

Castle Primary School



October 2024

A message from Steve Morton

Welcome to the first newsletter of the year. This term seems to have flown by, but we haven't missed a moment or an opportunity to cram in as much learning and enjoyment as we can. All the children have returned to school full of energy and enthusiasm. Everywhere around our school children have settled into their new classes and built relationships with their new classmates. The Reception children are certainly keeping their Year 6 buddies on their toes as they navigate their first term of 'big school'.



International Languages Day and World Poetry Day kicked off our wider curriculum learning for the term. All the children sang and spoke in our assembly to the school in a multitude of languages from around the world. This was swiftly followed by Years 5 & 6 collaborating with children from all over Great Britain in a Guinness World Record attempt for the most people collaborating in a poetry lesson at the same time. The lesson was live streamed, and all our children and the teachers joined in. We will let you know if we get a mention in the record book!

World Mental Health Awareness Day (Wear a bright colour) was a hit, with all the children filling our school with colour and smiles. Sessions throughout the day gave the children time to focus on their own mental health and to understand how to keep themselves well, whilst being aware of those around them. Ending the day with our second golden ticket event made the day even more special. Thank you to everyone who purchased a bar. I can't wait to see who is joining the King and Queen for a private lunch this time.

We have spent some time introducing our new Castle values focus for the year. The Castle 4 C's. The poster attached shares with everyone in our school community what we value and how we help to make our school and the wider world better. Lots more information to follow on this over the coming terms.

'Project Playtime' is off to a great start. The new play equipment and the structure of each daily play session is allowing for all the children to get involved in play that they are interested in. Adults around the playground are facilitating team games, role-play, crafts and a variety of physical activities. The new gigantic sandpit is a hit with, on average, 15 children tunnelling and building daily. Please do continue to donate any dress up clothes, buckets and spades, large cardboard boxes, plastic tarpaulins etc to keep it all evolving. Our next project is to remove the tin shed from the corner of the playground and to build an outdoor stage area for all our budding performers. We are looking for volunteers who are motivated to help with this over a weekend next half term. Please let the office know if you are willing and able to help.

Enjoy your half term break and we look forward to welcoming you all back in November.



The Photo of the Week



Pinkery 2024



Cabot
Learning
Federation

This school is part of the Cabot Learning Federation, a Multi Academy Trust in South West England.

Dates for your Diary

- 22nd and 23rd Oct - Parents Evening
- 22nd Oct- Tiny Turrets Parents Evening
- 24th and 25th Oct- Inset Days
- 5th Nov- School photos- portraits and siblings
- 6th Nov- Tiny Turrets Photos
- 6th Nov - **Tiny Turrets and Drogo's Bakes for Bits and Bobs**
- 7th Oct- FOCS Sparkle Disco

Head of school: Steve Morton

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Safeguarding

Safeguarding is high priority at Castle Primary School. We take every opportunity to ensure that our pupil's safety is paramount. We want our pupils to be healthy and happy and to develop well, both physically and mentally. The school follows the latest Government Guidance to ensure we are fulfilling our duties in this important area.

Our Designated Lead (DSL) and contact at School is Steve Morton and our Deputy Safeguarding Lead is Laura Liddell.

Our school's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy can be found online at:
www.castleprimaryschool.com/759/safeguarding

If you have any concerns about the safety of a child you can either talk to our DSL or DDSLs or you may phone Somerset Direct on 0300 123 2224.

There is lots of online safety advice on our website – please follow [this link](#) to help keep your child safe

Attendance Breakdown:

Drogo– 99.73%

Corfe - 94.96%

Totnes - 98.15%

Dunster - 94.40%

Tintagel– 98.15%

School total = 96.57%

Drogo

Drogo Class have made a fantastic start to the new school year. They have settled in so quickly and it's hard to believe that they have only been in school for a few weeks! The year six buddies have been amazing - meeting us at playtimes, helping at lunchtimes and even joining us for the daily mile - thank you buddies! We also have some new Early Years Ministers who come down at the end of the day to help everyone get ready for home, which is much appreciated.

In class, we have been busy learning how to take turns, share and work as a team. The Little Red Hen story was a great starting point and everyone enjoyed making their own bread and finding out how yeast worked by watching the balloon get bigger. The children have learnt the story using actions and a story map and have also had fun changing the characters - we had a lion and a gorilla this week!



We have already started our phonics lessons and have nearly learnt all of the phase two letters and sounds. Thank you so much for all of your support at home. The children are starting to read and write CVC words and they are making fantastic progress - we are very proud of them. In Maths, Drogo Class are learning how to subitise and how to recognise when a group has more or fewer items. The Numberblocks have also been helping us to learn all about the numbers to four and how to count accurately.

Don't forget to check Seesaw regularly for photos of what we have been up to, and for activities that support what we have been learning in school. We love to see what you are doing at home so please feel free to take some photos and send them in!
Everyone is starting to get a bit tired now - it has been a very long half term!

We hope you all have a well deserved break and we can't wait to see you all in November!



Corfe

Welcome to the first newsletter of the new year. It is always an exciting time getting to know each other and finding out what the children really enjoy doing at school. They seem to have settled in well to new teachers, a new classroom, new routines and a new way of learning. Thank you to the parents/carers for supporting us with such a positive transition back to school. Having happy, positive and motivated children coming through the gate at 8.45am really does make such a difference.

Hopefully you have had chance to follow our journey so far on Seesaw and have been able to see some of the lovely things the children have already been doing. We always appreciate a like or a comment!

In Maths, we have worked hard on perfecting our place value. We have been representing numbers, comparing, ordering and deepening our understanding. We have used a range of manipulatives to help us and we are developing our mathematical vocabulary.

Our Discovery has been through Geography. We have been loving a map and have been really getting to know our local area. We have found out how symbols work, compass directions and whether we have enough recreational green space in our village. We are becoming experts at logging on to the Chromebooks in computing and developing our skills in PE.

In English, we have been reading *The Museum of Marvellous Things* and *Do Not Enter the Monster Zoo*. We have explored and made story maps, used our amazing imaginations to innovate, learnt about imperative verbs and written instructions and discovered how adjectives can bring our writing alive. We are working hard on all the tools and rules we need to be successful writers. There is a lot to remember but once we unlock the magic, the excitement of the children seeing themselves as writers really is a marvellous thing!

We have started our new phonics programme, unlocking letters and sounds. We have seen huge progress over the short time we have been doing it. We have made some progress with our home/school reading. Thank you to all the parents who have already started to fill in the reading record book as part of the home school agreement of 4 reads a week. After half term, Mrs Downes would like to offer you the opportunity to pop into the classroom on a Monday for 15 minutes at the end of the school day. It would be a great chance to tick off one of the 4 reads for the week as well as chat through any ideas to make reading a positive part of home life.

It has been a lovely first half term and we are looking forward to all the delights of Autumn 2. Please do keep in touch. First thing in the morning can be busy as we are welcoming the children into school, but we are always happy to make an appointment to chat after school if you have any concerns.

Mrs Seaby and Mrs Downes



Totnes

Welcome back everyone! Totnes have had a remarkable return to form after the long, scorching summer holidays. Although the weather has inevitably taken a turn for the worse, Totnes remain in high spirits and giving their all towards the wealth of topics we have covered to date. To start, we have been looking at Place Values, having recently wrapped up the unit and started progressing towards new content in the Addition and Subtraction unit. While Maths can be full of expected and unexpected challenges, the class has taken leaps and strides in progress to get through this first half term of content.

In English, we have had the pleasure of reading through *The Ever-Changing Earth* by Grahame Baker-Smith, featuring stunning visuals and vocabulary. With the story as our inspiration, we have been analysing the concepts of sentence types, explanation texts and motifs. This has been an inspiring and accessible text for all to start the year with. To link with the aforementioned literature, our discovery topic this half term has been Extreme Earth. This is one of my personal favourite discovery units, and thankfully Totnes agreed! Extreme Earth has enabled us to explore some of the most destructive forces that affect planet earth, including tsunamis, volcanoes and eruptions and earthquakes. Totnes have not only learned the effects of these disasters, but how they occur and the science behind them – truly a double learning experience! The class even had the chance to get hands on with tectonic plates using some delicious and marginally less dangerous biscuit representation.

All this learning doesn't even begin to scratch the surface on the other subjects we have been experiencing; in Art, we looked at storytelling through drawing, in Music, we have looked at drumming and dancing to different rhythms in the style of samba, and even more dancing to be had in sports as we danced using shapes! With such a busy half term, it is time for a well-deserved rest so we can come back for it all over again in the following term full of energy!



Dunster

It has been a really wonderful start to the academic year in Dunster Class. We have certainly packed a lot into the past few weeks.

In Maths, we have split our time between developing our Geometry skills, and building on our knowledge of Place Value, to think about numbers up to 1 million. We have also begun a new times table strategy called 40/40, designed to build our resilience and fluency in recalling key multiplication facts.

In Reading, we have celebrated Roald Dahl Week by finding out more about some of his famous works like *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and *The Witches*, as well as learning about his 'writing hut', where he wrote all his greatest tales! We have also been marking Black History Month this October, finding out about the life of NASA mathematician Katherine Johnson, as well as learning about the Windrush Generation in the UK.

In English, we started off by adding some weird and wonderful 'embellishments' to our summer holidays to create our Tall Tales of Summer! We really enjoyed letting our creative juices flow. We then turned our attention to our key text 'When the Giant Stirred' by Celia Godkin. This is the tale of an island community forced to move by the impending eruption of the mountain that makes up the majority of their home. We have used this as a vehicle to explore setting description, as well as using dialogue to tell us about the characters and move the story forward. It has been great fun trying out some more advanced sentence structures now we are in Year 5.

This has linked beautifully to our Discovery focus, which has been a Geography unit called 'Extreme Earth' where we have been learning all about volcanoes, earthquakes and other natural disasters, how they form and what impact they have on the lives of human beings across the planet. We have made our own volcanoes out of clay in Forest School and used a chemical reaction to simulate an eruption, and we have had a few 'earthquake drills', something which schoolchildren in Japan are very used to!

In RE, we have been learning about how different world religions deal with suffering in a unit called Hurt and Healing, which has brought up some very interesting discussions in class. In Art with Mrs Seaby, we have been exploring the use of charcoal in our sketchbooks, and more recently planning an artistic response to Lewis Carroll's nonsense poem 'Jabberwocky'. As you will have no doubt seen on Facebook, we have also been enjoying some dance sessions with Miss Ackerley from Monkton Wood Academy in Taunton, exploring dances from around the world, including Bollywood and more recently the Paso Doble!



We also found time to take part in a Guinness World Record attempt for National Poetry Day. Along with tens of thousands of other pupils from the UK and worldwide, we participated in Laura Mucha's largest poetry lesson (multiple venues). We had to submit lots of evidence to show we had played by the rules, so watch this space to see whether we break that record!

It has been a real pleasure and privilege getting to know our new Year 5s as learners, and we are looking forward to more adventures together as the year progresses! Now, let's enjoy the final few days of Term 1, and then

we hope the children enjoy the well-earned rest of the October break.

Team Dunster 😊



Tintagel



What a brilliant first half term in year 6 it has been! Topped off with a very exciting trip to Pinkery! By the time you get this, your children will be on their way home with bags of wet, dirty clothes, and years of great memories!

This term, your children have settled into year 6 just as we knew they would, they are responsible, well mannered, calm and engaged – what more could we ask for?

In English, we have been looking at the story – The Lost Happy Endings, learning all about Jub and her encounter with an evil witch who stole the happy endings from all the stories – the children have mastered their adverbials, speech punctuation and verb tenses and are really focusing on their spellings and editing skills. In Math's, we have worked hard on our place value unit, learning to read, write and work with numbers up to 10,000,000! They have approached their learning with such maturity, even when it has been tricky, they have all persevered and worked hard to overcome challenges – you should be proud.

Just a reminder, reading records are due in on Mondays – with a minimum of 4 reads per week written in them. If your child is not reading at home, please do encourage them to come into class at 8.35 daily, they can sit quietly and read – these reads can go in their reading record. I have some children coming along to this and it really takes the pressure off of reading at home. A huge thanks to Mrs Belsey, who gives up her time every Wednesday to come in and listen to readers in Tintagel – it is so valuable for children to read to an adult, and we all appreciate your time, thank you Mrs Belsey!

We are now very proud to have our very own pupil parliament – every role has been democratically voted for and everyone is really taking their roles very seriously. Well done everyone. Now it's time for us to shut down the computers, pop on our wellies and get off to Pinkery!

Enjoy the peace and quiet! See you on the other side!



Nursery

Welcome to our new school year 2024/2025, Autumn term. All our children have returned happy and settled ready to take on the role of becoming our pre-school children and supporting our younger children. We have been looking at ourselves during this half term, naming body parts, understanding feelings and emotions and how colours can be associated with feelings. This supports our promises in our nursery and understanding the boundaries and routines.



The children have enjoyed exploring Autumn and creating our falling leaves tree by painting their hands. We have used lots of natural resources in our play. We have also joined in with European Day of Languages, learning to sing Frere Jacques, both in French and English. Black History Month, learning African dancing, playing the drums, and trying different foods from around the world. We celebrated Harvest baking hedgehog bread and Mental Health Day with a variety of mindfulness activities.

The children have been learning to join in refrains for the stories, Owl Babies and The Gruffalo and creating picture maps for the nursery rhymes Twinkle Twinkle Little Star and Humpty Dumpty.



SEND

Last Friday we hosted our first PINS Parent Group. PINS stands for Partnership for Inclusion of Neurodiversity in Schools. The term 'neurodiversity' describes the differences in brain functions from person to person. For example, the different ways a child's brain may function if they are diagnosed with autism, ADHD, OCD, dyspraxia, dyslexia, dyscalculia or many other additional needs.



This year we are taking part in a pilot project funded by the NHS and in partnership with the DfE and the Parent Carer Forum to support schools as they raise awareness of Neurodiversity. The project will focus on strengthening knowledge, skills and improving environments to better meet the needs of neurodiverse children. Throughout the year the school will be accessing training for staff and will work with families to signpost training and support available to them. The impact of this training and support will be measured at the end of the year to see if strengthening knowledge, skills and improving environments allows us to better meet the needs of our neurodiverse pupils and their families.

In last week's parent group, Rachel from the Somerset Parent Carer's Forum explained the aims of the project and shared some possible topics we could look to cover in future parent meetings. Please follow the link below and share any requests for topics to be discussed so we can tailor these to the needs of our community. Example session topics could be around managing challenging behaviour, sensory processing, working memory, social communication, managing sleep or any other challenges faced by parents. Sessions are open to all parents, not just those with an identified additional SEND need. Sessions will be each half term and will be advertised via Facebook and email.

Click here share to any topic requests: [PINS parent session focus request](#)



As always, teachers will share progress towards individual education targets within your parents' evening discussions. However, I will be available on both parents' eve-

Project Playtime!

Thank you for so many kind donations. We have been introducing new activities on the playground and the children seem to be really enjoying it! Particular favourites include den building, the sandpit and the play kitchen!



Camelot Club– Before and after school care

Now available to book on a Friday after school

At Castle Primary School we offer thriving wrap-around care in our Camelot Club. The staff, Mrs Middleton, Mrs Newman and Miss Gurney are caring, enthusiastic and professional; the environment is friendly and there is a wide range of interesting activities for children aged 4 to 11 years to enjoy.

Camelot Club breakfast sessions run from 7.45am until 8.45am @ £4.75 where the children enjoy a wholesome breakfast, access a variety of activities and get themselves ready for the day ahead. Children in our Reception through to year 4 are then escorted to their classes while year 5 and 6 pupils take themselves to their classes for a prompt start.

Camelot Club after school provision runs from 15.15 until 17.45. Children can attend short sessions until 16.15, later sessions from 16.15 until 17.45 or full sessions. They are offered a light snack and drink to keep them going until home time. There is plenty to do during these sessions; crafting and lego are always popular, but gardening, outdoor play, playdough and picnics are seasoned favourites too! Children are encouraged to read with an adult and there is plenty of time to get started on homework, with adult support on hand.

After school club has the following sessions:

3.15pm - 4.15pm @ £5

4.15pm - 5.45pm @ £6

3.15pm – 5.45pm @ £7.50

All sessions can be booked on Parentmail.