

St. Peter's 50th Anniversary Celebrations!

On Friday 30th September, we came together in Church and School to celebrate our 50th year of St. Peter's on its current site on Marshall Drive. Former and current staff, parents, governors and pupils enjoyed a Eucharist Service, dance and musical presentations from the children across the decades whilst they shared their experiences of the school, viewing the old photos and registers on display. Former Head Teachers Ken Thwaites and John Stinson also joined us and I shared some of the history and our memories of leading the school.

Our partnership with St. Margaret's Church has been strong for many years, during the 1970s and 80s with Rev Eric Smitts, the 90s and early noughties with Rev Bruce Harrison and currently with Father Jonathan. The Centenary year for the Church was a very special occasion with the parade of floats through the village one Sunday ending with a special musical and fun events. There was the first St. Peter's Day held, with 8 buses of children, parents and villagers visiting Holy Island for a special service. Other events strengthened the links between school and Church with the Carol Service held in the evening with Piano, stage blocks and musical instruments being transported to Church on the back of a lorry with some children holding them in place!

On 4th September 1972, St. Peter's Church of England Primary School opened its doors led by Head Teacher William Heseltine. The boys and the Infant school at the top of the village had been closed however 80 children continued to be educated in the remaining portion of the old school until the temporary classrooms could be transferred to the new site. There were 588 children on the register and would increase to 620 by the end of the summer term.



The school was justifiably proud of its fine new Learner Swimming Pool opened in 1973. This was made possible by the dedicated efforts of volunteers to raise the large part of £8500 needed.



A dedication of the school was held on 13th December 1973 by the Right Reverend John Yates the Lord Bishop of Whitby. The pupils enjoyed a half day holiday before arriving for lunch of Roast Topside, Yorkshire Puddings, Carrots, Roast Potatoes, Christmas Cake and Cheese and Apple, all for 12p! The school was much visited in the 1970s as an 'Open Plan School'. The numbers of pupils at St. Peter's peaked to 699 in the early 1980s before Badger Hill Primary School was built.



Mr Thwaites was appointed in September 1983 and St. Peter's established three Special Needs Classes, the Infant Assessment Class, Junior Support Base and a satellite class from Kilton Thorpe School. This approach by the school demonstrated our inclusiveness as a Church School with much

commitment from staff, governors and pupils. The new approach attracted national interest and is still a real strength of the school today.

Coming together as a school community to celebrate the anniversary will without doubt be a day everyone will remember for some time to come. Beginning with the Eucharist Service in the morning led by Father Jonathan with Ken Thwaites on the organ, John Stinson with a reading and former Chair of Governors David Jackson serving communion. The afternoon began with scones, cream and jam followed by fabulous musical presentations from the 70s, 80s, 90s and noughties. Certainly one of my best days leading the school meeting former pupils, parents and staff which included a photo of Ken, John, Jonathan and myself below the Altar!



Reading partnerships with Parents & Carers

On Monday 26th September, Reception parents and carers joined us in school for our early reading meeting and fun phonics sessions with the children. It was great to see so many families there and to share key information about Read, Write Inc and our home reading schemes. Everyone then had fun trying out some of the activities, such as playing 'I spy' and having a go at 'Fred talk' to cross the river.



Sporting Festivals at St. Peter's.

The school has hosted a number of sporting events for the schools of East Cleveland recently including Tag Rugby, Girls Football and Cross Country. It has been great to see the children participating and the parents enjoying spectating. The children showed great determination particularly in the Cross Country around the school site and the undulating tracks of Marshall Drive Playing Field.



Best wishes
Richard Unthank,
Head Teacher, St. Peter's C of E Primary School