



**Headteacher:** Mrs Catherine Flood

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## Dear Parents and Carers

Welcome to the start of a new academic year for what will be your child's final year in primary school at English Martyrs. Year 6 is such an exciting year and the children will relish being the oldest students in the school, taking on additional responsibilities and being role models for their younger peers as their journey with us comes to its exciting finale!

As a new teacher in the school, I'd like to introduce myself. I have taught for many years in both state and independent schools and I strongly believe that teaching and learning should be engaging, relevant and delivered with purpose to produce positive outcomes that build confidence and a sense of self-worth. If children can see for themselves the positive difference that education can make to their lives, then they will embrace lifelong independent learning and develop the academic, social, emotional and spiritual skills that they need to become the confident and successful adults they ALL have the potential to become.

I'm delighted that I will be ably supported this year by Mrs Quinn and Mrs Almond who, of course, know the children extremely well and who will continue to support and nurture the children over the course of the year. We are blessed to have such fabulous help in the classroom.

The children will have a few tests in May, but we are going to maintain curriculum breadth to deliver learning that will continue to inspire. I will hardly be mentioning these: the SATS tests, from your child's perspective, are not that big a deal - they just need to do their best as their real purpose, of course, is to help us - the teachers - plan and deliver the best possible teaching and learning in school for children in future years.

So what a year we are going to have! In English, we will be basing the first term of work around RJ Palacio's stunning book, 'Wonder'. We've chosen this book this year to develop the key literacy skills and curriculum content, as well as help inspire a love of reading. The book also explores some important social and emotional themes faced by pre-teen children, so I am sure the class will enjoy the book enormously as it will 'speak to them'.

In mathematics, there will be a strong focus on number skills, fractions and position and direction this term. We will be working hard to present the children with with real life examples of how the mathematics is used in the real world so they can see the relevance of what is being learned. We will also explore how 'cool' problem solving with maths is, and the children will have lots of opportunities to engage with this element of the subject.

In RE, the topic will be 'Called to Serve' which will about the gifts of the Spirit and Confirmation. This links to the work undertaken in the parish to prepare the children for the Sacrament of Confirmation.

We have further developed engaging programmes of study over the summer for the other curriculum subjects: World War 2 in history, lots of mapwork in geography with a focus on the Wakefield hero of longitude, John Harrison. In PE, we're supplementing orienteering, team games, tennis and dance with Physical Training fitness work: the children already know that there is 'no gain without pain!' and that they need to 'feel the burn!' But they're also learning that staying fit and healthy is very easy and great fun. In science, the topics are electricity (Are we really going to be making the stuff? Yes we are!) and light (Mr. Winfield always enjoys playing with lasers and mirrors...)



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A fulsome programme is also going to be maintained in Music, French, Art & Design (Pop Art & 3D Printing) and Computing (Staying safe online, programming robots).

In addition to that lot, we're also planning a residential trip (more information about this shortly - but learning outside of the classroom is going to be something the children will be doing a lot of), we're being visited by lots of very important and successful people to talk about what they do, why they do it, and how they got to do it (including a consultant from Leeds General Infirmary and local Wakefield MP, Mary Creagh). There will also be a class assembly this term that you will be invited to.

The frequency of homework is going to increase slightly this term, with it being set on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday. The homework will last no longer than 20 minutes and will ensure that key concepts that have been learned in the classroom are secure. It also gives you the opportunity to see what your children are up to and to get involved with this aspect of their lives. To support the children in this endeavor, we will be running a homework club on a Monday and Wednesday afternoon until 4:15 which the children are free to attend if they wish. We are introducing the 'learning platform', Edmodo, to encourage collaborative and independent learning among the year 6 children. There will be a letter going home about this - it's a helpful tool for parents too. I strongly encourage all parents to support their children as year 6 is an important transition year and the short and frequent homework tasks teach the children important time management skills and learning behaviours that will enable them to hit the ground running when they enter senior school.

You may have heard other rumours - rumours involving cake rotas for example. These are all true! Again, more information to follow shortly.

PE Kit is required on **Wednesday** and **Friday**. Shorts and white top and trainers / footwear suitable for outside are essential. PLEASE ensure each item of clothing is labelled with your child's name. Mrs Quinn, Mrs Almond and I really do enjoy our 'hunt the shorts' games so much more when we know we've found what we're looking for! :)

Finally, do come along to meet me at the Year 6 parents introduction meeting if you are able to. I'll be talking in a lot more detail about what we're going to get up to this year and how we can work together. I'd really like to get to know you as you entrust your precious child to us for six hours each day and I see our relationship very much as a partnership to ensure they can be the very best version of themselves - in every way. If you are not able to make it, do stop by the classroom if you can - the door always remains open.

With best wishes to you and your family,

David Winfield.  
Year 6 Form Teacher.