

Headteacher News

School Closure – 8th June – General Election

I regret to inform you that the school will be closed on 8th June as it has been allocated as a polling station for the general election. Closure is a decision I really don't like making as every day at school is crucial for children (which is why we always make such a fuss about holidays during term time). However, I always have to undertake a risk assessment to work out whether the designated polling station area can be isolated securely from the rest of the school and consider the way that members of the public will gain access to it. Preventing members of the public coming into contact with children is absolutely crucial. Due to the older design and shape of the school, the long and open corridors, and the problems of access and lockable doors, we are unable to isolate the polling station or provide secure access to it. Therefore, in the interests of keeping all the children completely safe, we have to close the school to the children. The staff will attend school as usual. Again, apologies for this but, being a general rather than local election, it will be particularly busy throughout the day. Sorry for any inconvenience caused.

Mixing Classes

We all know that it's really difficult to sort out problems, queries or concerns if you don't actually know anything about them. I do receive the odd email or letter, or have a chat with a parent regarding issues they may have but it doesn't happen very often. For example, I only received two emails regarding the recent letter I sent out about our intention to mix classes up at the end of certain years. This is great because I then think to myself that all's well and, generally, everyone's happy! However, I then learnt from a parent, during a conversation, that the 'talk on the playground' regarding this change is one of concern. What?? I do implore everyone to please come forward if there's ever anything that's troubling you. Generally such issues are easily resolved and the worry can stop. Anyway, the playground chatter revolved around the idea that we were intending to 'stream' or 'set' the classes according to ability at the end of Foundation Stage, Year 2 and Year 4, so that we have a 'top', 'middle' and 'bottom' class. I was very surprised, as this is pretty much exactly the opposite of what we intend to do. The idea behind mixing the classes is to create a balance. We intend to create an equal mix, across the three classes, of the characteristics that are proven to impact upon academic achievement (e.g. gender, ability, social background, language acquisition, absence levels, behaviour, date of birth and special educational need). We definitely won't be putting them together according to ability. If the classes are to be mixed, we would ensure that everyone was placed with **at least** one of their friends (but probably more) from their current class so please don't worry about this either.

Golden Learning Behaviours

You will hopefully remember that we introduced the idea of Golden Learning Behaviours (GLB) back in the spring term of 2016. GLB grew from our 'Going for Gold' initiative that began in the summer of 2014. Going for Gold recognises children who are always good and, particularly, those who go 'above and beyond' in terms of their behaviour. Since we began celebrating outstanding behaviour in this way, it has improved even further right across the school, despite already being a great strength of ours. Pupils demonstrate lovely behaviour and also encourage and expect it of each other. **Golden Learning Behaviours** followed on from this. It aimed to recognise, celebrate and encourage excellent **learning** behaviours and to openly teach children to become better learners. This isn't about studying new facts or building on knowledge so that the children know more 'stuff'. It's about techniques, skills and abilities the children need and (most importantly) can develop further, in order to become better at learning new things. What we've done now is simplify the model we were using. Previously, we'd closely followed a nationally recognised initiative called Building Learning Power. However, in using it, we found that it was very complex; having four main learning dispositions and then 17 'learning muscles' within these dispositions. It was all a little too complicated. So, what we've done is to strip it back a bit and personalise it for Montpelier and the children we have here. We now have just **7** broad golden learning behaviours that we develop in school. These are: love learning, love a challenge, persevere, believe in ourselves, value teamwork, focus, and develop self-help strategies. There's lots of key language and skills that sit behind these learning behaviours and I encourage you to visit our website to find out a little more about this:

www.montpelierprimary.co.uk/website/golden_learning_behaviour.

It's much simpler for the children to understand this way and it is also much more pertinent to the approach to learning that we value at Montpelier.

Lost Property

I have a pair of size 12 yellow Croc boots that are not labelled. If these belong to you please collect them from the First Aid room asap - Jane Gilbert, Parent Support Advisor.

Foundation News

As part of our focus on the author, David McKee, the children have experienced an episode of Mr Benn (you maybe old enough to remember it from your childhood!) They have made a spoon character who will go on an adventure like Mr Benn to the setting created for their homework diarama. A photo has been put on their Tapestry Journal to help link the setting you create at home to the character they have made in school, so please log in to see it.

Upcoming dates:

23rd May - Visit to Playbox to watch their performance 'We're going on a Bear Hunt'.

W/C 15th May Balanceability - the children will be riding balance bikes twice a day for the week. Please can you ensure the children wear trainers/old shoes that week as they may get well-worn on the toes. Thank you

We need your help! - We are always looking to improve the Foundation outside area. We are asking for donations of anything the children could use outside. This could include old Wendy houses, play tents, plastic piping, compost, bedding plants, old kitchen utensils, planters, chippings... anything you like! If anyone would like to donate their time to help that is always most welcome too!

Year 1 News

This week Year 1 have been busy learning all about measure in maths. We've been weighing objects using the balance scales as well as measuring length with a ruler. We also enjoyed meeting a real life hero! We were intrigued to ask the nurse from Derriford Hospital lots of questions. We also considered how her job is different to that of Florence Nightingale who we learned about last week. Thank you for supporting your children with their fantastic homework this week! They look brilliant and will certainly help us with our super hero story writing next week! Have a brilliant weekend.

Year 2 News

It has been a fantastic but busy week in Year 2. We were blown away by the children's super sea creature homework - thank you for your support with this as they certainly helped when we were writing our sea creature reports. Have a brilliant weekend!

Year 3 News

Another exciting week in Year 3. The children have been working hard on their Plymouth 'now and then' leaflets for English, including many of the facts learnt from their Barbican trips last week. In Maths children have been continuing to learn time to the nearest minute and solving time problems crossing over the hour. Have an enjoyable weekend!

Year 4 News

Year 4 have had a busy week, planning their own magical story. We searched the school for portals into a magical world to help us with our writing. In Maths, we have been learning about co-ordinates and exploring time. In History, we continued our research into Dr Barnardo and how he impacted on Britain. Have a lovely weekend discovering your own portals.

Year 5 News

The children have had a great three weeks of swimming at the Life Centre since the Easter holiday. It has been a joy to witness the improvement of them all, not only in ability, but in their confidence in the water. During their sessions, they have developed a range of water safety skills, swimming techniques and most of the children have been fortunate to experience using a range of diving opportunities using the springboard and diving platforms up to 7.5 metres. An amazing effort and achievement from all of the children, well done!

Don't forget to bring your PE kit into school next week as normal PE sessions will resume.

Just a reminder to keep reading to an adult and get them to sign your reading record at least four times a week.

Year 6 News

As you are all aware, next week official KS2 SATs test will be taking place in schools all over the country. Although tests aren't pleasant, they are something we all have to do at some point in our lives. Working hard, persevering to overcome difficulties and pushing yourself to be the best you can are important life skills. Regardless of the outcome of these tests, we are proud of what they achieved during their time in Year 6.

To all the children in Year 6: you have done everything you can. Don't worry and try your best! Let's face this with the same drive and determination you have shown throughout your time at Montpelier. Bring it on!

Diary Dates

Mon 8th May 2017

- SATs week for Year 6

Sun 21st – Fri 26th May 2016

- Bude Residential (Yr 6)

Wed 24th May 2017

- Tempest Photos – Class groups

Mon 29th May - Fri 2nd June '17

- Half term

Mon 19th June 2017

- Our Schools Race for life event

Tues 25th July 2017

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

Wed 26th July 2017

- Start of the summer holidays

Mon 4th Sept 2017

- Non pupil day

Tues 5th Sept 2017

- First day of term

Monty's Den

Monty's Den is our onsite after school care. Call on 07522 429599 for more information or to book a session. Flexible booking available www.thedens.co.uk

Montpelier's Got Talent

Well done to everyone who auditioned for Montpelier's Got Talent this year. It was great to see so many acts getting up and giving it a go. We could have filled 3 or 4 showcases! Congratulations to the acts who made it through to the whole school performances. Many children have already started planning for next year! Due to SATS, there will be no instrumental lessons next week. After school music clubs carry on as normal.

Year 6 SATs

Pupils are expected to arrive promptly in school for 8:35am. Any issues with attendance must be reported to the school immediately. A free breakfast (a bacon or cheese roll) will be available for all pupils. Make sure children get the chance to relax and are well-rested when they arrive each morning. A test timetable can be found using this link: <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/key-stage-1-and-key-stage-2-test-dates>

After School Clubs

Athletics starts on Monday 8th. Please note Netball has changed from a Wednesday to a Tuesday.