



# St. Helen's Church of England School

Abbotsham, Bideford, North Devon, EX39 5AP

Tel: 01237 475276 Email: [sthelens.sch@alumnismat.org](mailto:sthelens.sch@alumnismat.org)

Headteacher: Mrs C. S. Lewis BSc (Hons) / PGCE / QTS / NPQH



**At St. Helen's we learn to LOVE, love to LEARN and aspire to SERVE  
so that we become Inspiring Change Makers**

*'Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds.'* Hebrews 10:24

Friday 10th September 2021

Dear families of Year 2, 3 and 4,

A very warm welcome back to the academic year and what promises to be a very exciting new era in the evolution of our wonderful school.

By the time you read this letter, I had really hoped that I would already have had the chance to get to know or catch up with many of you at our welcome event, and I really hope that our postponed Middle Mini-School Welcome Day and BBQ will take place soon. We are keeping a close eye on the weather and my freezer is full!!!

Within our mini school we have a large team of qualified and experienced staff supporting the three classes and we are all looking forward to working with all of the children and all of you.

We have such a lot planned for the term, and indeed the year, but in this letter, I will attempt to give you the key information and messages that you will need to get started.

Firstly, thank you to everyone who has adapted to the new drop off and pick up procedures. The decision to require all children, up to and including Year 4, to be collected by an adult (not 'GREEN to GO') was taken to ensure the safety of all children, and we appreciate your understanding in this matter.

We have been really pleased with how smoothly the handover process has gone so far, but would like to take the opportunity to remind you that on arrival in the netball court, your child should immediately make their way to the appropriate line, where a member of the team will greet them and ensure the school day has a smooth start. Please refrain from crossing the barrier as it can make it very challenging for staff to keep a sharp eye on the children.

You have already been sent information about school uniform and PE kit, so I won't repeat that here, but key information is that children will take part in 30 minutes of physical activity (DPA) every day, so ideally, trainer



St. Helen's Church of England School is part of the Alumnis Multi-Academy Trust, a charitable company limited by guarantee and registered in England and Wales with company number 11409631



type shoes are preferable (however these do need to be quite waterproof to cope with our changeable weather). If you would prefer your child to change their shoes for DPA, please send them with a pair (named) in their bag.

It would be very helpful if the children could bring a pair of (named) wellies to keep in school so that we can make the most of our wonderful grounds.

We have noticed that lots of the children are getting pretty peckish during the morning - I think we are all adjusting to school eating times, rather than summer holiday grazing!! Year 2 continue to receive free fruit and vegetables, but Year 3 and 4 children need to bring their own fruit or vegetable snack to school.

Year 3 and 4 will have cricket on Tuesdays this half term, so need to come to school in their school PE kit (again, see the previous information sent) on this day. Children will not be required to change out of their PE kit. Year 2 and 3 will have PE on Wednesday and again, will wear PE kit for the day.

Year 4 have swimming on Wednesdays and will need to bring their swimming kit (including a swimming hat) to change into at school before they go to the pool.

On Fridays, all three classes will have Wild Tribe (outdoor learning) and will need to bring leggings or tracksuit bottoms and suitable, sturdy waterproof footwear.

I am sure there will be occasional changes to this routine, but we will endeavour to give you as much notice as possible.

Our theme for this term is Social Justice. You can see more about what each class will be covering on the curriculum overview that will arrive along with this letter.

We have amazing new bespoke writing and maths books for every child in school, which we know the children are super proud of. We are going to send these home each Wednesday so that the children can share what they have been learning with you. We invite you to make positive comments in the appropriate place in the book. Parental engagement, and the children seeing us working together as a team around them really does raise their aspirations and increase their motivation - however, it is essential that the children bring their books back to school the next day! The same goes for Seesaw - they love seeing your 'likes' and comments come in during the day, and it really does motivate them!

Reading is a priority this year, as always, and we are going to be working hard to make sure that all children develop and embed their reading skills. We want the children to read for pleasure and become lifelong readers. The children will take a photograph of their reading book and this will be posted on Seesaw.

Home learning to support and enhance classwork will also be sent out via Seesaw each Friday and we will monitor this closely. There will be a range of activities which we hope you will also find supportive. The expectation is that all children complete their online reading journal, with a parent, at least five times each week. We also expect children to work on their Maths fluency (counting/times tables) at least three times each week and there will be a quiz each Friday. Each week, the children will also be given a few spellings from the relevant year group list to learn for a quiz on Friday. We will provide fun and engaging ways for them to practise and learn.

We are so excited to be able to welcome volunteers back into school so if you feel able to, please get in touch so we can discuss ways in which you can support our mini-school.

I am looking forward to leading the Middle Mini School and developing the characters of the children in Year 2, 3 and 4 so they become Inspiring Change Makers.

Best wishes,

Mrs Rebecca Northcott - School Improvement Lead  
and the Middle Years Mini School Staff Team - Mrs Debbie Brookes, Mr Ben Kent, Mrs Jaime Larque, Miss Yvette Wood and Mrs Rebecca Garrett