



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong

Diocese of Plymouth

7th April 2017

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to take the opportunity to update you on Mrs. Armstrong's health and the life of the school this week. Mrs. Armstrong is feeling better and continues to recover at home. She has asked us to pass on her thanks to you all for the many kind gifts and messages of support that you have sent her. Please continue to keep both the whole family and the wider school community in your prayers.

In last week's letter I mentioned that there would be news for prospective governors. There is, however, still ongoing work to be completed in this area and therefore in the first week back after the Easter break you will hear directly from our new chair, Mrs. Ann Harris. I appreciate that this is a further delay but I can assure you that the work being undertaken is both of a very high standard and will directly impact on our continuing journey of school improvement.

I also mentioned the homework group which met for the first time earlier this term. The next step in the work of this group will be for the teaching staff to discuss the findings of the initial parent meeting and see where we can work together to gain improvements to our system in the short term. Ideas discussed by the group included raising funds to buy a commercially produced set of homework books for every year group and a school wide standardisation of homework set dates e.g. every class would have a maths homework set on the same day and due on the same day. Again, this is a process that will take time but I would like to thank those who were able to attend the meeting and those who contributed suggestions by email. Any further comments on this issue are welcome; please direct them via the school office.

Year 6 are currently within a revision cycle for their upcoming SATs exams which begin on Monday 8th May 2017 and conclude at the end of that week. Please can I impress on all parents of Year 6 children the need to be in school for that week. In more general terms of absence and lateness, there are still significant numbers of children who consistently arrive late to school. This has a detrimental impact on their own education and causes disruption to their peers and teaching staff. Please, therefore, ensure your child is in school and ready to learn by 8:40 when activities are in place to help them get their day off to a flying start. Arrivals after the gate has closed at 8:50 will be marked as late and may trigger a letter and/or a meeting with the school with regard to solving this issue.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to all the staff, children and parents who have risen to the occasion of what has been a challenging half term. Back in a cold, dark week in February, myself and Mrs. Betts addressed the children and said that Mrs. Armstrong would want to be proud of them in their behaviour and their work. I have to say that having had to delay the announcement of the house points award yesterday (too many to count in the time given-Red/Portland being the winners), it is clear to see that all the staff at St Mary's will agree with me that the children here have made us feel very proud on both counts.

I wish you all a relaxing Easter break.

Yours faithfully,

R Howard

Mr. R. Howard

Acting Headteacher.



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Devon Road – Poole – Dorset – BH15 3QQ

Telephone: (01202) 676207 Website: www.st-marys.poole.sch.uk E-mail: office@st-marys.poole.sch.uk