



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

*Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong
Diocese of Plymouth*

23rd September 2019

Dear Parents and Carers,

It has become apparent over the past 3 weeks of this new academic year that there are a few issues for which we feel the need to give gentle reminders about in order for our school to work as positively as possible within our community.

Health and Safety

We have unfortunately received a number of complaints from residents in neighbouring roads who are having their drives blocked and other examples of inconsiderate parking at the start and end of the school day. Please be mindful that Devon Road has parking restrictions at these times and parking, on the right hand side as you are walking to school, is "resident only" parking at all times of the day.

We are also aware that a few parents are still driving in to Devon Road and having to perform numerous turns to exit the road after drop off. Please can we ask that you do not do this for the safety of all the children.

If you are using Early Birds breakfast club please use the disabled bays to drop off your child and do not park in the staff parking bays. This will ensure the safety of your child, as they will not need to cross the car park and will allow staff to promptly and safely start their working day. If you wish to walk in to school with your child for Early Birds sessions then please park in Hunt Road or Pound Lane.

School Uniform



We are sure you agree that children wearing school uniform promotes a sense of pride, and symbolises belonging to the school and a sense of our community. We find that school uniform has a positive impact on good behaviour and attitudes in school and our children wear it with a sense of pride. Children often feel like they stand out and look different from their peers if they are wearing clothes that do not follow the school policy which can cause unnecessary upset.



OR

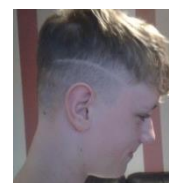


Please refer to our uniform policies attached.

We have found that in particular there is some confusion with the blouses and shirts. If your child wears a blouse with a reversed collar then there is no need a school tie but, if the shirt or blouse has a top button then a tie is necessary. School ties are available to buy from the office for £5. We also have a quantity of nearly new uniform which is available for a small donation to the PTA. Please contact Mrs Wright if you would like to see if there is anything suitable.

Please also remember that we do not allow any extreme haircuts, this includes “tramlines” and severe “undercuts”. Hair should be of natural colour and only modest, school coloured hair bands and elastics are allowed.

Please note that the school’s decision is always final.



Lost Property

We have moved lost property in to the foyer to allow easier access for parents and carers. We already have a number of brand new cardigans and jumpers which have not been claimed. Please ensure that all items are clearly named so that we can reunite items with their owners as soon as possible!

Term Time Absences

On the first day of this term we had an attendance rate of 94%, meaning 30 sessions of school were missed across the school in one day. Children who are taken out of school at the very beginning of a term often have difficulty settling in to the routines of school on their return from a family holiday. They miss the benefit of bonding with their peers in these important few days, which can impact on their socialising throughout the year. The impact of missing early learning opportunities is evidenced by weakened academic performance.

We discourage any requests for holidays in term time and are unable, by law, to authorise any leave unless there are exceptional circumstances. As a school we aim to maintain a minimum attendance rate of 96% and maintain parents’ and pupils’ awareness of the importance of regular attendance. We have an attendance policy in tandem with the Local Authority and work with the School Attendance Worker to ensure that children do not miss out on their education. When a child is taken out of school for a day, for a birthday treat for example, we find it makes them very uncomfortable not being able to tell the truth in class and then often do tell; please do not put your child in this position.

If children are unwell it is, of course advisable for them to be at home, where they can receive the love and care they need to regain good health. However please rest assured that if they are able to come in to school our First Aid trained staff can administer **prescribed** medicine, please ask the school office for a consent form.

Cashless School

As announced at last term we have moved to become cashless, thank you to those who have supported this. Please contact the school office if you have any difficulties with the

system. One quick tip is that when booking you do need to load a payment first before making any bookings. Please see the link below for SCOPAY help:

<https://scopay.atlassian.net/wiki/spaces/SCOPAY/overview/>

We will shortly be sending out information letters to those parents who have not yet used the system, hopefully you will find this useful.

EU Settlement



Finally, with Brexit looming, we may have children who are EU Nationals, or have parents, carers or family members who are EU Nationals. You may need assistance to get the immigration status needed to continue to live, work or study in the UK, and be eligible for public services and public funds. The Home Office is working with local organisations to make sure the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) is accessible to all and capable of handling vulnerable applicants with flexibility and sensitivity.

A small team of engagement and case officers, based within Citizens Advice BCP, Citizens Advice in Dorset and Dorset Race Equality Council are available to help, inform and more importantly provide support to anyone who is finding any aspect of the application challenging.

If you know of any European nationals within your networks and communities who may need advice and help in their application, do not hesitate to raise awareness of the scheme and of the free help available. Anyone can refer themselves in to the service using the details below:

For FREE help or advice with an EUSS application, please contact Citizens Advice BCP

Text or Telephone Maggie: 07761 092704 / General Advice Line: 03444 111 444

Email: euss.advice@citizensadvicebcp.org.uk

For further information please visit <https://www.citizensadvicebcp.org.uk/home/eu-settlement-scheme/>

Guidance can be found at www.gov.uk/eusettledstatus

I hope that you have found this bulletin helpful.

Yours faithfully,

Helen Armstrong
Headteacher