



Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2017

## SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Dear Parents and Carers,

Below is a summary of the work that has been taking place in school since October half term to continue our focus on improvement at St Vincent's:

*Writing has been a big focus this half term, following from work started earlier in the term. Teachers have been working on a new approach to teaching writing, consistent across the school, so that everything is now based on a high quality story or non-fiction text. Where possible, these texts have been linked to children's learning in the wider curriculum. A whole school overview of texts and writing, plus more detailed class overviews will be published on the school website in January.*

*This approach will help children to develop their spelling, punctuation and grammar skills in context, and will enable children to apply these skills immediately and more often into a wider range of writing.*

*New reading books are now in school so that appropriately levelled texts can be sent home as home readers for all children across the school. A huge thanks to the Friends of St Vincent's who have purchased these books, plus a catch-up reading programme for Key Stage 2, a catch-up phonics programme for Key Stage 1 and an assessment tool that will help to make sure children are reading at the appropriate level.*

*The school website has been reorganized to make it more accessible and user-friendly. Class pages will provide you with more information about the learning specific to each your child, in addition to the general curriculum and wider information available. We will continue to add further information to keep you up to date and fully informed. We are aware that the blogs are not yet back in use but are working on this - thanks for your patience.*

*Homework is now back up and running following consultation. We have tried to balance all views shared but realise that with homework, we are never going to please everyone! However, we are delighted with the standard of topic homework coming into school - well done children!*

School improvement is being closely monitored by myself and Mrs Long through classroom observation (both planned and unannounced), scrutiny of teachers' planning and evidence in children's books. We have seen a significant improvement and look forward to this being reflected in the outcomes that children achieve. All judgements being made have been quality assured by the Local Authority Senior Adviser, the Archdiocesan Schools' Officer, and our School Improvement Partner.

A new tracking system, consistent across the school is now in place to support teachers in identifying children who are falling behind in their learning early, so that intervention and support can be planned and to ensure that all children, no matter what their ability, are making at least expected progress.

Each half term at Pupil Progress Meetings, teachers will have their assessments quality assured by myself and Mrs Long, with reference to outcomes of formal tests too. This will give us chance to see how each child across the school is progressing from their individual starting points and discuss what support has been planned for those who are not progressing as expected.

In order to secure further improvement in the quality of teaching and further strengthen the progress for children, we have employed an additional teaching assistant and part-time teacher to increase capacity to support children's learning.

This gives much greater flexibility to support and challenge children of all abilities.

We have been working closely with other schools to ensure that the evidence being produced by children at St Vincent's is of a consistent standard with children in other schools. This work has particularly focused on writing, and most recent moderation was very pleasing. The changes already made to teaching and learning of writing has resulted in much greater consistency with other schools.

Some teachers have also benefited from visiting other schools to look at classroom environments, children's books and observe other teachers, bringing back some great ideas to use here at St Vincent's.

We have continued to work on making the school environment more focused on celebrating and supporting children's learning and sharing the wider life of our school. We have also re-organised rooms and resources so that every space and resource in school are being used for the benefit of the children.

Many thanks for your continued support,

*Dominic Vernon*  
Interim Headteacher