



Do Everything with Love (1 Corinthians 16:14)

January Newsletter 2021

Update from Mrs Christopher

Hello everyone, the new year has now well and truly started and January almost completed! The uncertainties of life continue for a while longer and we all need reassurance as well as appreciation for the hard work we are all doing. Well done to **all** of you and a special mention to those of you who are juggling working at home for your own job as well as supporting your children at home with their learning. Remember we can all only do our best and we are all human. More than ever, we need to knit our school Gospel values into our lives at the moment. Each week this term, the children have the opportunity to reflect on the school's Gospel values and use their voices to express these values to others. In this way they are being school ambassadors spreading these values into our homes as well. In the paragraphs below you will see examples of their work but for now let us reflect on the foundation of these values by reading Colossians 3:12-17:

'As God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.' Colossians 3:12-17

Let us hope and pray that through harmony with each other and in our world, we will be able to soon see an end to this pandemic.

Take care and be safe everyone,

Mrs Christopher

Our Gospel Values explained

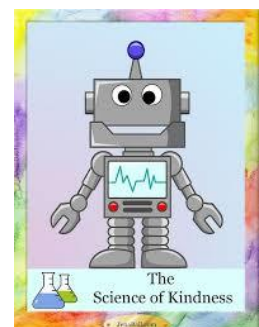
All of the schools in Plymouth CAST share the same Gospel values as it unites us as an academy and creates a similar vision for our schools. Each term, we explore the meaning of the values through group discussions, images and poetry. Each class is a guardian of one of the values as follows:

The children in Maple class are the guardians of *Kindness*.

Last year, the children in Maple class designed a kindness robot, a character that is programmed only to be kind and is displayed in our school hall.

Elm class are the guardians of *Forgiveness*.

Last year, each child had a mosaic tile to design which they all fitted together to decorate a large wooden cross.



Sycamore class are the guardians of *Humility*.

They discussed the humble birth of Jesus and represented Mary his mother surrounded by stain glass windows made from patterns using coloured tissue paper.



In Beech class the children are the guardians of *Peace*.

Children used mod roc to create a giant white dove with a wire frame to hover over miniature doves.

The children in Oak class are the guardians of *Courage*

Last year, they designed a powerful 3D lion's face collage using fabric, feathers, wool and tissue paper.



Willow class are the guardians of *Integrity*.

Last year they made a Tree of clay and paper leaves with their own unique designs.

Rowan class are the guardians of *Compassion*. For our Library area the children created soft fleecy cushions, each child making a square and then four pieces sewn together. One was given to our Church as a way of linking us with our Church community.

Every child in school designed a jigsaw piece which we all put together as a *Justice* jigsaw to show that we all believe in fairness and equality.

Pupil Ambassadors of our Gospel Values

Over the past two weeks the children have had an optional extra task of portraying their understanding of the Gospel values Kindness and Forgiveness. We will continue this task until we have covered all the values and we hope to create durable copies of the children's work to display both in and outside. In this way, the values will surround us all and remind us of the important things in life. Here are examples of the work done so far - thank to all of you who spent time on this truly valued work.



Toby



Phoebe



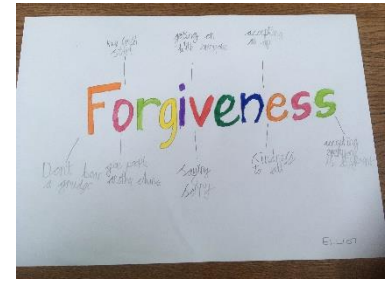
Noah



Lily (Y2)



Hannah



Elliot



Lily (Y4)



Bradley (Y4)

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT UPDATE

Although we are now in Lockdown, we are still adapting and working on our school improvement objectives. Here is a short update on what has been achieved and our future plans when school opens again.

Phonics: Last half term all staff participated in a phonics training course with our outstanding hub school in Southampton. This training is being put into practice with new phonics books for the children and group 'keep up' sessions which will now take part remotely.

Reading: We have now purchased over £1,000 of highly decodable reading books for the children to use at home and at school for Reception class, Year 1 & 2. These are designed to help the children build confidence quickly through reading the sounds they have already being taught rather than having many words that are non-decodable and end up frustrating young readers.

For our older KS2 children, we have purchased individual class books last term and this term which will enable the children to delve deeper into stories, recognising characteristics of specific authors whilst developing imagination.

Catch Up Funding plans: As you know, last term we were using our catch up funding to employ supply teachers in each KS2 class for one day a week. Feedback from you and the teachers was very positive on this approach so we will continue with this when the children return to school. Many of the children have told me how this time has helped them to talk about areas of learning they didn't understand and with help, resolve this so this plan is well worth repeating.



Staff News : Mrs Mac

Last Friday, we recognised a very rare and special event for one of our team. Mrs Mac has been working at this school for 25 years! We thanked her for her loyalty, her dedication and commitment. There are many children from St Mary & St Joseph's school now and in the past who remember and value the support that has been given to them from Mrs Mac. I am sure you would all like to join me in congratulating her for these years of service to the school.

Book Borrowing Service

If your child has limited access to books, please let the class teachers know. We have many unused books in our school library waiting for children to read. If there is a particular one they'd like, please ask and we will have a look and you can pick it up from school. We will also have a drop off box for returns in the foyer.

Audio stories

Audio stories are a great way to develop concentration and listening skills for children and can give parents a rest from reading stories too. You can access many free stories on many devices including Alexa, kindles and ipads.

Reading signatures

We all know that reading is an essential skill in life and we want to encourage our children to develop a love for reading. With some children, this love comes when they have an expected daily reading slot and they discover that magical book. Please encourage your child to read and sign their reading record each time. Remember to let the child's teacher know if they reach the following number of signatures as they will then be awarded a reading certificate: 25, 50, 75, 100, 125 etc.

Other information and helplines for parents

Listening service for anyone affected by Covid-19

Maybe you, a colleague, or a parent could benefit from a **one-off chat** with someone who has a professional training. Contact Psychotherapy Dorset and someone will call back offering to listen and speak for 50 minutes. The service is designed to help people share some of the impact that the current situation is having on them and to regain some sense of control. This is not an advice service nor counselling or therapy. **Call 07714 330120 or go to the website: www.psychotherapydorset.co.uk**

Open door Sessions

Dorset Council provide Open door sessions for parents to provide support or a chat. *If you would like further information or would like to book a slot, please call the Purbeck Education and Early Help Team on 01305 225729 and ask for Julie or Penny*

Mental Health & Well being

Next week is National wellbeing week and the teachers have planned support activities for the children in this area. We have also started a new tab on the website for this important area. Please have a look to see if there are any resources there to support you or to support your child with any issues in this area.



It's the Big Garden Birdwatch this weekend. If you'd like to take part in this, please click on the link below. Children usually love this activity.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>