Dear Parents/Carers, 15th February 2019

The children break up for the half-term holiday today Friday 15th February and return to school on Monday 25th February.

Recently the children completed a number of assessments in Literacy and Mathematics. As we are approximately halfway through the academic year, the results are a good indication of the progress the children are making. The teachers will discuss the results of these tests when they meet with you at Parents Meetings at the end of March.

During this half term, the children have been involved in a number of exciting activities including workshops on Rivers, Mathematical Art, Orienteering (Year 6), Science (Year 5), Water, Drama (Year 4), Art (Year 3). The Year 6 pupils also had a trip to the Marist Centre. The EYFS and KS1 celebrated the Chinese New Year including traditional tales this half-term.

In addition to all of this, there was also a Virtual Reality workshop for Years 1-6 which was superb. This session will also be booked for the Nursery and Reception classes after the holidays. This week the whole school, from Nursery to Year 6 enjoyed a great entertainer from “Bubbly Maths” who reinforced the magic of maths and how much fun it is.

**MATHS DAY-** Well done to everyone! What a brilliant response from all the children with their fantastic maths outfits and amazing posters! Very creative and highly imaginative! Many thanks to all the parents and staff for supporting this day. No wonder we are so consistently highly ranked in the country for maths! St. Richard’s is full of maths superstars!

**SPORT-** A very busy half-term with 3 tournaments. The Athletics team finished 7th in the Manchester Indoor Athletics at Sports City. Our two basketball teams finished 3rd and 4th in the East Manchester tournament at St. Peter’s. Our two hockey teams have done very well in the East Manchester hockey tournament at Cedar Mount-we are currently awaiting the results.

We had a visit from Mark Williams, our annual Quality Assurance school adviser just before Christmas and as mentioned in my last newsletter, here is a more detailed report of his visit. He spent half a day going round the school, looking at the school environment, talking to pupils, and working with myself and Mrs Toal on the school data. The report he writes each year gives a very accurate assessment of where the school is at this point in time. This Quality Assurance is provided to support the school’s self-evaluation process. (SEF). It is essentially the barometer between Ofsted inspections. The report highlighted that we continue to be OUTSTANDING in all areas.

Effectiveness of leadership and management:

“Leadership and management remain outstanding. Over a number of years, school leaders have ensured consistently outstanding outcomes at St. Richard’s. Self-evaluation is accurate and validated by a wide range of monitoring evidence. The recent change in leadership arrangements have not had any adverse effects on outcomes, in fact they have actually improved further in most areas.”

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment:

“Teaching, learning and assessment remain Outstanding. School leaders have a rigorous monitoring programme in place to support this judgement. This is also evidenced by the consistently outstanding outcomes seen at the school.”

Personal development, behaviour and welfare: “Personal development, behaviour and welfare are Outstanding. Behaviour in school is exemplary and is a major contributory factor to high levels of achievement.”

The report also highlights our fantastic KS2 SATs results:

Maths 95% (46% High attaining)

Reading 92% (34% High attaining)

GPS 93% (80% High attaining)

Our combined scores for Reading, Writing and Maths was 85% which ranked us in the top 6% of the country!

Maths- Top 4% in the country

GPS - Top 9% in the country

Reading - Top 10% in the country

We are of course delighted with this report which is a testimony to the hard work of the staff and children and the excellent support we receive from the parents. These sentiments were also expressed by Bishop John Arnold in a letter to the school at the end of last term after our school profile in “The Parliamentary Review”, where he commended us for supporting 25 other schools over the years.

On April 28th, my tenure of Acting Headteacher comes to an end, but I will be very much involved as the Deputy Head to ensure these high standards are maintained. The governors have appointed a new Headteacher from April 29th, which is the start of the summer term. His name is Mr Jonathan Murray and he is currently the Headteacher at St. Mary’s RC Primary School in Dukinfield.

I hope you all have a safe and enjoyable break and I look forward to seeing you on Monday 25th February.

Best regards,

J Keyworth. Headteacher