

October 9th 2020 School Newsletter



Justin Stone -
Head Teacher

Phone
01392 276854

E-mail
**admin@st-
thomas.devon.sch.uk**

Dates

- ◆ 26-30/10/20 - Half Term
- ◆ 1/10/20 - Census day
- ◆ WB 19/10/20 - parent evenings
- ◆ 31/10/20 - Secondary School Applications in.
- ◆ 6/11/20 - Photos
- ◆ 20/11/20 - Flu Vaccine
- ◆ 18/12/20 - Last day of term
- ◆ 5/1/2021 - Term starts

COVID 19

The school year has started really well and we are adapting to new systems and routines to keep our school healthy. Thank you for supporting the school in:

- keeping children off if they have a new persistent cough, high temperature or loss of taste and doing battle with the testing system. Please use the following link <https://111.nhs.uk/covid-19> to check symptoms which then provides useful advice.
- using the one way system around school at drop off and pick up and staggering the arrival time.

I am sure that you are aware that cases of COVID 19 are rising in the Exeter area and over the coming days I will be looking at strengthening our response across the school to reduce the impact of any case we may have. As the children have settled so well I am keen to minimise the disruption to their learning whilst ensuring we can follow the guidance and keep people safe. With this in mind please can:

- face coverings to be worn on site by adults at drop off and pick up where social distancing is not possible.
- entrances and exits be kept clear to stop congestion.

Whilst this is just guidance at the moment I hope that people will take their social responsibility to keep the school in the best possible position. Thank you for your help with this.

Reception

Our new Reception class has settled in brilliantly and it is an absolute delight to go into their classroom. They are so enthusiastic! Look out for this picture in the Express and Echo.



Read Write Inc.

We are very excited to share with you that we will now be teaching your children to read and write using Read Write Inc phonics. This scheme is aimed at children in Reception to Year 2 and where needed, higher up the school. It is a comprehensive literacy programme, weaving decoding, comprehension, writing and spelling together seamlessly. Ideally we would have liked to have invited parents into school to go through what this change would mean. This is not possible at the moment but Mrs Bessant has put some information on the school story on Class Dojo already and more will be put up in the coming weeks.

A significant amount of planning, training, assessments and resources has been put into this over the past year to ensure that the introduction of this teaching strategy is a success. One of the great things is that the children work in small groups with targeted precise teaching that is at your child's level for a part of every day.

Considerable investment has been put into the reading books that your children will be bringing home as part of this programme. They will be in a protective plastic wallet to prevent too much damage in the journey between school and home. Please look after the books. The children will bring home a black and white version of the book being used in school and a coloured book that is a similar story but links the sounds being learnt. These will not be changed frequently the aim is to get the children to read them fluently with a 'story tellers' voice. This is a deliberate strategy to stop gaps from forming in the children's phonic knowledge and to enable them to become a 'reading expert'. We have been using the programme since the start of this term but the children were in their small groups for the first time at the end of this week. The children have responded really well - so far!