

Headteacher News

I met up with Alistair the other day. He was my Assistant Head when I was a Headteacher in Cornwall. We spent eight years working together so know each other pretty well. When I left to come here, he also ventured elsewhere to become a Headteacher himself, further down in Cornwall. Anyway, we got chatting about our schools, about education and all the challenges facing us at the moment. Particularly in terms of the demands of the new, much tougher SATs tests and the ever increasing pressure to marginalise the broad and balanced curriculum for one of relentless English and mathematics teaching (and you must know by now that this is a favourite discussion topic of mine)! I do promise not to get on my soap box again though. I explained to him how every child at Montpelier receives an hour of high quality music teaching every week. He was really impressed, knowing full well that one of the first subjects to be squeezed out of the weekly timetable in schools is music. This was born out when Miss Spragg and I were presenting a lecture to PGCE students at the University of Plymouth this week. A number of them mentioned that the schools they had been on placement in recently were feeling the pressure on their timetables and were battling with how to cover enough of the new, more challenging English and maths curriculum without impacting too greatly upon lots of the other subjects, not just music. But music is something we pride ourselves on. It's something we value highly. It's a part of Montpelier's identity.

Although, in the past, I have dabbled with playing the guitar, I'm really not musical. And you really wouldn't want to hear me sing either! However, my brother is and has made a great career of it, both as a teacher and a West End musician. My son, Joe, is also beginning to head down that path with the aim of attending a university to study music. Playing an instrument is an extremely pleasant past time but it's also a wonderful career for many people. And ask any musician, from the striving busker to the thriving megastar, whether they're glad or not that they took the time to learn an instrument, and you can guarantee the answer would be positive. You develop a new skill, open up the opportunity to write and perform, and generally enrich your life in a way unlike any other hobby. And there's so much more to learning an instrument than the visible payoffs. There's a world of magic going on inside your brain when you're involved in music. You learn **patience**, particularly for anyone starting to learn an instrument, as the hardest part is proving your dedication, because mastering any instrument takes a lot of time and effort. The sense of **achievement** is incredible: by putting the hours in and dedicating yourself to improving your skill, you'll experience a great sense of achievement which is pretty hard to beat. One of the many reasons why so many parents encourage their children to learn an instrument is because of the positive effect it can have on **concentration** and how it can greatly improve this. The **skill development** people experience is incredible and this talent, whether natural or earned, can go a long way to building **confidence** in your ability to take on new challenges. Even better than that is the way that certain **skills** you learn, either physically through motor skills or mentally through thought, can be **transferred** to other areas. Standing up on a stage to play an instrument takes **skill, courage and calmness** - all very useful attributes. And I've not even touched on the **social aspect** of being involved in groups or bands. Music gives people from all cultures or backgrounds a common, universal language with which to communicate. And also the **physical aspect**, the precision and deftness of a skilled musician is stunning. And also, simply, the **pure pleasure** playing, listening, singing, practising and performing brings. What a great list of benefits music holds!

Our annual Christmas Carol Concert next Wednesday is testament to the efforts we go to in providing children with exciting experiences of participating in music and song. The event surpasses any school carolling event I have ever attended, both in terms of the scale and scope of it but also the ambitious performance quality that Miss JR draws from the children. All 190 of them! That's almost the size of an average sized primary school with every single pupil being involved - a massive accomplishment. You can probably appreciate the intense preparation and organisation that has to go into putting on such an event. I'm aware that there have been a couple of grumbles from parents that they've been unable to get enough tickets to the concert because there's too many children involved and, therefore, too many parents and family members wishing to attend. The question for us is; how can we deprive any eager child the opportunity to be a part of such a wonderful event? We teach children and expose them to music every week for chances like this - to perform and revel in singing and playing in front of an enraptured audience. There's nothing quite like it. So my sincerest apologies go out to anyone missing the Carol Concert because I know, being a parent, how delightful it is to watch your children perform. But, first and foremost, this experience is for them. And as many of them as we can possibly manage to include in such a great performance. I'm certainly looking forward to it. It's a wonderful way to get into the festive spirit. Merry Christmas one and all!

Diary Dates

Wed 7th Dec 2016

- Carol Concert

Thurs 8th Dec 2016

- Christmas lunch
- Christmas Tree Festival

Thurs 15th Dec 2016

- Christmas party / wear your Christmas jumper (Save the Children £1 donation)

Fri 16th Dec 2016

- 50 Things Event

Mon 19th Dec '16 - Tues 3rd Jan Inc.

- Christmas Holidays

Mon 13th - Fri 17th Feb 2017 Inc.

- Half term

Fri 31st Mar 2017

- 'Wear a Hat' mufti day - for Brain Tumor Research

Mon 3rd - Tues 18th Apr 2017 Inc.

- Easter holidays

Mon 1st May 2017

- Bank holiday

Sun 21st - Fri 26th May 2016

- Bude Residential (Yr 6)

Mon 29th May - Fri 2nd June '17

- Half term

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



Monty's Den

Monty's Den is our onsite after school care. Call on 07522 429599 for more information or to book a session. Sessions start from £6.50. Flexible booking available www.thedens.co.uk

Bude Payments

The next Bude payment of £50 was due yesterday, Thurs 1st December 2016, bringing monies paid to a minimum of £210. Please log on to www.schoolmoney.co.uk to make your payment, if you have not done so already. Contact Mrs Simpson on 216160 if there is a problem with meeting any of the deadlines.

Foundation News

We were delighted to see so many parents/grandparents who were able to join us on Wednesday for our Christmas activity afternoon. If you are not yet feeling in the Christmas spirit, remember next Friday is our Christmas Sing-a-long! The children can wear their Festive finery (jumpers, antlers, Santa hats included) for that day to school. Hope to see you looking festive and ready to sing at 2.15pm!

Year 1 News

What a tiring but super week in Year 1! It was great to see some of you at our phonics sessions and workshop on Wednesday. The children are continuing to show their fantastic attitude and enthusiasm towards learning in phonics and it is brilliant to share the progress they are making with you. Thank you for your continued support with this. We have also been very busy practising for our upcoming performance this week. It is clear that many of the children have been practising the songs and their lines at home over the weekend; they sound brilliant! We look forward to sharing our performance with you on the 13th December. We topped off the week by making some very special Christmas decorations to sell at the fair today. We hope you like them! Have a great weekend.

Year 2 News

Wow! We have had an absolutely 'choctastic' week. On Tuesday, the children had a challenge, set by Willy Wonka, to research, design and make a chocolate bar to be sold at Christmas fair - you may be tucking into one as you're reading this. We had a great day and the children were very creative! Have a great weekend.

Year 4 News

The children have had a busy week. We have started reading 'The Star Bearer: A Creation Myth from Ancient Egypt' by Dianne Hofmeyr. While the children heard the story, Year 3 walked between the children with their fantastic lanterns representing the light of the world. In Design Technology we have designed and created our own biscuits. We thought the biscuits were very tasty and we hope that you managed to buy some of these biscuits at the Christmas Fair.

On Tuesday 6th December we would like to invite you to come and work with your child in class between 2:30 and 3:15pm. During that afternoon we would like to involve you in our work on ancient Egypt. We look forward to seeing you to share your children's learning. Thank you for your continued support and have a great weekend.

Year 5 News

Congratulations to the three year 5 classes for taking the first three places in the TTRockstars event last week. As a year group we scored half of the 80,000 points accumulated by the school. Well done to all the children for the effort put in to achieving such a fantastic score. 5S were overall winners with 5P in second place and 5M 3rd.

We have been working hard describing settings and characters in our English this week, while continuing our shape work in Mathematics.

If there are any more cardboard tubes (not toilet roll centres please), shoe boxes, or similar available, please could they be sent into the class teachers at your earliest convenience.

Year 6 News

In Year 6 this week, we have been enjoying writing using our class text 'Journey to Jo'burg' as inspiration. The story explores what life was like in South Africa during Apartheid. We are excellent story writers in Year 6 and we have written some fantastic pieces, making sure we use a balance of action, speech and description. Ask your child to explain what techniques they have been using to write effective narrative.

Music News

We have possible spaces for a few children to learn guitar or keyboard in January at a cost of £32.50 for a block of 10 x 15 minute group lessons or £65 for 10 x 30 minute group lessons.

If you are interested, please contact Miss JR (jessrowe@mpsplymouth.net) as soon as possible to reserve a place. Payment due at the start of the January term.

We are looking forward to Wednesday's Carol Service. All the details you need are on the letter sent out with the tickets.

Thursday Choir has now finished and will restart on Thursday 5th January. All other clubs run by Miss JR are still going!

Years 1 & 2 Phonics Sessions

We hope you enjoyed the phonics sessions in school on Wednesday. The children enjoyed seeing their parents join in with the learning. Please see the Phonics code breaker as mentioned in the afternoon meeting:

Phoneme - a sound as it is said

Grapheme - a sound that is written

Digraph - two letters that work together to make the same sound

Trigraph - Three letters that work together to make the same sound

Split digraph - Two letters that work together to make the same sound, separated by another letter

Do you have children aged 10-25 years?

Plymouth City Council have put together a Next Steps Survey to help to improve their understanding of the needs of parents and carers of young people who are transitioning from secondary school and further education, employment and training.

Please have a look at the survey by following the link below.

http://plymouth.consult.limehouse.co.uk/public/hr/staff_surveys/next_steps_survey

Change to menu

Please note, wraps will not be available after Christmas 2016 until the new Summer Menu comes out after Easter.



School Christmas Lunch Thurs 8th Dec

Option 1: Roast Turkey with stuffing and all the trimmings

Option 2: Mushroom Wellington

PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO JACKET POTATOES OR WRAPS ON THIS DAY

Children to order in class as usual on the day. Payment in advance please, as per school policy.

Service Families Christmas Tree Decorations

Jam Band have been busy elves making decorations for our tree. Thank you to them and to those of you who have sent in your decorations. The tree will be decorated at Jam Band on Wednesday with finishing touches added on the Thursday so there is still time to make and add your decoration! Please send in any decorations to the office throughout next week clearly labelled for our tree.

Service Families

'Christmas Make and Meet'

Thursday 8th December 2:15-3:15pm. Thank you to those families who have already let us know of their attendance. If you would still like to attend this event please let the office know by Tuesday. It would be lovely to see you if you can make it.

School Games

On Wednesday the year 6 netball team took part in the first 'warm up' event held at the life centre. Our first match was against a team that beat us last year, knowing that we had something to prove Montpelier was eager for this win, they didn't disappoint, winning the first match 1-0. On a high and play improving at every match we won the remaining games. Well done team you were all amazing and hopefully prepared for the league that starts on Monday.

TIMES TABLES ROCKSTARS

ART COMPETITION

Custom avatar
made for 8
winners.

16 runner up
prizes

- Rules
1. You are allowed as many entries as you like.
 2. You must design the avatar yourself.
 3. Entry must be sent in before 5pm Friday 16th December 2016.



Winner from each of the following year groups will be chosen

- Boys years 3 and 4
- Girls years 3 and 4
- Boys years 5 and 6
- Girls years 5 and 6
- Boys years 7 and 8
- Girls years 7 and 8
- Male Teacher
- Female Teacher



How to enter?

- Step 1: Download and print off our avatar templates
- Step 2: Design your avatar
- Step 3: Attach a photograph or scan of your entries to an email and send to dario@trockstars.com