

# STOGURSEY SCHOOL NEWS

**October 2020**



We are well over a month into the new term and it certainly has been interesting getting used to the 'New Normal'. My thanks go to the whole community, the staff, parents, carers, children and governors who have been so patient and flexible in helping us to adapt to these new arrangements. It has been very strange putting the DfE's new requirements in place but we have tried to keep some sense of normality. For instance, we carried out the annual election of House Captains. Congratulations to Abi, Oakley and Connie (pictured above) who won these elections and will start their jobs after half term.

I think it was Einstein who mentioned about it not being right doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. We have certainly experienced this with our risk assessment. It keeps changing as we are met with new challenges. We realised early on that the entry and exit procedures weren't working well and quickly moved to staggered starts and ends. This change was seamless and is now working well every day.

Special thanks must go to FOSS who have bought us 6 walkie talkies which improve communication across our large site but also now have the benefit of getting children out of the building quickly and efficiently. Many thanks to FOSS for sorting this out!

As we adapt to the new normal, it throws up other challenges. The winter months are coming and PE must switch to indoors. My thanks to the Victory Hall Committee who are allowing PE lessons to be held in the new Victory Hall. Our current hall is used to ensure distancing amongst older pupils and so this has had an effect on the PE arrangements. This is another example of the community working together for the benefit of our children. My thanks to them.

A special thanks to our team of parents assisting me in the mornings ensuring the one-way system flows, ensuring distancing between adults. If you have half an hour spare, why not sign up for a shift on our sign up board outside the school?

As the months go on, I am sure there will be other challenges and I really appreciate the kindness and support from everyone as this has been quite a challenge. It's times like these that we see true character in people and the Stogursey character is certainly one of community and family.

Mr Tucker

## **STAFF NEWS**

Mrs Carter, our School Business Manager has decided to move on at the end of this half term. She has successfully got a new post in a school elsewhere in Somerset. Mrs Carter has been with us at the school for six years when Mrs Barnes was the Headteacher. We will miss the warm welcomes from Mrs Carter at the front office and are really sad to see her go. The staff will miss her tales of the carnival and of her holiday home. Congratulations, Mrs Carter on your new post and many thanks for your service to our school.

We are currently in the process of recruiting Mrs Carter's successor and we will let you know who this is once we have completed the process.

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Welcome to Mrs Christine Retallick, who joins our lunchtime team. Christine is local and has grandchildren in the school so knows us well. A warm welcome to her. We also welcome Miss Nicola Wood as our day cleaner. Nicola is helping to ensure areas used at lunchtimes are ready for afternoon sessions.

## WELLBEING

Since returning to school, each class has had a weekly wellbeing lesson to begin to provide children with an understanding of what wellbeing is. We began by introducing the term 'wellbeing' and have had lots of discussions with the children about the importance of taking care of our minds as well as our bodies. We have focused on the vocabulary we might use when talking about wellbeing, to begin to give children the language to talk about their own physical and mental wellbeing. The children have explored different feelings that they might experience in certain situations and we have focused a lot on strategies to help with these feelings. We have spent lots of time outdoors and the children are beginning to think of things that they can do themselves if they experience a particular feeling. The topic of wellbeing is an ongoing one within the school and each class will continually revisit it so that children understand that taking care of their physical and mental health is vital.

This is what the children have had to say about our wellbeing topic:

"You have to take care of your mind and your body. If your mind doesn't feel good then you can drink lots of water". Aaliyah, Y2

"If you're feeling sick then you should talk to people and they can help you. Wellbeing means being healthy and you can eat fruit to keep your mind and body healthy". Casey C, Y3

"I eat bananas and fruit to make me healthy and strong". Ava, Reception

"Wellbeing means that you are well and good. If I'm feeling sad then I get my favourite toy to help me feel better". Harry, Y1



## WELLIES

Could your child bring in some wellies with their name in both, please? If they are needed for evenings and weekends, then if your child brings in a carrier bag for when it is needed, then we can arrange for them to get them from the rack. If wellies can't be brought in, then old shoes will be fine.

## THE CATCH-UP

During the first few weeks, we got to know more about the children and their needs following the national lockdown. On the whole, the children are not massively behind. This is obviously good news. The remote learning packs with weekly deliveries and collections and the work you did with your children obviously paid off.

The government has put extra money called 'Catch-up Premium' into schools and so we have started to make decisions on how we spend it. We have noticed that children have largely forgotten their times tables. We have started to practise these in class (where applicable) twice a day and the children are really enjoying it. We have also noticed that the amount of writing children produce has diminished. This is probably because they didn't have to write much

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during the lockdown compared to what they do in school. We have invested some catch-up money into a scheme called 'Expressive Writing' for a short period of time. It's already started to have a positive effect on the school.

When it starts, we will engage in the national tutoring programme and some children will benefit from this. For a short period of time, we are also using the funding to employ Ms Dunwood to teach in the Year 4/5/6 team so that group sizes can be even smaller than they are for English and Maths. We believe this should help children to get back to where they need to be.

## PARENTS EVENINGS

These will be held in November and will possibly involve using technology. Where technology is an issue, alternative arrangements will be made.

## CLUBS

Many thanks to Mr Weeks for running his Ultimate Frisbee club after school on a Monday. There's still places left so please do book your child's place before they run out! All equipment and hands are gelled and washed in between games.

## TEMPERATURE READINGS

Our thanks again to FOSS who have financed three contactless thermometers so that all children, staff and essential visitors to the school can have their temperature taken on arrival. Many other schools do this and we decided to do this following parent feedback on the risk assessment. This will really help with keeping everyone safe especially as a high temperature is a COVID symptom. If you wish to do this yourself to your child instead of school staff or volunteers, then please say and we can arrange for this to happen each day. We have also added this to our risk assessment.

## REMOTE LEARNING

We have had some children off school with symptoms of COVID19. Luckily, we have had no positive cases. It is required now in law that anyone self-isolating either through a positive case or awaiting test results should continue their education at home through Remote Learning provided by the school. This month, our new investment of Chromebooks to loan out (for free!) should arrive and all work can be done online in Google Classroom. Currently work is still in paper packs. We will set out more details about this but the main expectations are:

1. Work should be for at least **3 hours per day**
2. Remote Learning should be done to the same high standards as we have at school (good presentation, care taken with it)
3. All remote learning packs are to be brought back upon your child's return to school
4. A requirement to meet deadlines set by teachers
5. Your family bubble should NOT be seen out and about whilst self-isolating. This is now against the law and can incur big fines.

We appreciate that switching like this can be very challenging but please know that our teachers are working extremely hard to ensure work is provided and then for children to 'slot back in' upon their arrival. This is such a challenge for teachers to do and so if you don't understand something about Remote Learning, then please do contact us at the school.



## NEWS FROM BEACON CLASS

Beacon Class have thoroughly enjoyed learning about different plant species and their characteristics. The children have discovered the wonderful world of non-vascular plants through the process of growing moss

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on tree roots. The moss was very carefully examined and scientifically labelled with the properties of non-vascular plants so that any new scientists can learn from their discoveries.

The children conducted a similar activity exploring insectivorous plants such as the Venus Fly Trap, Sundew and Pitcher plant. The children enjoyed making comparisons between these plants and those which were discovered on a walk of the school grounds.

## PE DAYS

Please remember as part of the plan, children may come to school in a tracksuit on PE days. These days are outlined below:

Triscombe (Rec/ Y1)- Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays  
Alfoxton (Y2/3)- Mondays and Fridays  
Beacon (Y4/5/6)- Thursdays and Fridays

## DIARY DATES

Newsletters will be sent out in the second week of every month. Please see the website for more information.

These are the dates for this term. We try our best not to change them but sometimes circumstances require us to.

Mon 19th October	Box of Delights Wellbeing Day
Thurs 22nd October	INSET Day
Fri 25th October	INSET Day
Mon 2nd November	Term 2 starts
Mon 16th November	Friendship Week starts
Mon 16th/ Tues 17th	Parents Evenings (Remotely)
Mon 30th November	Box of Delights Wellbeing Day
Fri 4th Dec	End of Topic Celebrations
Mon 7th Dec	Christmas topic begins
Fri 18th Dec	End of Term