



## St. Helen's Church of England School Newsletter | 7<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

This half term is going by at warp speed – I can't believe there are only a couple of weeks left until the holiday.

Here is a round-up of the last couple of weeks with some key messages for the year, now we have settled in.

### Community:

Firstly, a huge and heartfelt thank you to our wonderful staff and volunteer team who go out of their way to provide a rich, broad, balanced and inspirational curriculum for every child:

To Mr Wilson, the church warden, for giving his time to open the church up so we can use the incredible space for RE and collective worship, bringing a sense of awe and wonder.

To Mr Marlow, our fabulous volunteer, who gives his time to run Ground Force days each week, helping the children to understand about stewardship while doing valuable work to maintain the grounds, as well as supporting our Inspiring Researchers challenge with the village archive project on enrichment afternoons.

To Mrs Pirrie and Mrs Thompson for their support in teaching the children to make bread and soup, again as part of enrichment afternoon.

To Mrs Fidler, for organising yet another amazing Appledore book festival, with not one but two fabulous and inspirational visiting authors.



### KEY DATES

13<sup>th</sup> October Y6 to Lundy (new date)

14<sup>th</sup> October – Stephen Shield x-country

18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> October – Parent Consultation

19<sup>th</sup> October – Harvest Service in Church

20<sup>th</sup> October – Pound for Panto

21<sup>st</sup> October - Non-pupil day

1<sup>st</sup> November – Tempest Photos

8<sup>th</sup> November – Story Night

11<sup>th</sup> November – FOSH quiz

28<sup>th</sup> November - 5<sup>th</sup> December Scholastic Book Fair

2<sup>nd</sup> December - Christmas Fayre

To Mrs Larque for running a daily lunch club to support social skills

To Miss Gale and Mrs Gagg for running a weekly choir and singing club

To Mr Kent, Mrs Tolley, Ms Boyles and the FOSH team for their efforts to organise fun events to bring the community together while raising lots of money which goes directly back into enrichment.

Honestly, there are so many more people I could and should mention but I hope this small selection helps you to see how vast and valued our school community is.

If you are interested in joining Friends of St Helen's (FOSH), our PTA, please speak to one of the teaching team.

Similarly, we also have vacancies on our Local Schools Committee (formerly our governing body), so if you would like to share your time and talents in that way, please talk to me, Miss Hall in the office or our chair, Mrs Akam about how you can get involved.

Now, onto the next cornerstone...

### **Character:**

On the subject of enrichment, I need to say a huge well done to our impressive Young Leaders who are growing in confidence week after week as they lead the rest of the school in achieving their Inspiring Challenges. Seeing them reflect on and learn from their successes and challenges is really inspirational and I love seeing the pride they show when they are able to think creatively to resolve issues and overcome difficulties.

Our weekly celebration of the character virtues is one of my favourite parts of the week, when we celebrate how members of the school community have used their virtues to live out our vision to Love, Learn and Serve as Inspiring Change Makers.

The variety of virtues demonstrated never fails to blow me away. From children who are consistently demonstrating virtues of compassion, empathy, forgiveness, honesty, justice and courtesy, to those who show aspiration, resilience, creativity, curiosity and more. It is humbling to see and hear even our youngest children using the language of character.

We would love to hear how your child is developing their character virtues outside of school so please do celebrate these achievements with us on Seesaw or in person. No success is too small! If you'd like to know more about how character development supports and enhances life at St Helen's and beyond, please come and speak to me!

One important element is its impact on the next of our cornerstones...

## Academic

I am so impressed by the progress I am seeing from so many of our young people. From the youngest children getting to grips with the first phases of their phonics learning; to children growing their reading age and becoming more fluent with their number facts; and to our oldest children beginning to tackle the very trickiest concepts that they will encounter in primary school – it is fair to say that I am super proud of them all.

Seeing every child making progress from their starting points is the absolute highlight of our jobs and we celebrate every small step towards success. If you would like advice or guidance on how you can support this, please tell us the areas you would like to know more about so that we can make sure our workshops are helpful and well attended.

One of the things of which I am most proud at St Helen's is our Courageous Curriculum, which sits at the heart of our Curriculum 360. It is an innovative, creative, dynamic and enquiry-led program which the teaching staff have embraced. This new way of thinking, planning and teaching, and the focus on pupil agency and transformative skills is pretty ground-breaking.

We would love your feedback.

## Digital and Innovation

And so to our final cornerstone. As a Trust we are so fortunate to have an infrastructure in place that means that every child in KS2 has their own Chromebook that they can use at home and at school. Can we please ask that whenever possible, Chromebooks are charged at home and that the chargers are kept safely at home? It is also vital that your child has their Chromebook in school every day. Setting learning, support and challenge activities via the Chromebooks means we are able to cater for a wide range of needs in fully inclusive classrooms whilst making environmentally conscious choices about printing and paper.

We would love to know how best we can support you to make the best use of this fantastic resource so as always, please let us know how we can help and support.

This is quite a lot longer than I had planned so ...

Have a great weekend,

Bex Northcott



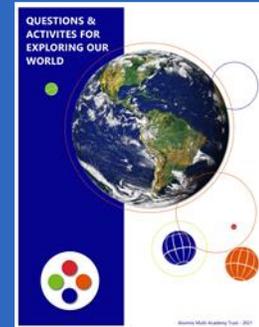
To read about teaching to **promote oracy** and tips and support for parents

[please click here.](#)



To read about ideas to have **fun with maths at home**

[please click here.](#)



For questions and activities for **exploring the world** with your children

[please click here.](#)

## **Safeguarding Updates**

### **Social Media**

[Click here](#) to read information on how to **keep your children safe** using social media

[Click here](#) for a guide to safely using WhatsApp

[Click here](#) to read information on how to **keep your children safe** using devices and technology

### **Family Support**

Click [here](#) for information about **Family Support** from Devon County Council.