



## ST. STEPHEN'S JUNIOR SCHOOL

HALES DRIVE, CANTERBURY, KENT, CT2 7AD

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**Headteachers:** Mrs Laura Cutts NPQH & Mrs Sarah Heaney NPQH

13<sup>th</sup> March 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

### Indian Festival of Holi

In the final week of this term, as a school we will be marking the Indian festival of Holi, the festival of colours, love and spring, which is celebrated by the Hindu religion. It is an opportunity to have fun, learn about different customs and traditions and welcome the start of spring. Many other schools in our local community have celebrated this very successfully.

On the afternoon of Monday 25<sup>th</sup> March, each class will be carrying out classroom-based Holi activities then recreating an Indian Holi festival on the school playground. The children will have the opportunity to throw and decorate each other with paint powder. This will be done in class groups throughout the afternoon, led by the teacher.

Children participating will need to bring a spare set of **old clothes (preferably white)** to wear over their uniform and **spare shoes** all in a carrier bag on the day of the event. These clothes will most certainly get covered in paint powder! The paint powder is washable but there is still a small chance of staining. They will then put these clothes over their normal uniform before the festival and can then remove them before travelling home. The paint powder is non-toxic and specifically designed for this purpose. During our Holi festival celebrations, we will be asking children not to throw powder above the shoulders, although your child is welcome to bring in goggles if they want to further protect their eyes from the paint. There will be a full risk assessment in place (please see additional information below).

Children will be dismissed at the usual place and time by their class teacher.

This fully supports our school value of belonging and we hope that whilst children are learning about another culture and religion, they are also able to have a fun memorable experience. If you do not wish your child to take part in the paint throwing please inform your child's class teacher.

Yours faithfully

**Mr Raffell**

**RE curriculum lead**

### **Additional information**

During our Holi festival celebrations, all children will be asked to throw the non-toxic powder paint below head height. This is to reduce the risk of inhalation, particularly for asthmatic children. In the event that any small particles are inhaled, this could affect people with asthma. The colours used in the festival celebration are in powder form (corn starch), which could irritate the airways of someone with asthma and result in an asthma flare-up, particularly if they have a sensitivity to corn.

Parents of children with asthma should be aware of the potential risk, and use their best judgement as to whether it will affect them, this can include consulting their GP to ensure it is safe to participate.

All children with asthma will bring their prescribed inhalers with them for the Holi festival event. Additionally, children may want to wear a face mask to further prevent inhalation, however this will need to be provided from home.