

## Headteacher News

### Mixing Classes - Questions and Answers

Thanks to the parents who attended the Q&A session on Wednesday and apologies to any who missed the opportunity. Apparently, last week's Beacon went directly to email spam for some reason which means some did not know it was taking place, or only got to know last minute. We did nothing different this end regarding sending the Beacon – just one of those weird technical anomalies I guess.

Most of the discussion we had was regarding the rationale behind the change. I highlighted some of the stark imbalances between many of the classes in terms of boys/girls, behavioural need, additional SEN support required, social/emotional need, etc. and that by balancing these out, it would be better and fairer for the children across each of the year groups.

A couple of key questions are worthwhile sharing with everyone. I was asked when the new class lists would be decided. The answer is that I hope staff will be able to complete these by the end of next week (although this is very ambitious due to the additional workload of report writing at the moment). But, as soon as ALL of the new classes have been decided, we'll communicate them to children and parents along with next year's allocation of classes for every year group. I did assure those present that as soon as this was decided, we'd let everyone know. One question was whether these new class lists would be 'set in stone'. The answer to that is 'yes'. Due to demographics and our popularity, classes are almost completely full across the school, so there would be no spare spaces to move children around. If spaces became free during the year, there might be the potential to move an individual but we'd see this as a very last resort.

It was queried whether we could provide additional opportunities for the new classes to get together before the end of the year (over and above the 'class swaps' we ordinarily do). It's always complicated to organise this but I promised to raise this with the year group leaders in Foundation, 2 and 4 to see if we could. Any opportunity to ensure the children feel more confident about the change should be exploited so, if we can timetable it in, we will provide additional times together with their next teacher.

Another question raised related to the three possible options I explained in my original letter: 1) no change to a year group at all, 2) a change of a few children or, 3) a complete change to all three classes. It was queried whether I foresee less significant changes happening in future years if these current swaps are successful. In an ideal world, that answer would be 'yes' – for example, if we get the 'remixed' Y2 classes right then hopefully we won't need to do another big changeround when they get to Y4. However, I explained that imbalances happen for a number of reasons outside of our control. We may have, for example, four girls leave one of those classes over the next two years and they are replaced with four boys. We may have three high attaining pupils leave who are replaced with three high needs SEN pupils. These scenarios would begin to create imbalances. It's impossible to know what changes might happen over the next two years which would then influence to what extent the classes needed mixing up again (or not).

It was questioned whether we'll be keeping an eye on children to see how they adjust to the change. That answer is a resounding 'yes'. We will of course keep a close eye on everyone, as we always do, but be particularly conscious of those we know are more anxious about being in a different class.

I think that after the initial reactions, children have become more used to the idea. And, like with many things, the thought of having to do something is often far worse than the experience of actually doing it. We did discuss how this should also be viewed as an opportunity. It will develop children's resilience (which is extremely important), provide them with an opportunity to get to know and work alongside other children within their year group, and potentially enable them to develop a wider circle of friends than they had before. Ultimately, all that we ask is that children do as they always do here – don't shy away from a challenge and give it a go.

If any parents wish to discuss anything further you know where to find me! I'm more than happy to talk it through or, instead, email me – head@mpsplymouth.net.

## Diary Dates

### Mon 19<sup>th</sup> June 2017

- Race for Life event

### Wed 21<sup>st</sup> June 2017

- Yr 2 – Trip to Wembury

### Mon 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017

- Foundation & KS1 Sports Day

### Tues 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017

- KS2 Sports Day

### Wed 5<sup>th</sup> July 2017

- Reserve Sports Day

### Tues 25<sup>th</sup> July 2017

- Leavers' assembly
- Last day of term 2:30pm finish (Yr6 finish at 1.30pm)

### Wed 26<sup>th</sup> July 2017

- Start of the summer holidays

### Mon 4<sup>th</sup> Sept 2017

- Non-pupil day

### Tues 5<sup>th</sup> Sept 2017

- First day of term

### Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> Oct Inc.

- Half term

### Wed 20<sup>th</sup> Dec – 2<sup>nd</sup> Jan Inc.

- Christmas holiday

### Wed 3<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2018

- Non pupil day

## Monty's Den

Monty's Den is our on-site after school care. Call on 07522 429599 for more information or to book a session. Flexible booking available.

[www.thedens.co.uk](http://www.thedens.co.uk)



## Proms in the Playground

What a wonderful evening we all had! Thank you to all our choirs for singing so well. You sounded brilliant! Many thanks to our bumper audience and staff who helped.

### Foundation News

Finally the summer has arrived! The children have begun to practise their games skills ready for Sports Day on Monday 3rd July in the morning. They have also enjoyed talking about holidays and learning about Great Britain and Spain. Next week we will be having fun with activities based on 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' and watching our Foundation caterpillars grow.

### Year 1 News

It has been a lovely, sunny week in Year 1. We've all very much enjoyed using Numicon to deepen our understanding of addition and subtraction as well as learning, rehearsing and performing some superhero poems! To catch a glimpse of these please check out E-schools where you will find some real superhero Year 1 children bravely performing. We hope that you all have a relaxing weekend enjoying the lovely weather, maybe some of you will enjoy performing your poems again on the beach!

### Year 2 News

It's been another fantastic week in year 2! It was great to see the year 2 choir sing so fantastically at Proms in the Playground - well done! We are looking forward to our trip to Wembury beach next.

### Year 3 News

Year 3 were excited and a little apprehensive this week to receive a letter confirming their date for their evacuation to Calstock. They have been working hard to make sure they are prepared, focusing on what an evacuee would wear, take with them and where they might live. Next week the children will be writing a description of themselves as an evacuee. In Maths the children have been persevering to achieve their 'calculation passports'- proving to us they can use all four operations. Any continued practise of the four operations and methods we use would be brilliant as next week we will be putting all four operations into problem solving contexts. Please see teacher if you would like another copy of our calculation policy and examples of the methods we use. Many thanks for your continued support.

### Lost & Found

Amelie Haley (Class P) has lost her new school cardigan. It is named in the pocket. Please contact the school office if you know of it whereabouts. Thank you.

### Lost Property

The lost property remains in the first aid room until Friday 23rd June, after which it will be disposed of. So if your child has lost anything please make your way along to have a look.

### Year 4 News

What a fantastic week Year 4 have had! In English, the children have been on a machine hunt and discussed various creative ways the gadget could function. They have written descriptions on this using some imaginative vocabulary and a range of sentence types.

In Maths, the children have been 'loving a challenge' to solve multiplication problems. They have shone with their 'perseverance' skills and proved they can work collaboratively together.

We have also tested materials around the classroom in Science to see if they were conductors or insulators.

Please ensure your child is continuing to read at home as often as possible and is practising their times tables and Spotlight Spellings. Thanks for your continued support! Have a lovely weekend.

### Year 5 News

Some of the year 5 children were invited to Stoke Damerel Community College on Wednesday and took part in either a geography or an art lesson. The children had an enjoyable time and received fantastic feedback from the staff at SDCC.

In maths this week, we have been solving word problems and practising our reasoning skills. While in English, the children have completed their mythical creature sonnet.

Although there are only a few weeks left of the term, remember the 'Reading Challenge' is continuing, so read to an adult as often as you can.

### Year 6 News

Year 6 are well into rehearsals for the school production. The actors have worked very hard to learn their lines and their ability to respond to stage directions is impressive! Their musical talent also shines through. Behind the scenes, lots of work is taking place from the creative team, stage management team and the marketing team. You'll hear more about the event soon. If your child is on stage and requires a costume, please can you talk through with what they are planning to wear.

### Parent Governor Ballot

The two parents that were elected as Parent Governors in Wednesday's ballot were Mr Richard Nunn and Mrs Catherine Mapstone. Congratulations.

### Thrift Shop

We have many items of good quality second hand uniform including, sweat shirts, cardigans, trousers, shorts, skirts and summer dresses at 50p and item.

It is now located outside the Cafe. Feel free to pop along and have a look when the cafe is open at the end of the day.

### School Games - Hockey

Congratulations to the year 6 children that represented our school in the Primary Hockey Festival held at Marjons on Wednesday. The squad of 8 started with the pool matches winning all 4 games, 8-0. 1-0, 4-0 and 10-0 making us the winners overall and playing in the cup knock out round. Unfortunately losing this match 1-0, and out of the competition. The team played extremely well, with positive feedback from other members of staff. Well done team you were fantastic and showed incredible team work.

### Athletics

What a glorious day on Wednesday for the children to compete in this years outdoor Athletics event held at Brickfield. With over 50 schools participating in this event, the schools were split into 3 categories, Montpelier being in the Major category. Entering all events, the children had to finish in the top 2 of their heat to progress into the final, 6 of our children reached the final and 3 out of 4 relay teams. All children were fantastic in all running and field events. Congratulations team you should be very proud of your achievements. A special thank you to parents for your continued support and the ice-lollies.

All kit to be returned ASAP please.

**Please note** - Netball and Athletics after school has now finished.

### Our School's Race for Life.

#### MONDAY 19<sup>th</sup> JUNE.

To mark the 'Race for Life' day, the day will be 'mufti sportswear' including all or some pink, with suitable running shoes, as ALL the children will be taking part during the school day. All children will receive a Race for Life medal to acknowledge both effort and achievement.

Hot weather is forecast for Monday. Please ensure your child has a drink, a hat and sun cream applied prior to coming to school.

We look forward to seeing all of you who are taking part in the family event in Central Park. Registration is from 3:40pm and the race begins at 4 pm.

Many thanks, Race for Life Team

### Children's University Passports / Armed Forces Day

If you are going to the Hoe on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June for the Armed forces day you can take your passports to the Military Kids Club Heroes and they will stamp your passport.