



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong
Diocese of Plymouth

3rd 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 again 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.

As I have mentioned in previous weekly updates, the school is continuing on its journey of self-improvement. As you may recall, one of the issues that the school and CAST have been asked to look at is the structure and purpose of the governance board. Following a meeting of the local governance board last week, I would like to thank Mr. Matt Desmier for his excellent service as chair through the last two years. Mr. Desmier has now decided to step down from this role although I am pleased to say that he will remain an integral part of the wider local governance board.

Following a formal vote, it is now my great pleasure to welcome Mrs. Ann Harris as our new chair of governors. Ann is a National Leader of Governance (NLG) and, as an ex-Headteacher and OFSTED inspector, she brings a wealth of experience to the role. There will now be an ongoing focus with regard to the governors involving themselves more fully in the life of the school. For those of you who have expressed an interest in becoming a governor, thank you for both your interest and your patience. There will be further information on the next steps of this process in the final update letter of this term.

We also say goodbye to Mrs. McNamara and Mrs. Houldsworth this term as they leave St. Mary's for new challenges. I would like to thank Mrs. McNamara for the enormous amount of work she has done in raising the profile of a plethora of languages in the time she has been with us. I also know you will join me in welcoming Mrs. Larkin who will take up the position of Modern Foreign Languages leader in the first week of the Summer term. Our thanks to Mrs. Houldsworth too; she has been instrumental in securing the good outcomes we have been recognised for in the EYFS stage.

We are currently having a real push on clearing the school of clutter. Staff have been extremely busy sorting out their classrooms as well as the communal areas of the school. The evidence of this can be seen in the skip! We will continue this week and, with that in mind, ***I would like to invite you to remove all items of lost property from school this week.*** (Please name all objects with at least a permanent marker). ***All non-collected items will be disposed of by the end of this week*** so I do urge you to spend some time both looking through lost property and talking to your child about the importance of looking after their own belongings; a valuable life skill as well as a way of being kinder to the environment by cutting down on waste.

My thanks to those parents and carers who were able to attend the rescheduled homework group last Thursday.



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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

Having looked at the results of the survey on this issue, it has become clear that there is never going to be complete consensus here but that there are some actions we (working together) can take in the short term to improve outcomes at home and at school. More details to follow in next week's update.

Finally, a plea to those who drive into the school. ***PLEASE ENSURE YOU ARE ABLE TO DROP OFF YOUR CHILDREN SAFELY AND MOVE ON AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.*** Bottlenecks in the traffic caused by stationary vehicles lead to frustration all round and could also contribute to dangerous driving conditions. Please allow a sensible amount of time to move through the car park and back down Devon Road as this will help the children, other parents & carers and residents too.

Yours faithfully,

R Howard

Mr. R. Howard
Acting Headteacher.