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Principal: Mr A Hill

## **School Review 2020/21**

This year has been, with the exception of 2019/20, the strangest and most challenging of recent times in Education.

September started with huge optimism at returning to full classrooms – the first time since March 2020.

The school staff had worked tirelessly to get the school ready to meet the requirements of a very strict Covid-19 risk assessment.

There was some concern about the impact of the school restrictions on the children's social, emotional and wellbeing. In reality, they were delighted to be back at school and the joy of their chat, laughter and learning was brilliant.

The academic year started by welcoming Mr Huxtable to our school team – and what a positive impact he had.



## **TEAM SCORES**

Team	Points	Rank
Mary Tavy & Brentor	886	3
Lewtrenchard	785	6
Princetown	522	8
Bridestowe	981	1
Meavy	978	2
Lady Modifords	586	7
Exbourne	801	5
Milton Abbot	809	4

The first academic term was one of trial, error and improvement as we grappled with meeting the needs of the children and maintaining the health and safety of our whole community. Great efforts were made to ensure the daily experience of the children was as normal as possible. We continued with our strong tradition of school sports and were rewarded with a Gold Medal in the West Devon Quad Kids.

As half term approached, we were still in the grips of an economic crisis as many parents were still furloughed or out of work after redundancy. As a Trust, despite no direct instruction or mandate from the Government, we decided to provide food vouchers in partnership with Waitrose for our free school meal children. By Christmas, Marcus Rashford and other high profile campaigners had persuaded the Government into a U-turn on the issue.



Half term was very welcome and staff continued to feel more and more back into routine as the children regained their old habits of writing stamina and long days. FoBS were instrumental in the development of the Environmental Area during the break, starting to construct our Forest School shelter. We thank all the volunteers, who have been limited by the pandemic this year, for their time and efforts.



By the beginning of November, we were feeling very positive and starting to participate in annual routines such as Remembrance Day and forest schools.



As we entered December we started to look ahead to Christmas and the continued economic hardships our community was facing. At this time, we sourced and supplied Chromebooks and tablet computers to our vulnerable families. This offer was extended in the Spring Term to any family

requesting a device.

Our Christmas Play was a huge success having been live-streamed and recorded for watching back. The response was very positive with lots of donations to FoBS.

At the end of the Autumn Term, we said a sad farewell to Mr Huxtable. Personal circumstances meant he was unable to continue in his new role as Year 5/6 class teacher. We welcomed the excellent and experienced Mrs Reid into our staff team.

January 1<sup>st</sup> saw the official start for our new Trust CEO Dan Morrow. Mr Morrow has brought a fresh perspective and renewed focus to the Trust which is rapidly leading to improvements across the schools.





As the Christmas break came to an end, the number of Covid cases and, tragically, deaths continued to rise. As a school, we had no guidance from HM Government and continued to plan to reopen as normal on the 5<sup>th</sup> January. Late in the afternoon on Monday 4<sup>th</sup> January, our Trust took the decision to defy Government guidance and delay the reopening of school until at least the 7<sup>th</sup> January.

By 8pm, Mr Johnson had declared a national lockdown including restricted school access. We were back into partial home and school education – something parents and teachers had been desperate to avoid. It is extremely difficult to provide education for some students at home and others in school, effectively delivering two lessons. The staff have continued to not only achieve this but excel at it – we are truly blessed with our team.

The numbers of children requesting a school place was significantly higher than in previous school restrictions and we had to adapt quickly to balance social distancing and accepting the children who needed support. We then faced the strange challenge of ventilating the rooms in freezing temperatures! How different that is to now, the end of July and 30 degree heat.

So, we returned to remote teaching videos, resources, Class Dojo and supporting families anyway we could including digital devices:



this time were brilliant – they returned to school routines and behaviours as if they'd never been away. As we approached Easter we prepared to send our best wishes to Ms Baker with her upcoming new baby. Ms Baker had been working from home for some time, supporting staff in the background, as a critically vulnerable member of staff. Miss Bryant was employed to fill the maternity cover role in the Owlets class.

♥♥♥ Appreciation post from Mr Hill ♥♥♥ From 4<sup>th</sup> Jan

Today has been the most difficult day in my professional career.

At times I have been completely enraged at the situation I have found myself and our schools in. With no power to change it.

Staff have been told this and then that and then something completely different during the day by me.

They accepted it all.

'No problem' they said.

They asked how they could help.

They said 'We will do what is best for the children and our community and keep everyone safe'.

We are truly lucky to have such a brilliant team at our schools and I want to publicly thank every one of them.

You, the parents, carers and community were informed at 4.30pm of our decision to delay full reopening.

I feared a backlash of (completely understandable) frustration, dismay and anger at such short notice. It hasn't come.

Feedback from parents has been completely, totally and wholly supportive. You have thanked us for our continued work for our children and community. You have sympathised and been understanding. Thank you, I am so grateful to have your support.

Without wishing to speculate on the PMs imminent announcement; I expect some more challenges are heading our way. Let us keep working as a united community to support one another and our children in these most unusual of times. If your family needs any support in the coming weeks, please do not hesitate to ask.

With respect and ambition, we flourish together.  
Mr Hill

By February half term, everyone was ready to return to school. However, we'd have to wait until March 8<sup>th</sup> with World Book Day continuing remotely. The children returned to school, delighted once again to be back.

Staff quickly spotted learning areas which had suffered as a result of the school restrictions and planned how they would mitigate them. Of course, some of these are long term. The children at

Our partnership with local community groups continued throughout the year. The West Devon Methodist circuit provided regular craft bags for the children whilst St Bridget's church offered milk and food vouchers to our vulnerable families. In partnership with Devon County Council and the Covid hardship fund, several families benefitted from financial grants to ensure their children were supported and cared for during these challenging times.

Charity work has continued through the year as the children support local and national charities. Comic Relief, Children in Need, Save the Children Jumper Day and Virgin Money's Young Enterprise Scheme which raised £100 for the WWF.

By the end of April, improving weather meant that all the children could be on the playground and have assemblies together albeit in their socially distanced bubbles. The joy of having all 80 children laughing and playing together cannot be underestimated.

We also welcomed Mrs Whitelaw to our Teaching Assistant team to support children in the EYFS as restrictions had finally been eased.



Moving towards the end of the year the school staff continued to work tirelessly to provide opportunities for our children, including the Year 5/6 residential and Sports Day.

During our residential, the children participated in a range of outdoor pursuits with every child achieving their potential. Overnight camping was brilliant with lots of fond memories being made – albeit not a lot of sleep!

Our Sports Day remains one of the highlights of the year – and this year was no exception. 2 and half hours, 70 races, 94 medals and every child taking part in every event – it was superb. The children all enjoyed themselves and the day was topped off by those children winning multiple medals giving them away to others who had helped and supported, but not come first. Living our vision of *flourishing together*.

Now, on the second to last day of term, our Summer Performance has capped a memorable year. Our Leaver's Service will be one of tears and joy as we wish our departing Year 6s the best in their future education.



Enjoy the summer break. Stay safe and have fun, look out for one another. I am already looking forward to the new academic year in September – I hope you are too.

Mr Hill

Principal

**Whole Year**  
**Attendance**

**96.3%**

**End of Year Awards**



**Care, Concern and Courtesy** – Dominic  
**Spirit of Devon 1** – Noah  
**Spirit of Devon 2** - Zola  
**Literacy Award** – Lucia  
**Mathematics Award** – Zoe  
**Sports Person** – Ben C  
**Art Award** – Caiden  
**Design and Technology Award** – Ethan  
**ICT Award** – Callum  
**Reading Awards** – Johnathan & Jamie  
**Music Award** – Sam