



### Head teacher News

I always try to remain uncontentious and apolitical in my Headteacher news but this week I wish to talk SATs, which is always guaranteed to be emotive whether you're a pupil, parent or teacher. Successive governments have told us that *'it's what parents want'* although I've rarely found this to be the case, and certainly the recent 'Let Our Kids Be Kids' campaign, started by a group of parents who have *'had enough of endless testing, enough of teachers not being trusted to teach, enough of an Ofsted driven, dull, dry curriculum aimed solely at passing National Curriculum tests'*, echoes the sentiments of many. They also tell us that teachers need the SATs to tell them what children can do. I can categorically tell you that teachers do not need these narrow tests for this; our ongoing informal assessments provide a far more in-depth and rounded evaluation of each pupil's capabilities.

Last week, we were visited by someone from the Schools and Settings team at Plymouth City Council to check that all of our SATs papers were being kept under lock and key and that none had been opened by us prematurely. The implicit message here is, of course, that we may be cheating – opening the tests early and teaching the children the content. As principled professionals this is nothing short of utterly offensive. Needless to say, they found the papers locked away in the cupboards in my office and every pack of papers remained sealed. Little apology for the implied insult before they moved on to the next school. At this point, some will chorus that schools have occasionally been found actually cheating. When I hear of this, I'm not sure whether to be more disappointed in the colleagues who have been driven to such measures, or in the absurdly high-stakes, pressured system of accountability that we have found ourselves in that makes these people even consider doing such a thing.

Our Year 6 children performed admirably though this week. These new test papers, which are considerably more difficult than in previous years, undoubtedly caused varying degrees of stress and upset for pupils. We always try to minimise this as much as possible but these tests have now become notorious in their own right and, whatever we say to the children, they definitely feel an unwarranted degree of pressure to 'perform'. This early experience of staring at countless questions that seem to test more about what they don't know rather than what they do know, has not been a worthwhile educational experience for them. Many schools sent letters out to parents and pupils prior to the SATs telling them that these tests do not assess all of what makes each child special and unique, and go on to talk about all the other amazing things that children can do. Such letters contain important messages. Being well-rounded individuals is much more than being able to answer abstract mathematical problems or questions that pick apart the beautiful art of writing into an almost mechanical process of understanding and applying *fronted adverbials, intransitive verbs, possessive determiners* and the like.

Education policy has undoubtedly lost its way at the moment - it's adrift in a purposeless sea of political accountability. I wish to reassure every one of our pupils and parents that we will continue to navigate our way through this with your interests at the centre of all we do. We achieve this by providing a truly broad and balanced experience for children that engenders a love and joy of learning and a desire to be the best that each of them can be in their own special and unique way. Well done to all of Year 6; we think you're fabulous. Regardless of any score you receive, if you've tried your best, that's all we can ask of anyone.

### Foundation News

In Foundation this week the children have discussed improving the pond, keeping it clean and the features that they would like to see. They wrote letters to Mr Morgan (our caretaker) with their wish lists! We also have some tadpoles in the unit which they will be watching closely for changes. Next week we will be reading and working around another traditional tale. Foundation children- look out to see who has been visiting...

### Year 1 News

Year 1 have been busy learning about fractions! We tried to find a  $\frac{1}{2}$  and  $\frac{1}{4}$  of something namely sweets and chocolate! The children used their knowledge of the Bar Model already learnt to extend it to finding 2 parts and 4 parts of a number. During science we planted our sunflowers in one of the planters in the Pirate playground so keep your eyes open for those flowers to grow and bloom just like your children are doing! Watch this space because we will be holding a phonics meeting to all Year 1 parents and carers by the end of this half term.

### Year 2 News

The children have been investigating signs, symbols and logos in RE recently. To enhance this unit of work, Mrs Meatyard organised a visit from a local building company, Eliot Design and Build. A representative, Karen de Lang, came in to discuss the process and meaning behind their company logo and set up a competition for children to design their own. The entries, so far, have been great and we are looking forward to showing them off to Karen soon. Please help your child to keep practising their spellings and times tables, it really does help them greatly. Have a great weekend.

### Diary Dates

**Sun 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2016**

- Bude residential

**Mon 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2016**

- Activity Week

**Mon 30<sup>th</sup> May 2016**

- Bank holiday

**Tues 31<sup>st</sup> May - Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> June Inc.**

- Half term

**Mon 6<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

- Non pupil day

**Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

- Year Six Production

**Wed 20<sup>th</sup> July 2016**

- Leaver's Celebration Disco

**Thurs 21<sup>st</sup> July 2016**

- Year 6 Leavers Lunch

**Fri 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2016**

- Leavers' assembly
- Last day of term 2:30pm finish (Yr 6 finish at 1.30pm)

**Wed 7<sup>th</sup> Sept 2016**

- First day of term

### Year 3 News

We have had a fun week learning the story of Madagascar. We have acted the story out and used puppets to re-tell the story. We will be using this knowledge of the story to create our own version based in Central Park Zoo. The stories we create will go on show in Peverell library on Thursday 26th May. Also this week we have continued to practice our time telling skills, everyone has worked very hard to learn to tell the time on both analogue and digital clocks. Please keep supporting your child with this skill.

### Year 4 News

Year 4 have been in a dilemma this week! The children have been starting to plan their own dilemma stories in English with a focus on excitement and suspense, packed full of SPAG related features. Ask your child what their writing target is. In Maths the children have been learning and consolidating time, with some having moved on to time related problems using both analogue and digital 12/24hr clocks. In Science this week the children were looking at MRS NERG to classify living things. Ask your child about MRS NERG. Thank you for your continued support. Have a fantastic weekend.

### Year 5 News

Well done to all the children who entertained us during Montpellier's Got Talent, especially to the Year 5 children, who were representing their classes.

In our English lessons this week, there has been some impressive writing on show too! We have been describing events related to Theseus and the Minotaur. We look forward to reading more next week.

In Maths we have been calculating volume and learning to reflect and translate shapes.

May we remind you that if you read with your child that you record it in their Reading Record please. Enjoy the weekend.

### Year 6 News

A huge WELL DONE to our Year 6 pupils for the way they approached their SATs tests this week. They really applied themselves - keeping their heads and giving it their all. We are very proud of you. Have a well-earned break this weekend.

### Year 5 Girls - Futsal

This year, the year 5 girls made it all the way to the South West Regional Finals for Futsal, going up against the best Football teams (not just school teams) from Cornwall to Gloucestershire. They started the competition playing at Marjons in a local event. This was the first time that they played together and made it through very convincingly. They then went to Paignton for the Devon finals, which they absolutely stormed only conceding 1 goal until the final! Last Sunday, they were invited back to Paignton for the South West Regional Final, however they weren't able to make it to the National finals. Throughout the past few months the girls have been amazing and it has been a real privilege to see them progress. A massive well done to, Gracie Hapney, Angel Goucher, Neve Mitchell, Hallie Taylor, Sienna Colwill, Emilia Heyes, Niamh Eyres and Taylor Miller. We are all very proud of your achievements, Mr Carhart, Mrs Pearce and Mrs Frost.



### Half-Term Programme May 2016

#### Tue 31<sup>st</sup> May

Kelly Close, Barne Barton PL5 1DT

#### Wed 1<sup>st</sup> June

Sunnydene, St. Budeaux PL5 1QP

#### Thu 2<sup>nd</sup> June

Red Brick Field, Barne Barton PL5 1EG

#### Fri 3<sup>rd</sup> June

Shell Close, Leigham PL6 8NU

Community Play Projects is one of a number of projects delivered by One Step Beyond CIC

Play Rangers bring ideas for different sports, games and art & craft activities for 4-13 year olds to various parks. It is free for everyone to join in. Look out for them at a park near you! Session times: 11.00 am - 3.30 pm

### Thrift Shop

With the warmer weather we have been having you may be thinking about buying summer dresses and shorts for your children. In the thrift we have many dresses of varying sizes in good condition for 50p each. Do pop in and help us raise funds for the PTFA and get yourself a bargain.

### Routeways

We would like to invite you to one of our popular Short Breaks days during the upcoming May half-term.

Please join us on Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> May for Allotment in a Planter, activities will consist of making a planter, sowing and harvesting & cooking outdoors.

If you would like your child to attend please book on <https://v1.bookwhen.com/routeways>, we have limited spaces available, if the activity is fully booked you will be placed on a waiting list and will be contacted by email if a place becomes available. Please remember to complete and bring in the consent form attached to the booking page.

This activity is part of the Short Breaks Holiday Activities for disabled children. This activity can be used as part of the 10 day allocation managed through Inclusion Works. To be eligible your child will have a diagnosis of a disability and attend a special school or Support Centre or attend a mainstream school and have a severe or moderate learning disability with ASD or a complex physical disability. Once you have booked the activity please ensure you are registered with Inclusion Works. You can register by filling in the form and all about me' booklet at [www.plymouth.gov.uk/inclusionworks](http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/inclusionworks).

### Coombe Dean Information Evening

For Year 4/5 parents - information evening Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> June 7pm at Coombe Dean





## Mini Arts Festival

Promoting & celebrating  
Mental Health Awareness Week

**16th - 22nd May 2016**

Jan Cutting Healthy Living Centre,  
Scott Business Park, Beacon Park Rd,  
Plymouth PL2 2PQ

### Workshops with Plymouth Options

Monday 16th May

10:30 - 11:30am Managing Anxiety  
12 - 1pm Mindfulness

### Activities with Dartmoor Zoo

Monday 16th May

10am - 4pm Green prescribing & volunteering  
Meet some small invertebrates

Tuesday 17th May

10am - 4pm Green prescribing & volunteering

Wednesday 18th May

10am - 4pm Green prescribing & volunteering  
11am Talk from Ben Mee, CEO

### Drop-in sessions

Monday 16th May

10am - 4:30pm Creativity (Cornwall College)  
(15 minute slots)

Tuesday 17th May & Thursday 19th May

11am - 2pm Creativity & Chatter  
(Wellbeing Team)

Wednesday 18th May

10am - 4pm Rag Rug Craft Sessions  
(Your Way)

### Exhibitions

Running from 10am - 4pm, Mon - Fri

Jan Cutting Healthy Living Centre, Mount Gould  
Local Care Centre and the Cumberland Centre.

For more information please contact Rachael Hawson:

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