



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong

Diocese of Plymouth

3rd March 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. Betts and I visited Mrs. Armstrong last Sunday. We delivered the cards, flowers and messages of support that you have sent in. Mrs. Armstrong asked us to pass on her gratitude to you all for these kind gestures. Please continue to keep her and the family in your prayers and remember there is a collection on the gate today after school.

I would also like to thank you for the improvement we have seen in terms of children arriving in time for the start of the school day; this is much appreciated. Just to reiterate-

Children have early morning activities provided from 8:40 a.m. and the register is taken at 8:50. Therefore, please allow sufficient time for your child to walk round to their class, prepare themselves for the start of the school day and to be in their classroom in readiness for the register to be taken at 8:50.

This week has also seen the following events in the academic and spiritual life of the school:

A wonderful Liturgy led by Fr. Colin on Ash Wednesday. The children's behaviour and understanding were a joy to behold.

A successful audit of the school's safeguarding arrangements was achieved. Although we are all responsible for safeguarding at St Mary's, Mrs. Betts (Designated Safeguarding Lead) always works especially hard to ensure that our systems are comprehensive and effective and ably demonstrated this to our auditor during the audit process.

There has been a constant stream of children coming into the office to show us the house point rewards they are winning for their tables knowledge (this includes some children from Foundation stage).

As tables are so fundamental to confidence in maths, I would like to remind you of the following points:

Firstly, please find attached a document outlining what tables knowledge is required for each year group in the school. It really is helpful for children to be instantaneous in their recall of these facts (including division) before they move on to content from the year group above.

Tables are best memorised little and often-e.g. 5 minutes a day is more useful than a half hour revision slot once a week. They can be said forwards, backwards and from the middle of a sequence e.g. "Tell me the 3 x table starting at 18 and going back to zero..."



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Tables can be said at breakfast, in the bath, before bed, and on the way to school. They can also be used as a code to unlock treats such as time on an iPad.

I understand how difficult it can be to find time to sit and work with your child when family life is so busy, therefore please find below some websites that can be used independently by your child:

“Hit The Button” – Random questions where the answers are always visible. We aim to achieve at least 20 correct answers within the 1 minute time given. <http://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button>

“Timestablesme.co.uk”=Reliable and customisable sheets that allow for testing of specific multiplication and division facts quickly and easily. There is also an online random test function. We will be doing a “Top Gear” style best times competition using this site in the next few weeks. The criteria for this competition is simple: 100 questions correct with no mistakes-any fact (including division) up to 12x12 in the shortest time.

<http://www.timestables.me.uk/>

Thank you for your continued support of the school, it is appreciated by all of us at St. Mary’s.

Yours faithfully,

R Howard

Mr R. Howard
Acting Headteacher.