



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong
Diocese of Plymouth

5th February 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I was really hoping that this week I would be able to say that things are getting a little easier and that we are getting into systems and routines which help us move forward positively. But the reality is that it is not getting any easier at all for any of us. We are all feeling the strain of this 'Lockdown'. As I am sat writing this letter looking out of my patio windows and the rain is pouring. I keep thinking of you all in your own homes. Some of you will be working and teaching, some of you will be teaching one child whilst others of you will be having to teach many children all of different ages. You are all doing such a wonderful job. I want you to know that the teachers are amazed at how positive you all are and we are all so grateful for the support you are giving to your children.

Ironically it has been 'Mental Health Week' this week. I really hope that you have all been able to find some time for you. It really is important that we take care of ourselves. Just last night I had a catch up with some friends over zoom. I realised how much I had missed talking to them. It made me feel so much happier. You are all very special people and you are surviving a pandemic. Please make sure that you do look after yourselves.



I was sent a link to this website this week <https://www.alonetogether.org.uk/>. Alone [Together] was created in response to the coronavirus pandemic and now exists as an archive resource for those who face periods of isolation in their lives. For others, it may be a useful reflection of a challenging time where much was learned. Our online resources don't come from theories; they all come from those with experience of social distancing or isolation, people who have lived this reality either intentionally, like monks and nuns, or against their will, like hostages or the housebound.

ALONE [TOGETHER]

"Inspiring each other to learn, in the light of Christ"

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We have been fortunate that the staff have continued to have negative results using the lateral flow tests. They have all been amazing at remembering to test twice a week and reporting their results as appropriate. I am very grateful to them all for their support.

Father John has arranged to lead our liturgy next Friday. It will be recorded so that it can go into the Google Classroom for all children. Today our liturgy was based centred around the CAFOD's Water of Life Assembly. We found out how even though we are all apart, we are still connected. We travelled to a place called Afar in Ethiopia, one of the hottest regions on earth, to meet people who make long journeys to collect water because it is so scarce. We wondered if you would join us over half term in the 'Walk for Water Campaign' which is taking place virtually on the 20th February. Also we are encouraging you to take part in the water droplet trail. Please stick a droplet in your window and then walk and see how many droplets you can see.

Please watch the assembly again here <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/Primary-teaching-resources/Primary-school-assemblies/Water-of-life-primary>

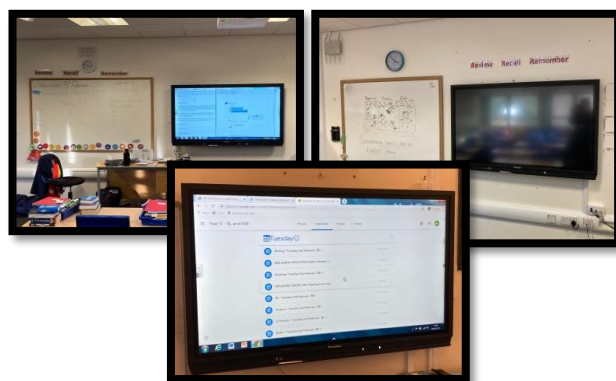


Here are the instructions <https://cafod.org.uk/Education/School-fundraising/Water-Droplet-Trail>

After 20 years we have finally had our SMART boards in Key Stage 2 updated. All eight classrooms have had a new board fitted. Fingers crossed next time it will be Key Stage One who will benefit.

I have been amazed at the talents of our children. One absolute positive of lockdown and remote education is that as a result of the Google Classroom I really do feel that I know more about the whole child.

I feel blessed to be able to see what our children get up to at home as well as with their school work.



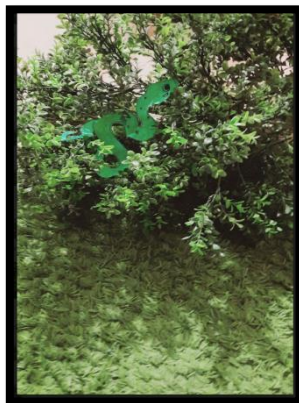
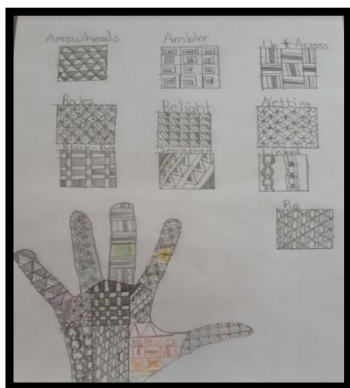
Jake in FS2 challenged his Dad to Mr Vince's Sock Challenge. Jake won one and drew one! Well done Jake. The best bit was that they all laughed a lot!

I was thrilled to watch videos of our younger children reading stories to their friends. Leonardo in Year 1 read a Peppa Pig book brilliantly.

In Year 2 the children are becoming more and more confident at reading books to each other. Their art work is also amazing and they are always drawing and making amazing things.

Here is Nathan's snake and Bessie's narwhale.

In Year 3 Evana did some amazing Zentangles.



In Year 4 Sam shared a video of himself on his bike. He was going very fast up and down the hills and Max has been entertaining us with cartoons!

Year 5 have amazing talents as well. I watched Hollie, Katie and Harriet all doing gymnastics using a high bar. They were brilliant. Samuel had even made an animated movie!



In Year 6 we have amazing scientists who have been making blood soup!



Next week is Safer Internet Day. We will be sharing activities that you will be able to complete to support your child in understanding how to stay safe whilst using the internet.





The children in Year 4 remembered Captain Tom Moore. May his good work and powerful messages that have inspired our children live on forever "Tomorrow will be a better."

I am pleased to share with you that there are lots more house points that have been awarded this week. Thank you to you all for contributing.

Red 428 Blue 423

Green 435 Yellow 401



Thank you for all your thoughts, kind words, suggestions and prayers. Please keep sharing them.

Please stay safe and well.

Yours faithfully,

Helen Armstrong

Helen Armstrong

Headteacher