



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Helen Armstrong
Diocese of Plymouth

9th October 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

This week I received an email from BCP which helps us to explain why we are discouraging parents from being on site and for not lingering outside school.

"BCP Council has one of the highest attendance rates in the country at the moment, testimony to all of the hard work that has gone on to ensure pupils and school employees can return safely and get on with the crucial business of educating children, and the range of benefits this brings including social and emotional benefits."



We are grateful to parents who have supported their schools by understanding that the less time that they spend at school gates, or on premises, the more likely we are to be able keep schools fully open for as long as possible. Your schools all wish that they could invite you on to site for parents' evenings, open visits and to meet with teachers face to face. However we have asked them to limit access to adults who work in school or have professional duties that require attending school in person.

We are urging all schools and providers to continue to take all necessary measures to limit the number of adults coming onto the premises, including parents. Almost all confirmed cases in BCP schools have been sourced in family circles. Even with the best planning in a COVID safe way, we know that transmission can and does occur from events that involve more than a handful of people. Reducing the number of people coming into schools from the community is one of the surest ways of limiting the risk of transmission of COVID. The fewer positive cases we have in a school setting, the less likelihood of having to send children and teaching staff home to self-isolate. This position was fully supported by the Our Dorset COVID-19 Health Protection Board which meets regularly to review risks in key settings like schools, as part of our responsibility to deliver an effective local outbreak management plan."



The good news is that we have managed to secure a free trial with 'SchoolCloud', who are offering a video appointment system for parent consultations. Here are the dates to put in your diary. The teachers will be holding their consultations on Monday 9th November and Wednesday the 11th November, between 3.30-6.30pm. You will be sent details of how to log on and book your appointment as soon as we receive the details.

As you all know communication is key and one of the feedback points from the teachers in the bubbles is that they needed a way to communicate between 'bubbles' and with the office and SLT. As a result we have invested in the help of the good old 'Walkie Talkie'.

Apparently we all need a 'Handle Name' I wonder if anyone can guess what they have chosen for me?



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

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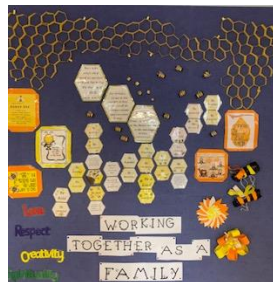
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We continue to witness both children and adults living out our vision is “Inspiring each other to learn, in the light of Christ” in school. Here is an amazing snippet of writing produced by Year 6.

Adam wrote:

Equipped like an ancient warrior, Thorin trudged tiredly through the dense dark - leaves wiping him clean. He approached his tribe, pain tightening his muscles. When he returned to his small hut, he told his mother what he saw: the theatre of green, full of costumes with an orchestra of sounds. He always dreamed of exploring by himself. He had trained for years and years. Yet, his father disapproved of him dying in the wild. He was the tribe's leader. The man who defeated the three headed snake, the man who defeated the Octoion.

Miss Howard and the Year 4 children have made this amazing new front entrance display “Working together as a family”.



Last week we had 77% of children using Google Classroom this week it is 87%. Thank you to all those that have logged on and fingers crossed we will soon have everyone on there.

This week the children have answered over 190,000 questions on IXL. Very well done.



More good news is that we have also renewed our subscription with ‘Timetables Rockstars’ and the children will be given a reminder of their password. At the end of Year 4 all the children will be tested on their tables by the government so this will help them all prepare and become proficient.



We received a certificate from 'Sports for Schools' this week from the event that took place before Lockdown. We cannot thank you enough for helping to raise £973.96 to develop sports at our school.



Thank you for all the harvest donations that we received today. We celebrated 'Harvest' with a whole school liturgy enabling us to think, pray and decide how we can help others. Here is a picture of some of the donations you so kindly sent in, we were overwhelmed and thankful of your kindness and we know the food bank will be too. Thank you.

In Music, Year 1 thought about harvest and the gifts that we have been given.

We learnt some signs for the song Harvest Samba.



I had a meeting with our PTA Chairperson and Treasurer this week. They wanted to give me advance warning that after 6 years of service to St. Mary's they and the majority of the committee will be stepping down at the end of the year due to their children moving onto secondary education. We cannot thank them enough for all they have done for our school.

As a result, we need to be proactive in recruiting a new committee who could work alongside them this year and then take over next year. If you are interested in becoming a member of our PTA and raising funds and putting on events for the children then please let the office know.

They are such a great committee that they suggested that we hold a virtual coffee morning for the parents in EYFS and in Year 1 so that they can share with them the events that they usually hold throughout the year and we pray that we will soon be able to hold again.



This weeks the 'House Points' awarded were:

Red 158
Green 146
Blue 146
Yellow 141

Thank you once again for all your support this week.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Helen Armstrong". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first name "Helen" and the last name "Armstrong" clearly distinguishable.

Helen Armstrong
Headteacher