



Bridestowe Primary School – With Respect and Ambition We Flourish Together

5th February 2021

Certainty and Uncertainty

It feels like this is a time of great uncertainty. The Covid pandemic has disrupted, delayed or cancelled many of our normal activities, including some fundamentals like school and work. It can be easy to feel anxious, nervous and upset when faced with uncertainty, especially for children. What I find useful is to focus upon the certainties and the things we can control, not the uncertainties.

It is certain that all children will return to school at some point. We have been guided to expect school restrictions to last until March 8th at least, with the promise of 2 weeks' notice of the school reopening fully. This gives us time to consider carefully and prepare for welcoming back all children, for supporting their emotional, social and physical wellbeing, and for restoring the routines of school and learning. It is certain that at some point we will be able to take part in the brilliant extra-curricular activities that we all enjoy so much. Sports clubs, trips and visits, visitors and guest speakers to school. We already have so many positive ideas to use when we are able.

It is certain that the school and our community will continue to support one another for the benefit of our families and children. Our purpose is much more than just education; we strive to build positive relationships with all and ensure the best life chances for everyone.

There have been some reports in the media of a 'lost generation' of children or that our children might lose £40,000 in earnings over their lifetime because of the missed school time.

I disagree. Our children are not lost, in fact they have found things they never knew they had. They have spent more time cooking, reading with their siblings, building bonds with their parents, exploring nature in the garden and locality, more time singing and dancing. It has caused me to reflect upon how we can enhance and enrich our school curriculum even more once we fully return.

And children are resilient, they are adaptable and they bounce back. Through the careful guidance, support, and facilitation of learning of our school team **and** the parents/carers, children will recover. Throughout history, and now, we see periods of time when children could not attend school and each time we see perseverance and success for those children. The 1940's war time, the foot and mouth crisis, children who are severely ill. What allows them to be successful is not whether they know all their times tables or how neat their handwriting is, it is their desire to learn, their curiosity, their love for new information and perseverance to succeed. When children have that, then they will find both themselves and their talents, and they will fulfil and earn their potential.

It feels hard, it feels uncertain now, but there are better times to come and we will embrace, support and work through them together.

School Update

We are still providing for approximately 40% of our children in school for key workers or vulnerable families. The 60% of children at home are engaging through Class Dojo and working extremely hard. Last week there were approximately 1770 (One thousand, seven hundred and seventy) pieces of work shared on Class Dojo.

The parental survey recently conducted was very successful with a good percentage of families completing it. The results were very positive with lots of praise for our teaching and school team. There were some useful suggestions and constructive criticism which we will carefully reflect upon. Thank you for taking the time to complete this.

We have distributed an additional 14 digital devices to families in the last 2 weeks as well as purchasing 30 Chromebooks for pupils and new laptops for all staff. This update of our technology is very welcome and represents a new investment in digital infrastructure.

Parental consultations are being offered next week via phone or Microsoft Teams. Please contact the office if you haven't received a time slot.

We welcomed a new member of our school family this week. Zak, in Year 2, joined our school roll on Monday. Of course, we can't meet Zak in person yet, but we are looking forward to making a new friendship with him. Zak has moved to the area recently so if you pass him in the village, please ensure he and his family are shown what a caring, friendly and loving community we are.

This week is Mental Health Week and you will have seen on Class Dojo and Facebook some activities and ideas to support your child's mental health and wellbeing.

The government have confirmed this week that schools will not be required to open for key worker and vulnerable families over the half term holiday. Staff have already prepared some fun, optional, keep busy activities for half term which we will share soon.

Although the government confirmed that schools will not be required to provide FSM over half term, the DMAT is working alongside Devon County Council to ensure our families receive their FSM vouchers. The vouchers will not go out until next week.

Schools will be responsible for track and trace over half term so if a child tests positive for Covid-19 during half term, you must inform us please.

Mr A. Hill – Acting Head of School
head@bridestowe-primary.devon.sch.uk
01837 861361

Evie using some great maths resources



What we have been up to:



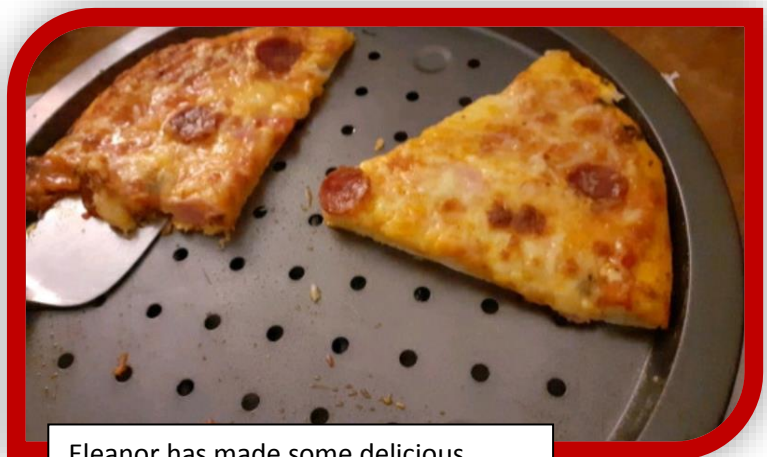
Niamh has been busy baking – they look yummy!



Hayleigh with a little helper at her work



Flynn working hard on letter formation. I love that he is wearing his uniform at home!



Eleanor has made some delicious pizza!



Some new arrivals on the Horn farm



Great teamwork from the Floyd-Walkers.
(Christmas pyjamas are not just for Christmas!)