



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong

Diocese of Plymouth

15th May 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, as some of you may know, attended church at St. Mary's recently. I will have more news regarding her return to work in next week's update. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the kindness shown since the February half term. Please continue to keep Mrs. Armstrong, her family and the wider school community in your prayers.

Last week saw our Year 6 pupils take their SATs tests in their first taste of formal examinations. The process of administering the SATS papers is very rigorous and demands an extraordinary number of people to ensure adherence to the guidelines from the Department For Education. My thanks to the governors who gave up their time to ensure that the whole week progressed smoothly towards the final exam on Thursday. I would also like to thank the staff who have given up so much of their own time in order to help Year 6 give these exams their best shot. Please note; no more early maths club for Year 6.

Crazes come and go in school life and we are currently experiencing the Fidget Spinner which has taken the place of last year's diablo as the must have accessory in the playground. A small minority of children may benefit from having a small item to manipulate when listening in class but in general there is no need for this type of device to be in school. Please could we ask that you do not allow these or other similar devices to be brought into school? We cannot guarantee to keep these items safe and time spent monitoring their use and sorting out disputes related to them could be better spent on learning from sites such as:

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/maths-games/hit-the-button>

or for those with more confidence:

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

Don't forget that times tables are the absolute foundation of all maths skills in primary school and that you can practise them every single day; in the bath, on the way to school, before bed and even on holiday. Mastery of these tables, including division facts, will be one of the best investments you can make for your child. Please see me if you would like any further resources or guidance in this crucial area of your child's education.



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Finally, I would like to share with you the story of a young lady in Year 6. With the SATS out of the way and the focus now on writing, one of our pupils wrote me a very persuasive letter outlining her desire to hold a KS2 movie night as part of the celebratory atmosphere that comes after a gruelling week of examinations. Her written style was so clear and compelling that we felt we had to get this wish granted. Please, therefore, if you have a child in Year 5 or 6, support the KS2 MOVIE NIGHT which will be held on Friday the 19th May from 5:30 p.m. until 7 p.m. in the school hall. It will be a great evening and should capture some of the community spirit which was so welcome at the weekend's First Holy Communion family day. Our children, as ever, did us proud and we look forward to celebrating their full entry into the life of the church over the coming weeks.

Yours faithfully,

R Howard

R. Howard.

Acting Headteacher.