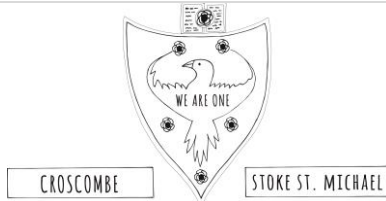


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Federation Newsletter

6th November 2020

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to this Week's Newsletter.

With the government announcement at the weekend of a further national lockdown, we are sure this has been a busy and challenging week for many members of our community. We are pleased that the schools can remain open within the lockdown and wanted to thank all of our parents and carers for supporting us with our procedures. Due to the excellent support of our parents and carers our pick up and drop staggered times continue to work smoothly. We can see everyone doing a brilliant job of distancing appropriately whilst waiting for their children and this is the best way to reduce any risk of transmission.

As a reminder, it is appropriate for children to come to school if they have the usual seasonal colds. We will continue to use our procedures including checking for fevers if anyone appears to have a raised temperature using our touch free thermometers, keeping the class bubble groups separated as much as possible and regular hand washing during the day as these remain some of the most effective ways of preventing the spread of COVID-19. Please do reinforce these at home. Thank you! ☺

National Lockdown

We would like to give you a further update regarding the national lockdown. Whilst the numbers of those infected with COVID-19 in the South West remains relatively low, the rate of virus transmission has accelerated considerably in recent weeks. Both of the schools in our federation will remain open and we will do our very best to maintain the current level of service we give. However, we anticipate that as more people are infected by COVID-19 or are required to isolate, we might need to make some adjustments to the way the schools operate.

It is possible that we may need to do one or more of the following if we see staff levels reduce:

- Combine year groups within designated bubbles.
- Teach larger groups in bigger spaces in the schools – assembly halls for example.
- Ask support staff to cover lessons.
- Ask teachers to cover lessons they would not normally teach.
- Increase our reliance on supply staff.
- Close early for some groups of children.
- Close certain year groups.
- Teach some year groups on a rota system.
- As a last resort, close the schools entirely.

The last 3 of these options would only become necessary if we feel the health and safety of children is at serious risk. For example, if there are not enough adults on a school site to supervise children safely. This is in alignment with Government guidelines and these options will only be used as a last resource.

Face Coverings



Department
of Health &
Social Care

Children in Primary Schools are not expected to wear face coverings because of the risks associated with putting on, removing and storing of masks and face coverings. However, if you have children over the age of 11 in your family please share with them the following gov.uk link on the safe use of masks and face coverings: <https://bit.ly/3k5l2dr>

We also need to request that ALL parents/carers and staff wear masks on entry to the school gates during drop off and pick up times. This is particularly important when there are large numbers of people present. Households should endeavour to avoid mixing during the lockdown period, including when collecting or dropping off children. The use of masks will protect you and others in the school community.

Please be extremely vigilant in keeping to the staggered drop off and pick up times as it reduces the numbers of people gathering at the school gates.

Ventilation

When we wrote to you before the half-term break, we mentioned the need to keep windows open in the schools for good ventilation. This will mean that the schools may be cooler than normal, so children should wear extra (suitable) layers under their uniform if they are finding rooms cold.

We thank you for your patience and continued support, whilst we all try to provide continued good education provision for your children in these difficult times.

Children in Need 2020

Next week is Children in Need week and after the stress and worry of the coronavirus pandemic Children in Need are making children's mental health their number one priority! In school we will be joining in with some of the Five to Thrive activities and will be looking at how we can all 'supercharge' our mental wellbeing!

The week will culminate on Friday with a Mufti Day and some extra fun activities. We would love for the children to come dressed in yellow and/or spots! There will be a donations box at the gate for drop off and pick up and we ask that anyone who is able, makes a donation of whatever they can afford to Children in Need!



Free School Meals

Due to the national lockdown, some family circumstances may be changing. Please do apply for free school meals for your children if you feel that you now meet the criteria using the following link: <https://www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/free-school-meals/#Universal-Infant-Free-School-Meals>

School Absences

If your child is unable to come into school due to illness, please can you ensure you call or email the office before 9.15am on each day that they are unable to come in. If they have a medical appointment, please ensure you have told the school before the day of the appointment

And finally, please remember that if you would like to take your child out of school for a holiday during the school term you must have completed a Holiday Request form at least 2 weeks before the holiday. Many thanks!

Please be extremely vigilant in keeping to the staggered drop off and pick up times as it reduces the numbers of people gathering at the school gates.

Flu Immunisation

Please remember to complete the online consent form for your child/children's flu immunisation. Even if you do not want your child to receive the vaccination you **must** complete the form. The consent form can be found at <https://saint.sompar.nhs.uk/flu/2020/east>

The Somerset SAINT (School Aged Immunisation Team) will be visiting our schools on the following dates:

- Stoke St Michael Primary School = 11th November 2020

Croscombe CofE Primary School = 10th December 2020

ParentPay Bookings

Our new school lunches are proving to be very popular with the children and we are delighted that we can now offer hot meals at lunch time – especially as the temperature has dropped over the past week!

If you would like your child to have a school lunch, please ensure you have ordered it on ParentPay by Wednesday of the previous week. If you have not ordered a meal for your child, they will not be provided with one. Do not hesitate to contact Tamsyn in the office if you have any problems ordering and she will be happy to help.

Little Roots

This week Little Roots have been learning all about Fire Works. They have been exploring sounds and colours and have had fun thinking about Autumn's celebrations!

School Applications 2021

Just a reminder that if your child is due to start school in September 2021, it is now time to make your application.

- The deadline for primary phase (Reception) applications is 15th January.

Letters will NOT be sent out to families reminding them and applications must be made online by visiting www.somerset.gov.uk/education-and-families/

Bags and Book Bags

As the weather is becoming wetter, we are happy to allow children to use either a school bag (Key Stage 2) or a book bag (Reception and Key Stage one) to bring their lunches and reading folders in to school.

Please continue to be 'COVID Safe' with any bags that are brought into school. We suggest that they are lightly sprayed and wiped clean regularly with anti-bacterial spray.

Federation Fundraising – 'Promise Auction'

To raise funds to support our schools, the Governors are organising a Promise Auction, just in time for some excellent Christmas gifts! Please read the attached letter for more information, deadlines and dates!

Congratulations!

And finally, we are delighted to announce that Mrs Bloom (Croscombe Yr 3&4 teacher) is expecting a baby and is due in March! Congratulations Mrs Bloom – we are so happy for you and your family.

We also want to wish Kelsey (Stoke St Michael KS1 TA) all the very best as she prepares for the arrival of her baby boy! We hope the next few weeks are restful and that you both stay safe and healthy.



Once again thank you for your ongoing support and help in keeping our schools safe, happy and healthy places for everyone and wish everyone a lovely weekend.

Mel Vincent and Bill Moore
Co-Headteacher's

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Let Your Light Shine

