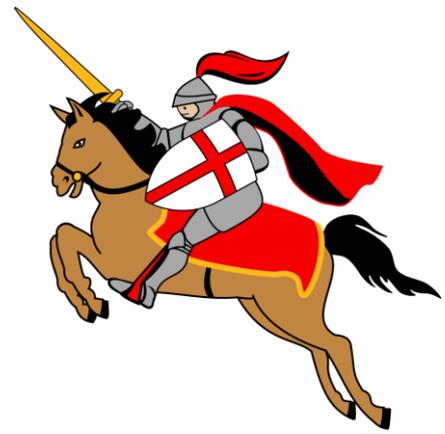


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18th July 2018

School closes Tuesday 24th July at 3.15

School opens again on Monday 3rd September

Dear Parent/Carer

As we approach the end of what has been a difficult academic year, I thought I would write a newsletter along these lines rather than the glossy, picture-filled style that we have used in the past: this has been the year of austerity and tragedy at this school and this style of newsletter seems more appropriate under the circumstances.

The sudden loss of Nuala cast a long shadow over all of us – and the only comfort has been in the magnificent way in which the community came together in response. Nuala's Memorial Garden has taken a long time to get organised but I do think that things are progressing – once we have a wall up and once the design of the garden is organised, then all of us can help plant whatever we feel is right for the space we will have created.

We finish the year with a wonderful piece of theatre organised by Miss Moseley, Miss Goddard and Miss Jackson – the Peter Pan musical they have directed has been thrilling – and the commitment of the children and the talent on show has been breath-taking. We are already decided that we need a performance at the end of every year and we will make sure that it happens.

I hope that a text has gone to all parents about the offer of a Tea Club at school during term time. We appreciate the expense of childcare and want to help parents wherever we can. Please contact school if you would like to take advantage of this offer.

In 2016/17, this school was the best *performing school in Doncaster* – this is a specific measurement based on progress between KS1 and KS2 after the SATs exams. Our progress was even better this year so I anticipate that we will continue to be the *best performing school*. In terms purely of attainment, our school was 4th in Doncaster last year and this year will be about 7th – if one set of parents had not taken their child for a holiday during SATs, we would be 4th again.

Subject	School Pass Rate	Doncaster Pass Rate
Reading	88%	70%
Writing	90%	76%
Maths	95%	72%
Grammar Punctuation and Spelling	90%	74%
Reading, Writing and Maths combined	83%	59.6%

“Pupils leave the school attaining standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are constantly above that expected for their age and above other pupils of the same age nationally.”
(OFSTED Report, March 2016.)

This table shows how well we have done in terms of attainment, and it is even better in terms of progress: *Doncaster, as a whole, has minus figures* for progress in Reading and Maths, whereas *Ivanhoe has very significantly positive figures*.

Locally, Denaby has under 20% for RWM (Reading, Writing and Maths combined), Castle has 53%, Hillside has 50%, Morley has 41.5% and St Albans 71% - so our 83% looks pretty good ☺.

Our school community should feel proud of these achievements – we are clearly not one of the ‘posh’ schools in Doncaster, but what we show is that the support of the community mixed with the talent of the children and the talent and hard work of the staff at this school leads to success.

We also do very well in Doncaster in terms of attendance and in terms of the low number of those with ‘persistence absence’ (below 90%) – better than the national average on both accounts. Attendance is hard work for the school because there are a very small number of parents who do not value school enough – however, we have a very large number of parents and children who attend school every day: we anticipate buying between 60-70 100% sweatshirts for September (we can’t be sure until after Tuesday...) and we have bought 75 Reading Champion sweatshirts which means that one in four children read to a parent every day of the week, every month of the year – and these figures can make us very proud indeed.

Just a reminder to parents that over the summer we are having our kitchen refurbished and modernised after receiving a grant from the EFA. This is brilliant news for the school, but it will mean a week of cold lunches at the start of term as the kitchen will not be finished in the holiday. Chartwells have raised the price of school meals in September to £2.30.

After half-term in October/November, we will be working with Dolce as our school meal provider – this will be a much better system in that parents can actually choose meals for children (or children can choose their own at the start of the day) but at the point of service, the children will tap their name on the screen and the servers will know exactly what has been ordered – which is what the children will get – which means there will be no dietary issues either. Christine Foster and I have been to other schools who use Dolce and we have been impressed.

We are saying farewell to one or two members of staff this term: in reverse order in terms of time at the school, we are saying goodbye to Gabrielle Windle who was a student with us and then a teacher; we are also wishing Claire Hinchliffe a fond farewell; and finally, Natalie Brown. In my memory, it doesn’t seem two minutes since Natalie was asking to do volunteer work at Ivanhoe so that she could become a teacher – and now she is off to Rotherham to become an Assistant Head!

It has been an unforgettable year – remember we started the school year by closing the school because the builders hadn’t completed the windows and heating on time...and then we had to close again so that they could secure the ceilings! Nuala’s death tore us all apart – and then the response of the community began to make us feel whole again – and on that note, on the power of community spirit, I have just had a cheque for £100 from a retired teacher from Warwickshire who happened to visit Mexborough and read about Nuala’s Garden in the Weekender on 24th May: he and his wife felt moved and wanted to make a contribution – this tragedy has touched so many people...

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I hope that everyone has a lovely summer holiday and that we all meet safe and sound again in September.

Joe Brian