the child's success.

**As always, we have been grateful for your support throughout the last academic year and we ask you to help your child again by ensuring the following:**

**READING, HOMEWORK, PE KIT, JEWELLERY**

- Your child must read at home each night (10 minutes for infants and at least 20 minutes for juniors). Children are taught reading skills in school, but unless they are practised at home, reading skills cannot improve. It is therefore vital that your child practises the skills they have learned in school.
- Your child will be given homework every week. Homework is often an extension of the learning children have been doing in class so that they can practise their skills. Sometimes homework is a task which needs to be done so that your child is prepared for the next lesson – if it is not completed, then your child will be at a disadvantage in that lesson. Please check with your child's teacher when the homework is distributed and when it should be returned. Please ensure that your child is given a quiet space to complete their homework. We hold a homework club on Tuesdays after school for Junior children. Please ask at the office for details.
- Please ensure that your child has the correct PE kit in school so that they are prepared for lessons. Please be aware that PE, sports and swimming are compulsory in the Primary Curriculum and that, if children have no kit, they will be wearing spare kit from the office. We also hold after-school sports clubs – please see Mr Lindsay for details.

- Jewellery, apart from one pair of STUD earrings and a watch, is not allowed in school. This is to avoid accidents, loss or damage. Any extra jewellery will be removed from the child and this may be collected at the end of the school day.

#### **ATTENDANCE AND PUNCTUALITY**

- Children generally LOVE coming to school! They are able to see their friends and teachers and spend each day learning and having fun. If your child is regularly absent from school, their friendships will be affected, as will their progress and the ability to learn as much as other children.

EVERY DAY of learning COUNTS towards the progress and achievement of your child.

Children with 100% attendance always make outstanding progress.

Aim for 95% or above!

Regular attendance at school is vital for a child's education. Missing one day could mean that your child will fall behind other children in their learning.

Children should aim to achieve at least 95% attendance in any school year. This means only 10 days absence from school in total. Child absence from school should be for illness or medical appointments only. If the parent is ill, then arrangements should be made for the child to be brought to school. **Absences for any other reason than illness or medical appointments will not be authorised unless there are exceptional circumstances.**

Absences for holidays are **NOT** allowed except for very exceptional circumstances. Holidays in term-time can be **requested** by filling in a school form from the office. However, unless the circumstances are exceptional, the holiday will not be granted. Please understand that I am bound by the government on this decision and I am not ordinarily allowed to grant permission.

#### Attendance affects your child's progress

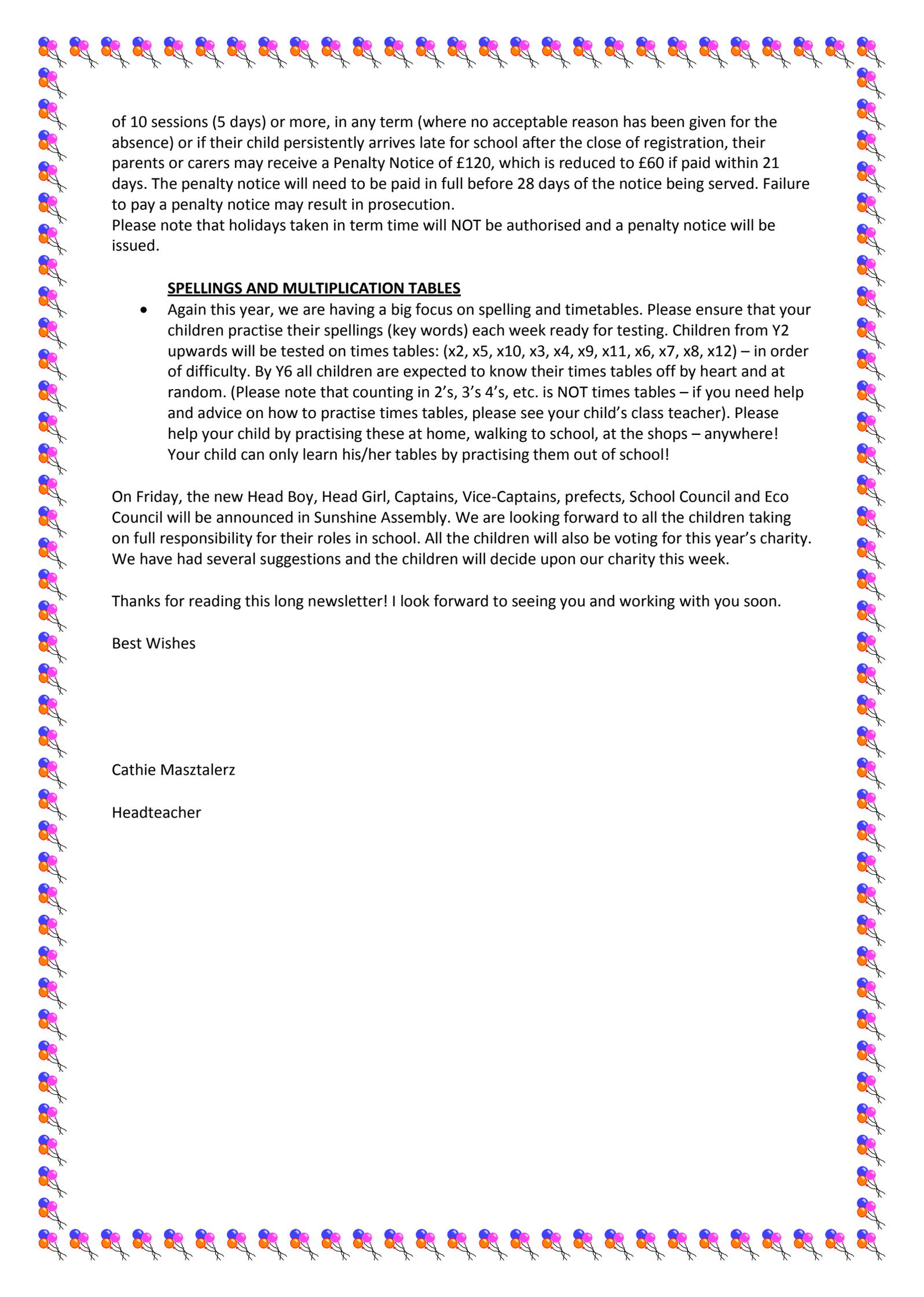
- 100% attendance increases the chance of children making outstanding progress.
- 95% attendance increases the chance of making good progress.
- Between 90% and 95% attendance means that your child may only make satisfactory progress.
- Less than 90% could mean that your child will not be able to make satisfactory progress as they will have missed one tenth of their schooling.

#### Punctuality affects children's progress

- At 9am each day, the children receive either the introduction to a lesson or the start of worship. Missing the introduction to a lesson (which includes the teacher modelling to the children what to do and how to improve) means that your child will not make progress during that lesson as they will not understand how to carry out their learning or how to improve it. Walking in late to an assembly in the hall means that a child will often feel embarrassed knowing that 200 people are watching him/her and will know that they are late. Please ensure that your child arrives at school at 8.50am so that s/he never misses any learning or other school activity.
- Please note that last year, 24 children were late for school on more than 16 occasions. This is not acceptable and impacts upon a child's learning.

#### **Penalty Notices for Non- school attendance (Tameside LA)**

Section 444(A) of the Education Act 1996 empowers the local authority to issue Penalty Notices in cases of unauthorised absence from school. This means that when a pupil has unauthorised absence



of 10 sessions (5 days) or more, in any term (where no acceptable reason has been given for the absence) or if their child persistently arrives late for school after the close of registration, their parents or carers may receive a Penalty Notice of £120, which is reduced to £60 if paid within 21 days. The penalty notice will need to be paid in full before 28 days of the notice being served. Failure to pay a penalty notice may result in prosecution. Please note that holidays taken in term time will NOT be authorised and a penalty notice will be issued.

**SPELLINGS AND MULTIPLICATION TABLES**

- Again this year, we are having a big focus on spelling and timetables. Please ensure that your children practise their spellings (key words) each week ready for testing. Children from Y2 upwards will be tested on times tables: (x2, x5, x10, x3, x4, x9, x11, x6, x7, x8, x12) – in order of difficulty. By Y6 all children are expected to know their times tables off by heart and at random. (Please note that counting in 2's, 3's 4's, etc. is NOT times tables – if you need help and advice on how to practise times tables, please see your child's class teacher). Please help your child by practising these at home, walking to school, at the shops – anywhere! Your child can only learn his/her tables by practising them out of school!

On Friday, the new Head Boy, Head Girl, Captains, Vice-Captains, prefects, School Council and Eco Council will be announced in Sunshine Assembly. We are looking forward to all the children taking on full responsibility for their roles in school. All the children will also be voting for this year's charity. We have had several suggestions and the children will decide upon our charity this week.

Thanks for reading this long newsletter! I look forward to seeing you and working with you soon.

Best Wishes

Cathie Masztalerz

Headteacher