

Newsletter— 22nd November 2017

Message from CEO

Dear Colleagues

I was very pleased to receive positive feedback from the governor training session that took place this week, I hope those next week will be equally helpful. I'm sorry that I am not able to attend, I had my second cataract operation on Saturday therefore, I am working from St Boniface House as I am not allowed to drive.

I would like to take this opportunity to confirm the current arrangements for seeking approval for staff appointments and explain the recent changes. When we first introduced the system all applications receive were sent to Louise Adams as Head of School Improvement and then on to me. As I was not as close to the situation in each school, I sometimes had to ask questions of the team and that led to delays. I therefore decided that unless Louise has concerns about a particular application, in which case she is free to consult me she has the authority to approve an application or not. Sandy Anderson as chair of the Board confirmed this decision. So far all the applications have been approved and only the three submitted on 21st November are outstanding.

Our Business and Financial Recovery plans were submitted to the Education Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) on Friday 17th November as required and we await their response. Clearly the road to recovery will be bumpy but I'm very grateful to all who are working so hard both in the schools and at CAST central to help us on our way.

As a former Maths teacher I'm pleased to hear that Philip Hammond, in his budget speech said: "So highly talented young mathematicians can release their potential wherever they live and whatever their background. More maths for everyone. Don't let anyone say I don't know how to show the nation a good time."

It's a shame that the additional spending is aimed at the secondary level, I'm sure that it would be at least as beneficial if it was given to primary as well. I just hope all our pupils agree that they are having a good time when learning maths. It's also good news that our review body does not have to keep to the 1% cap however, if the cap is lifted I hope our budgets increase accordingly.

It is lovely to read the many positive activities going on in our schools. November is not the easiest month in schools and so it is particularly encouraging to read these items now. December on the other hand is a lovely time as we prepare for the birth of our Lord. I am sure that you have access to many useful resources but I particularly like the Advent Calendar available on the CAFOD website. As the refugee crisis continues this year's calendar includes stories and activities to help children learn about and pray for refugees.

Best Wishes

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Kate'.

Kate Griffin
Interim CEO

News from our Schools



Happy 80th Birthday St Paul's

On Wednesday the 1st November St Paul's Catholic Primary School in Plymouth celebrated its 80th birthday with a day full of activities. The day started in a very fitting way with our All Saints whole school Mass celebrated by Bishop Mark. This was a very special way to mark the beginning of this event and set the scene for a truly memorable day. The church was packed, with our amazing children, staff, governors, past pupils, past HTs and present CAST Headteachers, priests, families, parishioners and people who have supported the school.



Following the mass we went to our new 80th Anniversary Garden which was blessed by Bishop Mark. This is a space designed by our children, that includes raised beds (for growing fruit and vegetables), a sensory garden and storytelling circle. It is a very tranquil and peaceful space that will be fully used by the whole of our school. While with us the Bishop planted a Cherry tree that we will be able to see grow over the years.



The children prepared an exhibition for the visitors to our school. This was based on each class researching one of the eight decades that the school had been open from the 1930's to the present day.

Year 6 were learning about what the school was like in the 1930s to the 1940s. They learnt all about gas masks and how they protect them from pollutants in the air. Children had to take their gas masks to school with them.

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Year 5 were learning about what the school was like in the 1950s to the 1960s. They looked at a very old picture which showed what school uniform would have been like. They also found out about the fact that each child was provided with a bottle of milk each day.

Year 3 were learning about what the school was like in the 1960s to the 1970s. They learnt about how children had to take off their outdoor shoes and put on their plimsolls for inside. Also, how children were allowed to bring in their own toys for playtimes and lunchtimes.

Year 1 were learning about what the school was like in the 1980s. They were learning about what people would have typically worn in the 80s and the children dressed up in the clothes.

Year 2 were learning about what the school was like in the 1990s. They looked at lots of pictures of a past pupil and learnt that the uniform hadn't changed and also how they used to have lots of dressing up days.

Year 4 were learning about what the school was like in the 2000s to 2010s. They learnt that lots of building work took place as the Foundation and Year 1 part of the school was built.

Foundation were learning about what the school was like from 2010 to present. They went out and drew what the school looks like today. They learnt all about the school badge and designed their own.

This was a very special day and one that the children will remember for a very long time. Thank you to all of you who joined us for the day we really appreciated you giving us your time, talking and being with us.



St Mary's Swanage

The children at St Mary's Swanage would like to let you know how fit they are!

Running

Every day before the start of school - unless we have a downpour which is very rare in sunny Swanage!- all children go out onto the playground for their morning run. Mr White, our Year 5 teacher and PE coordinator, leads KS2 children in a run around our top playground and our Early Years and Key Stage 1 children run round the lower playground with a member of staff. All children run and there is no shirking!

This has been a regular feature for many years at St Mary's. We believe it is an excellent start to the day and the children are so well trained that they settle immediately to work after their run. It is good to see pink faces!

News from our Schools



The children are really enthusiastic. Josh in Year 5 said: "I really enjoy the daily mile for many reasons. We get to have early morning fresh air while running around the track. It's also good fun as you can run and chat at the same time to your friends. I really enjoy the power laps we do at this school. A power lap is when we are allowed to go really fast for 1 minute at the end of the run".

Skipping

Many of our children regularly skip at break and lunchtimes and we decided to capitalise on this to improve their fitness even further. 'Skip2bFit' joined us for a day on 20th October just before half term and each class were treated to a skipping session during the day. Every child now has a school skipping rope with a skip counter built in which they use regularly during the school week.

Our younger children skip for two minutes during their afternoon play and our older children have a 2 minute dedicated skip 3 times a week at the start of their morning play. It is clear that this initiative already impacting on the fitness of the children.



The Skip2B fit day was also a hit with the staff. 'Friendly' skip offs took place during the day between teachers and support staff and personal bests were established. The two minute pupil / staff skip off is however the current favourite! An enthusiastic quote from a star skipper!

Both Mr White and I were heading into the skip off with similar personal bests so I knew it was going to be close. "

Lexi is very modest; in front of all of KS2 Mr White produced 301 with no mistakes; however Lexi won with 312 skips.

"I am looking forward to beating Mr White every week from now on - it's really exciting!" she



News from our Schools



St Augustine's, Weymouth

Children in Need and World Diabetes Day

On Friday 17th November, the children had a spotty and blue day at school. They came in with money to support these causes and thanks to everyone's generosity, over £229 was raised.



Special thanks needs to go to members of the Mini Vinnies Group who collected the money and met at lunchtime on that day to design posters to celebrate the achievements of our children.

The members of the group then spoke to the school during Celebration Assembly to thank everyone for their fundraising efforts.



Operation Christmas Child

This month the children at St. Augustine's School, together with parishioners, have worked hard to donate 123 shoe boxes filled with Christmas gifts in support of this year's Samaritan's Purse Shoebox Appeal. These boxes will go to children in many countries.

Special thanks to Mrs Wilkins who has worked tirelessly to launch the appeal, wrap and pack boxes and to coordinate the collection of these amazing gifts.

Well done everyone.

We really have been 'the best we can be',
By working so hard!



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Shared Services



Fire Risk Assessments

Thanks to all for hard work getting data on Fire Risk Assessments. Only four schools remain to be completed and these will be completed by 31 January 2018.

OSHENS Health and Safety Training

We have conducted several one to one training sessions for school staff to 'top up' or train new staff on the health and safety reporting system. See contact details below to book a session for your school. When reporting in OSHENS please do not use actual names of pupils or staff. Use initials only.

Safety Training

Devon County Council offer very good rates on safety training for a wide variety of subjects from Premises Management through to Water Quality and almost everything in between. If any CAST school wants to book they should email healthandsafety@devon.gov.uk and identify themselves as a CAST school.

General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)

In December the Trust Board will be assessing a partner to assist with implementation of GDPR across all CAST schools. As a very small first step, which schools should already have under the current Data Protection Act (DPA) a template for a school privacy notice, is available on the Trust website under Resources/Templates. There is plenty more to do between now and 25 May 2018 and that is why we are assessing potential partners to assist with compliance.

For further information on any of the above please contact marcus.taylor@plymouthcast.org.uk

Date of Next Newsletter – 6th December 2017

Please remember to email in items for inclusive in the newsletter so that we can share the Good News stories across the Trust. Articles for inclusion should be emailed to Helen Moram at helen.moram@plymouthcast.org.uk