

The Cathedral School of St Mary

Cecil Street
Stonehouse

Class 4 - Newsletter

September 2020

Welcome Back

Hello families! It is lovely to have you all back with us as we begin a new school year and we begin to find our way around the 'new' normal. I hope that you have all been well and have not been too affected by the events of the last few months. I think it is important to begin by reassuring you that we



will do our very best to support the children in the coming weeks and months, not just academically, but also socially and psychologically as they too try to establish themselves in the new normal. If you have any worries, concerns or would just like some reassurance over your child and their school journey, please get in touch either through ClassDojo or via emailing me: tdriscoll@csosm.org.uk. Failing this you can always contact the school office and leave a message for me there.

Class 4 is supported by a team of adults, each of whom are dedicated to ensuring that your child receives the best pastoral and academic education possible. Miss

Morrison will be the class teaching assistant working with all groups of children. Mrs Ellard is now being shared around the school but will remain a big part of Class 4. She will be working predominantly with our Pupil Premium children. Finally we have several volunteers who will be coming in to help the children with their work when government advice allows. Many of these volunteers are ex-teachers and we are incredibly fortunate that they are willing to give up their time to help the Class 4 children.

Important notices

Covid Awareness: It is important that we try to keep the school environment as protected as possible to ensure that the children's education is not further disrupted. With this in mind, please make that you and your household are aware of and follow the latest government guidance regarding the pandemic. We will distance the children from one another as best we can in line with government advice. We will ensure that thorough hand washing takes place before every transition and discourage unnecessary contact with items such as handles. Please reinforce this message at home. Please do not allow your child to come to school with unnecessary items such as pencil cases, toys, cards etc. Every child will get their own set of stationary which will remain in their place for the duration of the day. Finally, in an effort to keep cross-contact to a minimum, the children will be keeping all of their belongings with them in their places so the less they have, the better.

PE kits will need to be worn to school on Thursdays and Fridays and washed each week. I

recommend that the children wear trainers as these will be more comfortable for the duration of the day. Please ensure that all school clothing is washed on a regular basis and shoes are cleaned where possible. These are important changes that may seem unsettling to the children at first, but please rest assured that we will try to make this new routine as unthreatening as possible.

Class Dojo: Please ensure that you all have access to your child's Class Dojo account. Here you will be able to keep up-to-date with latest news and events regarding whole school activities, as well as day-to-day life in the classroom. You will also be able to message me from your account which I check on a daily basis during weekdays.

Homework: In Class 4, there is an expectation that the children will read on a daily basis and have this reading listened to and recorded in their reading record. If a child forgets their book or finishes a book quickly, we encourage them to find another piece or text that they can read at home in addition to the school book. This can be anything from a gaming magazine, to a sporting review to a recipe book! In addition to this, each child is also expected to practice their spellings and times table facts at home at least once a week. Finally, the children will also be set a piece of writing or maths homework once a week. If homework is not completed on time or to the standard that they are capable of, children may be asked to have another go. Under the current restrictions, homework will be online only. If your child needs support at any stage, please encourage them to speak to me.

Google Classroom: This is our online platform that allows children to work anywhere they have access to the internet. We encourage all families to become familiar with and keep an eye on the classroom as this is where work and helpful resources will be shared, alongside the homework.

Residential: As it stands the Year 5/6 residential will go ahead. Those parents who have paid in part or full to last year's cancelled event, have had their funds transferred to this year's event. Obviously there is a lot of extra planning now needed for the event to go ahead and so I cannot yet give dates but it is likely that, all being well, the residential will take place on the week beginning the 24th May 2021. More information will be provided in the near future. If you have any questions, please contact Mrs Packer or myself.

Junior Ten Tors: It is anticipated that this event, which is for eight Year 6 children, will go ahead in the summer of 2021. A committee meeting is scheduled for October and more details will be shared with you then. If your child is interested in taking part in this year's event, it would be beneficial for them to start thinking about their attributes and what they feel they would be able to offer the Junior Ten Tors team. This will help them when it comes to writing their letter of application.

Mass: The Catholic Life of the school is of paramount importance and I am currently in conversation with Canon Mark regarding ways in which the children will once again be able to attend mass on at least a termly basis. I will share more information with you via Class Dojo once we have settled on a suitable way forward.

First Holy Communion: For those children who were preparing to receive their First Holy Communion, we are once again hopeful that classes and preparations can begin again soon. If your child is interested in making this commitment, please get in touch. They do not need to be baptised as this can be done as part of the preparations.

Our Learning this Term

This year is slightly different in that we are now being directed in what to teach by our academy. With this in mind you may be surprised to hear that our first theme will be Plymouth during the Second World War. For those in Year 6, please do not worry as I am aware that this is the same theme that we had last year. I have worked hard to ensure that the children will consolidate their prior learning and will be learning new aspects of the theme that we had not touched on last year. I am hopeful that we

will be able to combine this theme with a trip to the new 'Box' (the refurbished museum) where they have an excellent exhibit on the Blitz. More information about this soon!

In our **RE** lessons this term we will be looking at a new theme called Domestic Church - Family. This is a sensitive theme. The experience of 'family' in society today is varied, with many joys and sorrows. Whatever the experience, family still remains the first place for growth and development, the basic social unit. We will look to help the children establish what the word 'family' means to them, those they associate with the term and what experiences of family life they have.

In **English** this term we will be starting the year with Carrie's War, an amazing adventure of a young girl during her evacuation. The children will be learning all about the life of an evacuee, writing postcards, interpreting rationed menus and creating their very own evacuation diary. We will also be creating pieces of writing which convey emotion and meaning to the reader from multiple points of view.

In **maths** the children will be developing further confidence in calculation using all four operations. In addition we will be working on understanding place value of whole numbers and decimals. We will also be looking at place value of numbers up to 1 million. All this work will be put into practice in our problem solving and reasoning morning tasks and our mental arithmetic sessions.

In **science** the children will be exploring different life cycles with the aim of understanding the similarities and differences between mammals, amphibians, insects and birds. Children will understand the lifecycle of a plant by drawing detailed diagrams and using research to find the function of each part. Later in the term, the children will be grouping, identifying and classifying living things and materials and using classification keys and will be able to use classification keys to identify unknown plants.

All of our learning is underpinned by our Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning work the pupils engage in and with this in mind we will also be incorporating time for personal reflection and the development of positive personal mental health strategies.

I am really looking forward to getting to know you and your family over the year and am very much looking forward to a wonderful year of learning with the new 'Year 5/6'.

With every good wish,

Mr Driscoll and the Class 4 Team

