

Newsletter 8th September 2017



It has been so wonderful to have the school full of the children again after the summer break. They are such a great advert for our school. Our new Reception class have made a fantastic start and it is great to see them busy in the front playground. The rest of the classes seem to have carried on where they left off last year with their smiling faces and enthusiasm for learning. It has also been fantastic to see some new children further up our school and I know that they will be made to feel supported and welcomed by the rest of the children.

The building works over the summer went right up to the wire. The building was handed over to us on Tuesday of this week. As anyone who has ever had the builders in will know, it takes a while to get things back in order after they have gone. The hall is looking fantastic and the improvements to the electrics and heating systems will save the school money and improve the learning environment for the children and staff. The kitchen has been completely rewired and now has an extractor fan so Barbara and Colleen won't need to worry about switching on the kettle at the same time as the microwave. Nor will they have to suffer in the heat anymore. I am not surprised they came runners up in the Devon Norse awards in July. The library has a much cosier feel to it with the fitting of the doors and it gives us another teaching room. The work to the front playground will now take place over the October half-term. A new server was fitted too, which means we can move forward with our plans to upgrade the hardware in school.

The start to the term has been interesting for all of the staff and I am incredibly grateful for the dedication and good humour that they have shown. All of Tuesday was spent making sure that the classrooms were ready for the children on Wednesday and the staff have been playing catch up ever since. It does mean that we haven't been able to get out all of the information to you that we normally do at the start of the year. We will endeavour to do so as soon as we can and I thank you for your understanding in the meantime. Like every school, we have had to work to a much tighter budget this year and this has meant a reduction in the number of Teaching Assistant. Dragonflies, Butterflies and Spiders won't have a dedicated TA with them every day. We will look for creative solutions and deploy our talented team of TAs across the school. We are currently looking to recruit a temporary TA for 3 days a week. We had been looking forward to welcoming Mrs Christine Penney from Diptford Primary School to replace Mrs Proudlove but she is unwell at the moment and we wish her a speedy recovery. I am delighted to welcome Mrs McGovern back to the fold. She is a really valuable member of our team. We welcome Mrs Letten and Miss Foley to the Stoke Gabriel Family. They have already made a great impression on their classes and I am very excited about what they will bring to the school. Mrs Burness-Moakes left us at the end of August and we are looking to replace her as soon as possible. We wish Mrs Burness-Moakes the very best of luck for the future.

Next week will see the children out and about in Stoke Gabriel. We are determined to make more of our beautiful surroundings and great community for the children's learning this year. The children in Dragonflies, Butterflies and Spiders will be spending time by the mill pond, at the Boat House and in the woods. All of the activities we have planned will rely on adult helpers to go ahead. A reminder that the children will wear Mufti next Friday and will need wellies to get across the dam for their forest school sessions.

A big thank you to the village hall committee who have fitted a gate to the side of the building. It makes the passage to the school field much safer for the children. Also a big thank you to the gardeners who have been looking after the pots outside the school. They make such a difference.

I am really looking forward to my second year at Stoke Gabriel Primary School. It is a wonderful community and I feel very lucky to be here.

Matthew Medd

Head of School

Safeguarding Roles and Responsibilities in our School

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If Mr Medd is not available, please contact any of the other safeguarding Officers:

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