



ST MARGARETS ACADEMY

19th July 2024

Summer Newsletter #12

Dear Parents,

And suddenly the summer holiday is almost upon us. Although there is one more day of term still remaining on Monday, this will be the final newsletter for this academic year.

Sara Pike

As I'm sure you are all aware, very sadly, Mrs Pike is retiring.

Sara has been at St Margaret's for 12 years. During this time, she has been the inspirational heart in our relational attachment-aware approach to all that we do. Never blowing her own trumpet and always working humbly and with absolute dedication, it has been her leadership that has helped create the special school we have today. Because of Sara, relationships are at the heart of everything we do. It is our number one word that describes St Margaret's. It is probably our Unique Selling Point.

Nowadays, schools are gradually coming round to the need to have a relational, rather than punishment model. There is a recognition that punishment doesn't work. Sara has been years ahead of this and because of her, so has St Margaret's. Sara led us in gaining recognition from Oxford University for our attachment and trauma-informed practice, and recognition from Leeds Beckett University with our Mental Health Award.

Despite her self-effacing nature, other professionals well know the true value of her knowledge, learning and expertise. Her practice is recognised across the Bay and examples of her work are used as models for training safeguarding leaders and SENCOs. When we had our inspection in June 2023, it was good to see that Ofsted also recognised this. At the requests of other schools and practitioners, she has shared her learning and journey, always in a typically understated manner with a keenness to celebrate the achievements of others, rather than herself, and always wanting to learn more herself.

To best describe Sara's legacy however, is better to mention the individual children and families. If you have been lucky enough to know Sara, you will know exactly what I mean. She has been the ultimate advocate for every child and family she has ever worked with, taking to heart all their worries and striving to apply all her learning and experience to help improve their lives.

Sara has completed an extensive handover of her Deputy Head Teacher and safeguarding roles to Nicole Turner who now has a massive file titled, "Sara's Brain". Sara has also spent this year working closely with Sophie Essam who, in the exact same mindset as Sara, is leading our SENCO provision and joining our Senior Leadership Team. Also, we are very thankful to Sara as she will be joining us as one of our trustees from September to bring that knowledgeable support and challenge which will be invaluable to us.

On a personal level, I would like to thank Sara for supporting me in my Head Teacher role. Her kind wisdom, knowledgeable insight and generous support have been invaluable. I will miss her hugely.

Finally, I would like to thank Sara on behalf of the whole school community and the broader educational world. I know we all wish her a richly-deserved, happy and healthy retirement adventure.





Reception Starters and Year 6 Leavers

On Wednesday our new Reception starters and their families joined our current Reception children for a picnic in the sun on the field. While at the other end of the school, our Year 6 leavers have enjoyed some special events over the last couple of weeks to finish their time at St Margaret's. Their Ali Barber show was a magnificent pun-tastic spectacular that had everybody laughing. It was so nice to see them shine on the stage. Last night they had their Leavers' disco and trips in limos organised by parents. On Monday they will share their emotional leavers' assembly with their families before finishing with a barbeque plus a special surprise treat organised by our wonderful PTA.

Wishing all of our Year 6s all the greatest fortune and happiness in their new adventure at big school. Good luck Year 6.

Good luck and Farewell

We all wish Miss Smith good luck in her new adventure as she leaves us to take up a post closer to home. Thank you to her for leading Computing this year and all of her hard work. Good luck and farewell.

Special Assembly

On Wednesday we had our end of term special values assembly when we celebrated children's achievements in taking *responsibility*, being *respectful*, showing *kindness* and having high *aspirations*. Across this term we have been recognising and celebrating individual children who have special interests and achievements. We have all learnt so much from this and it has been fantastic for the children to see what their peers have achieved through quiet hard work and practice. Fittingly we started Wednesday's assembly with Mason from Year 6 playing the bagpipes which has been learning for 3 years. There was amazement from the children with jaws open. Enjoy Mason's bagpipes yourself by clicking the picture.

We also took the opportunity in assembly to share a lovely example of kindness: Emelia's family presented the school with a hawthorn tree for planting in our orchard as a thank you to all the staff at St Margaret's as she prepares for her Year 7 journey.





PTA

Thank you to the PTA for all their work this year which culminated in the summer fair spectacular when over £4500 was raised. What an achievement and it's all money that goes to providing that special extra for your child. On our [website](#) you can learn and see exactly what they are about and what they have achieved. They are so much more than simply raising money. Thank you to Laura Kenyon and Felicity Morris in particular.

Have a look in the [PSHE Blog](#) to see a photo of this year's winning Year 6 team who raised over £150 in the PTA business challenge at the summer fair. Great effort.

Quality Reading Mark

Some fantastic news to share: this week we found out we have been awarded a prestigious Quality Mark from the UK Literacy Association and the Open University for our work in developing *Reading for Pleasure*. This is the culmination of 3 years work led by Mrs Turner and Mrs Madej. You can read the full news in our [Reading Blog](#) but I would like to pick out one line that particularly stood out for me from the accompanying letter:

"Frankly, you are at the vanguard of documenting reading for pleasure nationally."



Price Increase

Due to the increase in the cost of food, the amount for a school dinner will be also increasing. For a main and a pudding, the charge will now be £2.60 from September. Please be aware any payments made through the School Gateway App will have to be made via a debt or credit card. Bank transfers are no longer available.

Fred Frog's Summer Adventures – Round 2



Log on to the school's Facebook to follow Fred's new adventures.

With the long summer holiday starting next week, we want the children to keep on Reading. So, Fred Frog is packing his bags again and heading off on his hollybobs. Look out for Facebook posts to see where he gets to. Last summer he had lots of local trips as well as adventuring into Scandinavia, Europe, Asia and all the way to New Zealand. I wonder where he will end up this time?

Everybody knows that Fred helps children to read so hopefully he will be a nice nudge to keep reading over the summer.

Other Curriculum News

Have a look in the [Science Blog](#) to see how Year 1 got on last week when they re-visited the local woodland 5 months on. They used their new art skills to sketch some of the changes brought on by the seasons. In the [Maths Blog](#) you can see how Year 2 did some graffiti Maths. Look in the [PSHE Blog](#) to see how Year 1 have been preparing the children for the summer holiday. Mason's bagpipe playing can also be found in the PSHE Blog (click his picture above to go there directly).



Thank You

South Devon College Thank You

I would like to take this opportunity to thank South Devon College for their support and engagement with St Margaret's this term. We have been working in partnership, helping their students and lecturers gain valuable industry experience while also benefitting ourselves from their knowledge and expertise. For example, it has really benefited our children in Years 5 and 6 with the social media workshops. It has also supported our staff with preparing the orchard for Forest School in September and with our shared teacher learning, working alongside college lecturers in class. I am really looking forward to this partnership growing further next year. Parents, do look out for the absolutely invaluable and must-see parent workshops on social media that will be running again in the autumn. A big thanks especially to Sally Squires who has helped ensure all this happens.

Arrangements for September 2024

The government has directed schools to increase the school day by a further 10 minutes. **The first day back for children is Monday 9th September. School starts at 8.50am and finishes at 3.20pm.** Here are timings to help with your planning:

- 8.40am the gates open (these will close at 8.55am)
- 8.50am schools starts with registration followed promptly by the start of lessons
- 3.15pm gates open again
- 3.20pm end of the school day



Breakfast Clubs opens at 7.40am and After School Club closes at 5.20pm.

I hope that collecting your child from their new class this Thursday has helped you to locate where to drop off and collect your child from September.

Summer Holiday Fun & Help

If you find yourself looking for any help and support over the holiday period, here are a few places / ideas you might try:

- The Torbay Family Hub offers all sorts of advice and support for children of all ages, including for parents of children with SEND. [Home - Family Hub \(torbayfamilyhub.org.uk\)](http://torbayfamilyhub.org.uk).
- A range of free summer holiday clubs: [Holiday Activity and Food Programme - Torbay Council](#). You can also find a list of these activities on our school [website](#) under 'Parents' – 'Useful Resources for Parents'.
- 8th August fair play day at Torre Abbey Meadows. Read more [here](#).
- Free Park Yoga: running from now until September, there are free weekly yoga sessions on Torre Abbey Green at 9.30am every Sunday. Just turn up; no need to book.

Wishing everybody a relaxing, fun and restorative summer break. See you again on Monday 9th September.



In the meantime, look out for Fred on Face Book.

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'Tim Hughes'.

Tim Hughes (Headteacher)

