

# St Margaret's Academy

We started this week with an assembly on the power of working together to help us each achieve success. We used some drama to highlight the point of how we can fail if work opposite to each other, and that when we problem solve together, we can achieve what we aspire to. Ask your children about the two puppies on one leash drama and see if they can tell you about it.

## Strike Update

Understandably, the planned strike by some teachers on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> February is a very emotive issue for both teachers and parents, with strong views on all sides, both in support and against. From a senior leader and trustee point of view, it has been complex and challenging to find the right way forward. Our Head Teacher and Business Manager forums and groups have been lit up with discussion between schools. There has been a great deal of agonising. Every school has a different context and taken a range of approaches, including full school closure, full opening or partial closure like us. As teachers, like yourselves as parents, we do all ultimately have your children's best interests at the very heart of all the decisions we make.

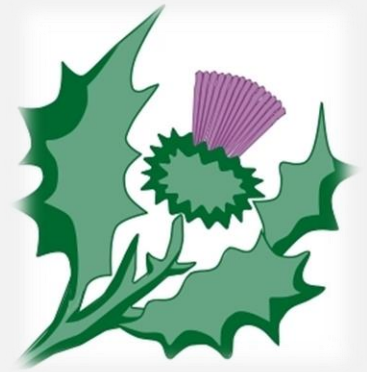
For the duration of the [strike](#), I have added a page to the website under 'Parents' where you can find my letter with information and a parent leaflet from the teacher's union, the NEU.

I would like to thank *all* parents (those who have expressed support and those who disagree) for your understanding and very much hope we can all move forwards positively together in the best interests of your children.

## Curriculum News

Two years ago we took the decision to re-design the learning experience in Years 1 and 2 so we could base it on the best practice *continuous provision* model used in Reception. This helps make learning more child-led and therefore more relevant and engaging. Mrs Tandy has been leading on this and has been updating a wonderful *Continuous Provision in KS1 Blog*. Recently, she has added a new section titled, [Continuous Provision across the Curriculum](#). In here you can see how children have used learnt skills to initiate their own learning in Maths, Science and Art... with remarkable outcomes. Well worth a look. I think it is a super example of the excellent education teachers provide for your children.

I hope you had a chance to have a look at the new *Kids Zone* on the website. Since last week there is a new video on how to punctuate direct speech and two videos on how to use cognates (similar sounding words) to translate from French to English.



Great news! Drumming lessons are now available at St Margaret's. Drumming teacher, Justin, is able to offer 30 minute lessons (in school time). An individual lesson is £16. For pairs, it's £8 and for a small group of 3 or 4, it's just £4. Please contact Justin directly if you are interested on 07714 769265 or [contact@beatwisedrums.co.uk](mailto:contact@beatwisedrums.co.uk). The website is [Drum-lessons-workshops | Beat Wise Drums | England](#)



The class with the highest attendance this week goes to

**BIRCH CLASS**  
**98.6%**  
**WELL DONE**

In the [French Blog](#) you can find photos of Year 3 translating a French letter using cognates, near cognates and prior knowledge. In the Sports Blog you can see how Year 4 got on in the local [problem solving competition](#) and read about the success of the [Lionesses](#) who continued their 100% winning run in a cup match on Thursday. Look in the Geography Blog for some super photos and to find out how [Year 5](#) got on surveying Oddicombe Beach for micro plastics and how [Year 3 Rowan](#) used their map skills to test their hypothesis about changes to the locality. In the [Reading Blog](#) you can see the certificate of recognition we received from the Open University for our work on *Reading for Pleasure* led by Mrs Turner, Mrs Tandy and Miss Pilkiewicz.



If you are looking for support to help you help your child with good comprehension of their books they read, Mrs Turner has put together [useful question prompts](#) that link to how use VIPERS to teach in school. This can be found under 'Curriculum' then scroll down to 'Subject Specific Information' and select 'Reading'.

VIPERS stands for **V**ocabulary – **I**nter – **P**redict – **E**xplain – **R**etrieve - **S**equence

### Term Date Change for September 2023

The orange dates will be non-pupil, training days for teaching staff. For the children, the first week will run from Tuesday 5<sup>th</sup> to Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> September.

	Sep-2023				
Monday		04	11	18	25
Tuesday		05	12	19	26
Wednesday		06	13	20	27
Thursday		07	14	21	28
Friday	01	08	15	22	29
Saturday	02	09	16	23	30
Sunday	03	10	17	24	

This is because one of our school improvement areas is to develop our use of ICT to enhance learning. This term and next, Miss Pritchard, our Computing Lead, is visiting other schools and trialling ideas in her class. Very excitingly, she has managed to book Mr P to lead one of our staff training days at the start of the next academic year. Unfortunately, Mr P only has Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September available. Mr P is an acknowledged expert in his field and followed by many in education. We are really lucky to secure him so don't want to miss this opportunity – hence the necessary change of date for your information. Find out more about Mr P here: <https://www.mrpict.com/>. Apologies if this causes any difficulties but hopefully the long notice will help.

### More Clubs

In response to some parent feedback about providing more clubs for the younger children, we have gradually been increasing our offer this term. We now provide additional club options after school and during the school day covering musical theatre, drumming, singing, reading, writing and maths. After half term, we will be also providing an after school dance club for those in Years 1 and 2. We very much hope this helps.

### Tip Top Parenting Tip

When researching my assembly for this week, I came across a fascinating 7 minute video about how to [help children thrive](#). It's well-worth a watch. I have added it to the *Useful Resources for Parents* on the website under *Parents*.

## Interested in being a Trustee?

We are looking to grow our school trustees. We have two different roles we would like to fill. One requires a minimum of two meetings per year (one usually virtually in the evening and one usually a visit in person). The other is a more regular role with about three events per term (one or two are usually in person with one virtual meeting).

If you are interested in helping form the direction of the school and having a more active role in the education of your children, please do come and have a chat. I am very happy to talk about the roles in more detail as is Karen Colmer our governance professional and James Bennett, the Chair of Trustees.

Also, if you know anyone out of school who might be interested, please do ask them to give me a call. This could be family members such as grandparents as well as any other professionals.

## Help with Rising Costs – Reminders

- Do you need help with child care? If so, try this website: <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/>
- Help for households – very useful government website: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/>
- This community kitchen has some very affordable meal options and is well worth a look: <https://www.turningheads.org.uk/community-kitchen/>
- The PTA has lots of quality school uniform for a small donation – see their FB page
- Martin Lewis: <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/>
- Free uniform and help with rising costs: <https://www.punkagainstopoverty.org/>
- Try here for cheaper broadband: <https://www.ofcom.org.uk/phones-telecoms-and-internet/advice-for-consumers/costs-and-billing/social-tariffs>

Enjoy your weekend.



Tim Hughes (Headteacher)



Beech	Ollie S is our star this week. You have amazed me this week with your eagerness to have a go and your writing has been fantastic. You have been super Aspirational - Well done!
Pine	Chanel is our star this week. She is an outstanding member of our class. She is always listening and following instructions and is super kind to everyone.
Oak	Lydia has impressed me with her participation and enthusiasm in the lessons this week. She has shown a great understanding of the geography of our local area and she even brought her own globe in to share with the class. Lydia has also shown resilience and great focus when writing her story this week. Fantastic effort- you are a star Lydia!
Apple	Rosie is our star in Apple this week. She is really trying with her handwriting, is always putting her hand up and getting involved in all our learning and just has a smile on her face all the time! Well done Rosie, your hard work is paying off.
Birch	Amelia is our star for showing a great improvement in all aspects of her writing and maths. She has really applied herself and this has resulted in her becoming much more independent. Well done - we're so proud of you!
Rowan	Ginny - for her sheer grit and determination to be an independent writer and reader. She continues to demonstrate such an aspirational attitude in school, at all times. We are so very proud of you.
Cherry	Veronica is the star of the week in Cherry Class. She has impressed us this week with her contributions to whole class discussions in RE and Geography lessons. Her active involvement in lessons shows her love of learning and her aspiration. Well done Veronica.
Hazel	Ava is this week's star, although you could be our star every week for going above and beyond to light up everyone's day. Thank you for always showing our core values - kindness and respect in all that you do.
Willow	Willow's star this week is for Max. Max has been incredibly aspirational this week and has worked exceptionally hard on his presentation. He has made some huge improvements and has been so resilient, even when he's had to rub things out and start again! His attitude towards his learning is just excellent! Well done, Max!
Holly	Kyle is this week's star due to his incredible maths work! He has shown such aspiration in his learning recently which has impressed us all. Keep up the hard Kyle, we are all so proud of you!
Maple	Our star of the week this week goes to a super kind helper in Maple class. Bethany is always asking if she can help tidy the classroom and offering to do little jobs for me. She has even designed a double page in our class book which looked amazing!! What a responsible, kind member of our class - well done
Hawthorn	Sophia shows great responsibility as well as respect for adults through her active listening in all lessons. We have also been impressed by how hard she has been working to do her very best in maths and with her writing - fantastic aspiration! You certainly are a star, Sophia!



# Diary Dates

31st January 2023	Year 4 Multiplication workshop 9.00-9.30
2nd February 2023	Year 2 Maths Parent and Child Workshop 9am
2nd February 2023	Year 6 Skern Lodge information meeting 3.30-4pm
3rd February 2023	Foundation Stage Phonics Workshop 9.15-10am
8th February 2023	Head Teacher Coffee Afternoon for Parents of Years 3,4,5 and 6 2.45pm
8th February 2023	Year 2 Maths Parent and Child Workshop 3.20pm
8th February 2023	Year 5 Parent DT afternoon 2pm
9th February 2023	Open classes for 'book looks' after school
10th February 2023	Non-Uniform day for Cued Speech
13th - 17th February 2023	February Half Term