

From Mr Chappell

Welcome back to a new academic year at St Helen's! I hope you all had an amazing summer and managed to have some great family time together. Every year I am genuinely excited to return to school in September, to start the journey ahead, but this year more than ever the prospect of coming 'back' together was something that I was really looking forward to. From Thursday's Inset day when we gathered in the hall together as a whole school staff for the first time in over 18 months, to having our first whole school assembly, the opportunity to bring everyone back together has been one that everyone has relished. The children have come back to school in such a positive way and there has been a real buzz of learning right across the school. It has been great to see the children come back with our ethos of 'Flying High' and I have been very impressed by the attitude and effort that our children have started the year with and in reconnecting with other year groups in the wider community. In assembly on Monday we talked about using all our school values to enable us to do the very best that we can and this has already been seen with lots of examples of friendship, respect and compassion across the school, with different year groups coming together. Well done everyone!



Coming Back to School- Children's Voice!

New Staff members

As highlighted in our newsletter at the end of last year, we are delighted to be joined by a number of new staff. Mrs Morgans has joined us as a general teaching assistant, Mrs Lee and Mrs Milsom as SEND teaching assistants in EYFS and Mrs Gilkes as teacher. Mrs Gilkes will be in school on Wednesdays to cover PPA time for class teachers. We were sorry to learn that Mr Cox, our sports coach, has changed his role with TPS (Total Pro Soccer) and will no longer be working at St Helen's. Whilst this is a big loss to us and our children, we have been delighted to be joined by Mr Goodwin, who will be in school running lunchtime sessions, after school clubs and working alongside teachers to help develop their own skills in Games lessons. We wish them all a very happy time at St Helen's.

Year 6 Trip to Dean Field Studies Centre

Next week, our Year 6's head to the Forest of Dean for the annual camp. They will be doing all sorts of exciting activities while they are away, including canoeing, orienteering and climbing. We hope that they have a really fantastic time away as a class! Technology permitting, we'll be sharing photos and updates from the trip on twitter. Twitter users can follow us @sthelenspri, or you can visit www.twitter.com/sthelenspri as Year 6 updates are written by the child on Class Dojo.

Back to school night via Zoom – Wednesday 22nd September – 6pm

There's a lot of information to communicate at the beginning of the school year and probably even more so this year as we look to get back to the wider whole school community. In previous years we have held a 'Back to School' night with parents gathering in the hall before moving to individual classes to meet their teacher. Whilst Covid-19 restrictions are being eased, we feel that it would be unfair to ask parents to congregate in a much larger group in the hall. We are therefore running a 'Back to School Messages' evening on Wednesday 22nd September at 6 pm. Members of our Senior Leadership Team will share some key messages around our school development priorities for the forthcoming year, share our own leadership roles and introduce members of the team.

'Meet the teacher' sessions: Individual teachers will also run 30 minute sessions across this week, from 4pm to 5pm. These will be on different days of the week to ensure that parents can attend siblings classes. These will again be held on zoom, due to the potential high numbers of parents being in the classroom. I am sure you will support our views on this. Teachers are in the process of finalising the timetable and we will get this to you by the middle of next week.

Generosity



This term the children will be exploring the value of 'Generosity'. With this newsletter you will receive the home school sheet relating to this value. Please share this with your children and if they complete any of the activities, I would love to share some of them in a display in the hall. This week in assembly we talked about generosity around school. Thank you to Seyhun and Lola for recording the children's ideas.



Message from the Chair of the Board of Governors, Neil Martin

On behalf of the Board of Governors, I want to welcome you to the new school year at St Helen's. As you may know, the Board of Governors is a group of volunteers made up of parents and other people from the community. We oversee the school's budget, make sure the curriculum is balanced and broad, monitor the school's performance, appoint senior staff, and develop and maintain the overall vision for, and strategic direction of, the school. If there is anything you would like to discuss with the Board, you can email us at governors.sthelensprimary@gmail.com. You will find more information at our page on the school website, and I will be with Mr Spens in the playground during the drop-off period on Wednesday and Thursday of next week if you would like to discuss anything. We are still looking for new parent governors, and we have room on the Board for non-parent governors so it's not necessary to have a direct connection with the school; we would welcome applications from anyone who would like to be a governor. So if you are interested, or if you have a friend, or family member who you think might be interested, please get in touch; we'd be happy to provide more information. Good luck with the new term, and I look forward to seeing some of you in the playground next week.



Opal Survey

One key element of our School Development Plan this year is the development of children's experiences of play at break times and dinner times; part of this work will be through OPAL. In Term 6 we saw lots of progress with this, with the introduction of loose parts play and children becoming more creative. The importance of play cannot be underestimated and to enable us to benchmark the impact of our work we sent out, towards the end of last term, a parents and children survey. This survey is still open and we would love for you to complete it with your children.

Parent Survey: <https://forms.gle/59NNx11M3QHAWqJd6> Child Survey: <https://forms.gle/pMnM5wvfyGqqi9d7>

Term dates and Inset days 2021/22

Term	Starts	Ends	INSET days 2021/22
Term 1	Thursday 2 September 2021	Friday 22 October 2021	
Term 2	Monday 1 November 2021	Friday 17 December 2021	
Term 3	Tuesday 4 January 2022	Friday 18 February 2022	
Term 4	Monday 28 February 2022	Friday 8 April 2022	
Term 5	Monday 25 April 2022	Friday 27 May 2022	
Term 6	Monday 6 June 2022	Thursday 21 July 2022	

Please note that, as the additional bank holiday next year falls in term time, Term 6 will now end one day earlier (Thursday 21st July and not Friday 22nd July). All term dates are on the South Gloucestershire Council website.

Well done to those children who were awarded a certificate today.

Holly class – Harrison and Holly
Beech class – Avah-Grace and James
Oak class – Lola and Harrison

Ash class – Catherine and Nithilan
Sycamore class – Selby and Frankie
Elm class – Xander and Emma



Working in partnership with St Mary's Primary School, Yate

'Growing together, pursuing life in all its fullness'

