



## St. Helen's Church of England School Newsletter | 21st October 2022

Dear Community,

Happy half-term, everyone! That went by in a flash and I'm happy to say it was seven lovely weeks of laughter and learning.

Here are some of the recent highlights.

### Community:

Our Harvest service was a definite high. For many children, it was the first time in St Helen's church and it was our first service in there since prior to lockdown so it felt very special to be back. Rev Claire from St Mary's led the service, supported by Mrs Brookes, Mrs Brown and the fabulous Year 2s and Mrs Gagg and the KS2 choir. Thanks to Mr Kent for welcoming the school to the service and for sorting out the sound system. It was a brilliant service full of gratitude for all we have and prayers for those who are not so fortunate. We were happy to take two cars full to the brim of donations to Harbour Bideford – thank you everyone!

The choir also performed brilliantly at the village coffee morning at the village hall and I know their beautiful voices bring real joy to the community.

Now, onto the next cornerstone...

### Character:

The Y6 netball team showed resilience, commitment, communication and respect in their first match of the year, which they won 6-2. They are a really talented bunch and I am sure this success will be the first



#### KEY DATES

- 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

of many. Many thanks to Mrs Fidler for all her hard work and dedication.

In another sporting success, we took over 30 children to the Stephens Shield Cross Country event in Torrington. The team showed great respect and incredible generosity of spirit as they cheered one another (and their competition) on as they completed a challenging course.

The Year 6 children also showed great character on our trip to Lundy, a really long day which pushed lots of use out of our comfort zone. It was made up for in absolute spades by the incredible and awe inspiring experience that it offered. The views were stunning, the wildlife was diverse and the spiritual reflections that the experience prompted were quite moving. Seeing the absolute wonder on the faces of the whole community as four porpoises swam in our wake was a very special moment. Thanks to Mrs Fidler, Miss Gale and Mr Creek for pulling a 14-hour day to make the trip happen, as well as Miss Hall and the team for all the organisation that went into it.

The language of character is truly becoming embedded now at St Helen's and the children are beginning to recognise this in each other. I absolutely love when one of them brings me a character certificate that has been completed by one their peers – it's really special! Hearing such young children talk about respect, courtesy, forgiveness and patience is incredible and impacts on their conduct in all areas. If you would like support with embedding this language at home, please speak to one of us.

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

## **Academic**

Thanks to all of you who attended this week's parent consultation sessions and for those who took the time to respond to the short survey. I loved chatting to lots of you over a cup of tea and I know Mrs Akam, the chair of the LSC did too.

Having looked at the feedback, we are really glad that you found the sessions useful and that you know your child's strengths and targets and how to support them at home. We picked up that lots of you would like support to use Seesaw more effectively, so we will be putting on workshops to support this in the second half of the autumn term.

In other academic news, we are thrilled to welcome a new member to the team. Mrs Sarah Walton joins us full time as our SEND Intervention Officer. She is a qualified teacher who will be working with a range of children across the school on individual targets, supporting our enrichment programme and offering alternative provision sessions and lunchtime social skills support.

Also new to the team is Mrs Powell, who joins our LSC as a foundation (community) member. We still have one vacancy on the committee, so if you would like to know more, or know someone who would like to be involved, please speak to me or to Rachel in the office. We would welcome applications from people NOT involved in education, as it is really important to get a range of perspectives!

## **Digital and Innovation**

We have been thinking hard about how we can find innovative ways to counter the ever increasing cost of living and are encouraging the children to make small changes to make a big difference. Turning lights off, turning sockets off when not in use, only charging devices when necessary, not leaving taps running and making careful choices about waste are all focus areas and we hope that this translates into their actions at home. If you are finding things tough, please reach out as there may be support that we can find for you and your family.

