



# NEWSLETTER

ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

BUCKFAST

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019

## Welcome Back!

We hope that everyone has had a lovely summer. Lots of new pupils and their families have joined St Mary's this academic year and we hope that you have all been made to feel very welcome.

We have also welcomed new staff to St Mary's this term. Mrs Teeder is our new teacher in Meldon Class and Mrs Sparks and Mrs Gibbs have also joined us as teaching assistants.

Everyone, old and new, please feel free to ask the class teachers or Mitzi in the school office or Miss Slack if you are unsure about anything and we will do our best to help.

## Building Learning Power

Over the past few years, pupils at St Mary's have been encouraged to think about themselves as learners (called 'metacognition') and develop skills and strategies that will enable them to become more effective learners. To make this more accessible to pupils we use an approach called 'Building Learning Power' or BLP, which focuses on the development of four specific skills: resourcefulness, resilience, reciprocity and reflectiveness. Each of these skills is represented to pupils as a character.

This term we have decided to focus on each of the characters for a period of three weeks and we will start with reciprocity (teamwork), which is represented as an 'Ant'.

Our BLP certificates, which we give out each week in our Achievement Assembly, will also celebrate this learning skill. Please take a look at the booklet which contains more detail about Building Learning Power.

## Safeguarding

The Designated Safeguarding Lead for the school is Miss Slack and the Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead is Mitzi. Contact details and information is on display throughout the school.

All staff receive safeguarding training annually and updates throughout the year.

## Prayer Focus

The focus for the acts of worship and prayers in class next week is

*"We believe our lives are filled with God's love. We know he calls us to go out and serve others."*

During the week, the children will be reflecting on the following things:

- faith and how it is hard to go on believing in good things when bad things happen.
- being different and having different strengths and gifts and how to use those gifts to help others.
- being able to make mistakes and start again because people love us.
- being sorry when we have done things wrong.
- asking God for help and knowing that, when things are too big for us to cope with, God is waiting patiently for us to turn to him for help.

## Reminders and Dates

This year our Harvest Mass will take place on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September at 9.30am in the School Hall. We will be making a collection of food outside the school office between now and Friday 20<sup>th</sup> September. If you could donate any of the following items it would be appreciated: tinned food (especially tinned fruit), tea bags, dried pasta, UHT milk, breakfast cereals.

Yesterday, pupils in Venford, Fernworthy and Burrator received a letter about the clubs on offer this half term. Our clubs are usually well supported so please ensure that the forms are returned to the office as soon as possible if your child wants to take part as most clubs start next week.

The half term break is Monday 21<sup>st</sup> to Monday 28<sup>th</sup> October inclusive. The children return to school on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> October.

More diary dates will follow next week.

## Building Work

As you are probably aware, the school has kindly been given use of the building next door (formerly the convent) and this week has marked the opening of the first phase in the use of this area. Meldon Class has now moved into their new classroom and outdoor areas. The outdoor play equipment will be soon be moved across from the old unit. St Mary's now has its own chapel too which will be a lovely space for children and staff to use for quiet reflection and other occasions during the year.

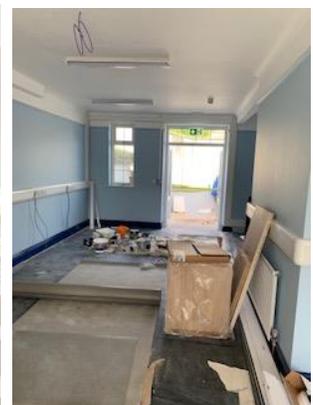
The photographs show the significance of the changes that have taken place to the building since the end of June. Those involved in carrying out the necessary structural changes worked incredibly hard over the summer to ensure that everything was ready for the start of term. Over the coming weeks they will be putting some finishing touches to the Foundation Stage area. Staff also worked long hours at the start of the week, preparing classroom areas for teaching and staff from the Abbey's Gardening, IT and Education Departments also gave generously of their time.

Work now begins on the upper floors, which should be ready for use next September.

In the meantime, we are enjoying making use of the new outside areas. The beautiful orchard has already been used by pupils and a new wildlife area is being planned for development later in the year.

If you would like to have a look at the new areas in use by pupils at the school, please feel free to pop in at the end of the school day, any time next week.

## Before - During - After



## Well Done!

Each week we will be celebrating the children's achievements, usually in our Friday Assembly, and their names will be included in our weekly newsletter.

If your child has any certificates or awards, or special news they would like to share with the whole school, please send the information or certificates in to the School Office so that we can share them in Assembly. If there is no Achievement Assembly that week, we will carry it forward to the next week.