

Castle Primary School



Spring 2024

A message from Steve Morton



My goodness, this term has flown by! So many exciting experiences have been had and wonderful adventures the children have been part of, inside and outside of the classroom. Despite the weather seeming determined to rain on every single Forest School session, our spirits have remained high and where others would see grey skies, we saw an opportunity to splash in the puddles.

It is always a privilege to speak with our children about the activities and experiences that they are offered throughout each term. I have thoroughly enjoyed spending my lunchtime dining experiences with Sophie, Olivia and their guests, as part of our Charlie Castle 'Wonka Bar' golden ticket prizes. The dinner table conversations have been delightful.

We have been able offer trips to the top of Ham Hill to experience iron age living, visits to the tank museum followed by VE Day experiences. Live writing webcasts with Micheal Rosen to enhance our creative writing and opportunities to join a national celebration of new books for children as part of the judging panel. Also, not forgetting that our team representing the school in the 'Big Bake' won their heat (pardon the pun). The team were so highly motivated by their experience that they have agreed to create our own 'in-school' version of the competition next term. Watch this space for how to take part and hopefully eat some delicious cakes!

We are also proud of how our teachers drive to find new ways to enhance our school offer and experiences to the children. Mrs Abbott is now part of a programme set up by Westminster to bring a better understanding of government, democracy and how our voices and actions can make a powerful difference for change. We are already working together to build a new parliament in our school setting. There is a strong possibility that we may have a future PM in our school!

Finally, a huge thank you to FoCS and all of you for the amazing support and energy that you bring to our school every day. Greeting you all at the gate each morning is a real treat and a wonderful start to my day. Thank you for your support and kindness for all that we do. Have a restful Easter and we look forward to seeing you all on Tuesday 16th of April.

The Photo of the Week



Tintagel's VE Day Celebration



This school is part of the The Redstart Learning Partnership, a Multi Academy Trust of primary schools in Somerset.

Dates for your Diary

- 15th April - Inset day
- 16th April - First day of summer term 1
- 24th April - Tiny Turrets Nursery group photos
- 25th April- Drogo and Nursery Bakes for Bits and Bobs
- 26th April - Inter-house Netball tournament
- 3rd -May Class photos

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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 Laura Liddell and our Deputy Safeguarding Leads are Steve Morton and Claire Dutson (Nursery)

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 Reception - 91.47%

Drogo Class 1– 95.18%

Corfe - 94.85%

Totnes - 95.48%

Dunster - 95.96%

Tintagel – 89.68%

Whole school - 94.05%

Drogo

What a very busy term Drogo Class have had! January seems like a very long time ago and the children have made so much progress. The Reception children have loved learning the stories of The Billy Goats Gruff and Goldilocks. They are a talented group of storytellers and like to take the stories into their own play - all taking on different roles with great enthusiasm. We have also started making up our own stories and acting them out, which is a hugely popular and fun activity! Lots of the children are now starting to write short sentences and captions with a little support and they are enjoying writing cards and letters to each other. They are also making great progress with their reading and it's a pleasure to hear them sounding out the longer words with such confidence. Now that the weather is a little warmer we are loving being back outside and enjoying the space in the sunshine.

In Year One the children have been working so hard. They have been busy learning lots of new sounds in phonics and this is helping everyone to read much more fluently and confidently. In maths we have been adding and subtracting to twenty and exploring the number line up to fifty. In Discovery we have found out about the Great Fire of London, learnt about the seasons and we are busy making our own puppets in the DT lessons. Everyone has also really enjoyed using the paint program on the IPAD's to become digital artists, using Kandinsky's circles as inspiration!

Drogo Class are very much looking forward to the Easter activities next week. For some of the children this will be their first experience of taking part in the Easter Hat Parade, which is always a highlight in the school calendar! We are looking forward to seeing the creations in school and to sharing some Easter songs with you all. We hope that you all have a wonderful holiday and look forward seeing everyone again for the Summer Term!



Corfe

We can hardly believe we are coming to the end of the Spring term. Time really does fly by, and Corfe Class have certainly found their wings in so many areas of their learning. We are very proud of them all and the progress they have all made individually and as a class.

It is always lovely to scroll back through Seesaw and be reminded of all the many things we have done. The Great Fire of London never fails to engage and excite enquiring minds and this year was no exception. Our class rat, Boxton, helped us to piece together this period of History. We all enjoyed re-enacting how **the fire started in Thomas Farriner's bakery, baking bread, writing a diary entry for Samuel Pepys, digging up his cheese and wine, making a human chain whilst using buckets to collect water from the River Thames and of course, the grand burning of Pudding Lane.** We really found a love for writing during this topic with some amazing setting descriptions and information reports about firefighting in the past and today.

This passion for writing has really taken off now in Corfe. Motivation and resilience have been discovered and Corfe Class are now seeing themselves as writers. It was great to be able to show all this hard work off at parent's evening and to see the huge jumps that have been made since September. We have been working hard on spelling and handwriting. Please do remember spelling shed as a resource you can use at home. Thank you for all your support with reading. It really makes a massive difference when the children read with you at home. They are a class of children who really do have a passion for books (they love a story!) so just finding that 10 minutes every day to reinforce this is so valid.

We have enjoyed lots of events and visits this term including World Book Day, Mental Health Week, Safer Internet Day, NSPCC Number Day, a preloved book sale, a fire safety talk and a visit from Wessex Water. Forest School is also a firm favourite activity every other Thursday.

We have enjoyed welcoming Year 1 into our class for our Discovery and Art sessions. This half term we have been Geographer's and have focused on the country of Kenya as well as perfecting our sewing skills through puppet making workshops.

We now look towards the summer term and all the new learning opportunities heading our way. Having such an enthusiastic group of children who are always keen to know 'what we are doing today' as soon as they come through the door in the morning, really helps to make the magic!

Have a lovely Easter holiday.



Totnes



As the Spring term draws to a close, I can proudly say that Totnes have had a fantastic start to 2024, exploring the entirety of our curriculum with the great enthusiasm and energy they have always shown. Having covered English, Mathematics, History, Geography and Art this term, there's plenty of work we have covered and so much to catchup on!

In English, we started the term by looking at the book 'The Tin Forest' by Helen Ward. The book explores themes of resilience and environmental stewardship, having the protagonist work to restore a forest to its former glory through hard work and dedication towards his dream. The class took part in their own form of environmental activism, developing their persuasive writing skills through observations from the book to create environmental preservation pamphlets. The range of literary and artistic skills on display in these pamphlets was a joy to see. Following on from The Tin Forest, we are currently exploring the story 'The Tear Thief' by Carol Ann Duffy. This book dives into the complexity of emotions, as a ghostly character collects tears from the children she visits, each with different colours and emotions associated with them. Totnes have had an excellent time so far exploring this story, having used physical representations for the 'tears' to express their understanding of the relation between colours and emotions.

In Maths, the Spring term began with a continuation of many of the ideas we were exploring in the previous term, as we proceeded to look at multiplication and division. Building on the ideas of doubling and halving numbers we briefly explored before the Winter holidays, Totnes attempted various methods and approaches to multiplication and division, figuring the many ways in which initially complex sums could be broken down into simple steps to be completed mentally or on paper. We celebrated NSPCC Number Day on the 2nd of February, which was a fun way for Totnes to view Mathematics differently in their everyday lives. Our current topic is length and perimeter, and we have been measuring several props and objects to supplement our learning, especially as we observe how measurements change depending on the magnitude of the object, and how we can calculate the perimeter of 2-dimensional shapes by breaking down the shape into simple measurement steps.

Our discovery focuses this year have been History and Geography. History saw us time travelling far into the past, looking into the mysteries of the development on humans from stone age to iron age. Having explored concepts such as how ancient humans survived in a time without the comfort of modern tools and technology, the development of art from stone age to iron age and how this documented the lives of those who lived at the time and looking at some real-life examples of prehistoric discoveries, such as Skara Brae and Stone Henge, the topic culminated in a trip to Ham Hill. During this trip, students in Totnes had the opportunity to learn all about the history surrounding Ham Hill, as well as creating their own little pieces of history in the form of prehistorically accurate clay pots! Our start to Geography this term has brought us back to the modern era as we look at comparing the differences and similarities between Somerset and the Berlin region of Germany from both a physical and human viewpoint. Having looked at both areas in depth over the past few weeks, we now look forward to seeing how similar the two may or may not be!

In Art, we have explored the concept of working with shapes and colours in our creative pursuits. Using various non-typical tools in our usual artistic toolkit such as scissors and various coloured materials, Totnes had the chance to create mosaic-inspired art. After exploring the works of artists such as Henri Matisse and Claire Willberg, the class took the art into their own hands and made vibrant collages using a variety of artistic mediums. All in all, the Spring term has been what we like to call 'short and sweet'; packed with excitement, creativity, and important foundations for our final term of the academic year. Totnes should now enjoy the well deserved Spring holidays!

Mrs Hopgood and Mrs Salter



Dunster

It was so lovely to meet with you all at parents evening this term. Thank you for coming in and sorry I overran so much (again).

Let's have a quick recap of all the amazing things that Dunster have been up to of late...

In our Discovery sessions, we have built a cave (Stig of the Dump style) using natural resources, we have recreated Stonehenge using air dry clay, we have considered how we would survive if we lived in the Stone Age and created our own miniature settlements (see Seesaw for pictures!)

We went on a class trip to Ham Hill to meet the rangers and learn all about the Stone Age artifacts that have been found on Ham Hill over the years! It was a fascinating morning, thank you Paul and Jasmine for hosting us!



As discussed at parents evening, we have been working on long multiplication over the past 4 weeks, and I am overjoyed that the children are finally showing up to maths lessons with a can-do attitude! We have really had to work on our mathematical resilience in Dunster this year; if at first, we don't succeed.... try and try again! We have focussed on slowing down, setting ourselves up to succeed, reading the question again, slowly...and then have a go. This is proving successful, and the children have really grasped long multiplication. Well, done everyone!

We have had a visit from Wessex Water; teaching us all about where our clean water comes from, how it is cleaned and what we should and should not be putting down the toilet. Your children bought home a lovely leaflet from Wessex Water, so please do have a look at it, there is some useful information in there on how to save water.

We celebrated world book day, where we took part in a 'Guess Who' quiz, put together by our Reading Champion, Mrs Downes! The children had to guess who was hiding behind the book, it was great fun. We also had lots of 'Stop! Drop! And read!' sessions throughout the day.

A few weeks ago, we had our Bakes for Bits and Bobs sale and my goodness me, you did not disappoint; so many amazing bakes! Thank you! The children will directly benefit from your fantastic contributions.

And lastly, Spanish Day! What a brilliant! Please log in to Seesaw to see the many posts I upload on there each week.

So there it is; it has been busy. Thank you, amazing parents, for spinning all the plates; making sure your child has everything they need in a term which seems to have something different going on every week is not always easy, I know. So, thank you for your ongoing support.



Quick reminders

Dunster class does not have a sink, so in the warmer months I fill up an urn with cold water to refill water bottles, however, this tends to get used up quickly. As the weather starts to get warmer (fingers crossed), please feel free to send your child with 2 bottles of water to get them through the day.

Thank you again for your ongoing support.

Mrs Abbott and Miss Gurney

Tintagel

The Spring term has whizzed by, and here we are, within sight of the Easter Holidays! For our last newsletter update, we were well into preparations for Christmas, and rehearsing hard for our show, 'One More Sleep'. It seems so long ago! But looking back, we have packed an awful lot in to 2024 so far...

In Spring 1, our Discovery sessions took us back in time to the Second World War in our topic 'The World at War'. The children were really captured by this learning, and it was so wonderful to see their enthusiasm. This has translated into some really fantastic work in their Discovery books, which hopefully many of you got to see at our recent Parents' Evenings. The children were especially interested in what life would have been like for a child during the war, and we are still enjoying our class novel 'Letters from the Lighthouse' about a brother and sister evacuated to Devon. In addition, when tackling the more difficult aspects of the war, such as the Holocaust and the nuclear bombings in Japan in 1945, they have shown their maturity and empathy in spades!



As you know, we rounded things off with a trip to the Tank Museum, which was thoroughly enjoyed by all, with everyone being impeccably behaved and really showing off the knowledge they had gained. We then had our VE Day celebrations, which were a fantastic way to end a well-loved topic. More recently, we have moved on to develop our geography skills again, thinking about a contrasting location in the world: the incredibly vibrant and biodiverse country of Costa Rica, in Central America. The children are really looking forward to finding out more about the fauna in Costa Rica as they build their own fact files about an animal of their choice.

In English, we have focused on a variety of genres, writing a new ending for a villainous character in 'The Lost Happy Endings', as well as honing our skills

in journalism to write some newspaper reports inspired by these new endings. We have also recently celebrated both LGBT+ History Month and Shakespeare Week, with some great Guided Reading sessions which have really got everyone thinking.

In Maths, we've been getting to grips with fractions, decimals and percentages, and the class have shown great resilience with some of these tricky concepts. We have also been doing lots of arithmetic practice (especially long multiplication and division) in readiness for the SATs in May.



Thank you to those of you who were able to make it to the recent Y6 Information Evening, where we shared more details about SATs week (beginning 13th May), as well as talking about our exciting residential to Bristol in June. I know you will also be aware that the homework expectations have moved up a gear this term. In addition to our regular 'Wheel of the Year' Forest School related tasks, we now have our CGP SATs practice books coming home each week with some 10-minute tests for the children to complete. We are really trying hard to encourage self-responsibility in the children where homework is concerned, in preparation for their move to secondary school. We appreciate that there are lots of things going on, but we would love your support in please encouraging your child to take this seriously, and to hand their tasks in on time. As a reminder, Reading Records are checked on Mondays, while SATs Folders need to be in each Tuesday, please. Thank you.

We have lots of exciting things still planned for the coming weeks and beyond, so stay tuned to Seesaw for updates, photos and work from your children! Wishing you a very Happy Easter break...

Team Tintagel

Nursery

We have had a wonderful term in Tiny Turrets Nursery. The children have enjoyed exploring two topics throughout this term. We have delved into the world of animals and vehicles. Within our animal topic the children investigated all different kinds of animals from the smallest of bugs to the largest of dinosaurs. We learnt to retell the story of "Brown Bear, Brown Bear" by Bill Martin JR using sign language and puppets. The children did such a wonderful job of performing their own version of the story to their friends.

The children explored a lot of different creative activities this term within the animal topic too. These art activities included creating their own bug hotels using junk modelling and natural resources. We were super lucky to have some beautiful puppies come and visit the nursery as well, it was so sweet to see the children show such caring behaviours towards the puppies and learn firsthand how to look after animals.

Within our vehicle topic this term the children have been learning all about different vehicles. Our friend PCSO Ian from Yeovil police station popped on in and spoke with the children about the different vehicles he uses as part of the policing team too. The children have loved practicing real life skills on how to cross the road in their play using the ride on bikes and taking it in turns to be crossing wardens and at one point we even had a ticket officer! We have just started exploring Easter and look forward to creating some wonderful craft keep sakes with the children over the next few weeks.



From the reading ambassador's

We are really excited to see a bit of sunshine so we can fully open our reading hut and enjoy sitting outside and sharing a book. Our weekly reading buddy meetings are going really well. We support children with reading their book bag books and then we read a story back to them. It is always a lovely atmosphere in the library. Mrs Downes tells us that the children in Key Stage 1 are always very excited to come up and read to us. Thank you for all of your kind donations for our preloved book sale. We had some really great quality books that we were able to find a new home for. We raised £40 and will put this towards developing our reading zones.

