

4th March 2022

Dear Parents,

Looking to a bright and hopeful future

I hope everyone managed to enjoy half term, even if the weather was a little stormy! We started this Half term with Worship on Monday with our Value of Hope. As the days get lighter and the weather (at some point) turns more Spring like, we really are looking towards a brighter time than that of the challenges of the past few years.

It's been just brilliant to get back into things like World Book Day with such creativity- the costumes and Story Boxes really showed how much the children love reading and have such creativity! It was super to have stories read to the children with renowned authors- really enriching the whole day!

Enriching Curriculum and Community Experiences

This is just one of the many enriching opportunities being planned for the Spring and then Summer terms, from Trips, a Yr 6 residential, Science Weeks, Community Art Projects, Music experiences with our Sister Academies, Queen's Jubilee celebrations, Sports Day and in the nearer Future, Easter Events. We are keen to look forward and re-introduce some of the favourite events and will keep you informed of when things are finalised but wanted to let you know our thinking.

We know how much getting into opportunities outside of school really motivates the children and brings their learning to life, giving it value. So far, we've been working on virtual events, like the recent Badminton Festival. This was held in each of our schools and the scores pooled together from Year 3-6. We're delighted that Ellacombe was the top scored out of our Trust schools and shows not only the high value of PE at Ellacombe but what talent we have too! A huge 'Thank you!' to Miss Ingham who leads PE and Sport with such enthusiasm!

As part of our work across our Schools, we have regular visits to look at our subject development and how quality teaching is supporting pupils to make great progress. This week we had a visit from Mrs Palmer, our Trust Maths Lead. Miss Hackett, Ellacombe's Maths Lead, has been really helping teachers to tweak their teaching and get children back into habit of debating their maths and finding different ways to show their thinking- things that needs lots of practising after all the lock downs. Mrs Palmer was blown away and described maths at our school as 'Brilliant.' Well done to the teachers for working super hard planning such detailed lessons and for the children for their enthusiasm they show for maths!

One of the other exciting things we're developing is our 'Outdoor Learning' and development of our Garden. We currently are in the process of advertising for a Forest School Lead- watch this space!



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FLOURISHING FUTURES

Parent Learning

Please do contact Miss Rose, Family Support, to find out more about these brilliant Parent learning opportunities!

Delicious School Lunches!

Many of you will know that this year, we brought all our school lunches 'in house' with our own Trust Catering Team. All the food is freshly prepared on site by the fabulous team, and we wanted to continue to share our work to provide yummy and nutritious lunches each day. Here is an update from our Trust Catering Lead, Mrs Keiller:

"Thank you for completing the parent questionnaire, the feedback has been really helpful and will help us to improve our service, a key comment from parents was: "Not sure what the food Looks like". This has been taken on board, so we now are sharing photos with parents via our socials of what the lunches look like - check out the Tuesday posts!

We have further updates coming so please do look out for some changes after the Easter Break and the 'Prepare for Victory – Eat Us to Defeat Us' and the ad campaign on TV encouraging our children to eat more vegetables, Starting with Carrots.

Caring for our local area

I'm sure many of you, like me, have been saddened to see how our local area around school is blighted by some individuals with dog fouling, obstructive and dangerous parking, and litter (including things like broken glass) being persistent problems. Where we can, we go well beyond what is expected of a school, and we clear things up ourselves. We also do contact the council about these problems, but we now need everyone's help with this. Torbay Council have a reporting facility on their website for Dog Fouling <https://www.torbay.gov.uk/asb-environment-and-nuisance/dogs/dog-fouling/>

I would encourage all of our parents - and with over 350 pupils, we have a lot of parents - to be reporting their concerns. By working as a large parent group, we can really get the voices of Ellacombe heard! Let's work as a whole community on this and ensure our area is a safe and pleasant area for all. As part of this, can I ask that parents do not park on the double yellow lines at the front of school to drop off. This causes an obstruction and is dangerous. This again is about all working as a whole community.

Finally, I do need to still remind about COVID. This has not gone away, and we do not want any outbreaks locally as we saw the devastating impact this had in January with several classes even having to work remotely, such was the chronic impact on staffing.

Are you thinking about a fresh spring start?

You can now access **FREE**
Level 2 accredited training
from the AIM Group

Ellacombe Academy are here to support you through this.
Get in touch today with the Family Support Team on 01803 293040 – option 2

Please remember:

Regular asymptomatic testing

- The Government has removed guidance for staff and students in most education and childcare settings to undertake twice-weekly asymptomatic testing. Of course, if you have access to test kits and would like to continue testing, then we would welcome this. Until the 1st April, you can still order home kits.
- If there is an outbreak, Public Health may instruct us to return to testing and it is our understanding that tests will be provided for you to use.

Self-isolation and contact-tracing

- The Government will remove the legal requirement to self-isolate following a positive test. However, if your child tests positive, you are advised to keep your child at home (and therefore not attend school) and avoid contact with other people for at least five full days. We will not be able to admit any children into school who are Covid positive. They should then continue to follow the guidance until they have received 2 negative test results on consecutive days.
- If your child has COVID 19 or we suspect that they have Covid 19 we can instruct parents to keep them at home and advise they are tested. Of course, we have worked together throughout this pandemic, and we are hopeful that this action would not be applied.
- We need to act as this were any other infectious illness e.g., chicken pox. If your child is likely to spread an illness, we would ask that you keep them at home, and we would ask that you do the same if it is Covid related. This means we minimise the spread and keep staffing levels high enough to sustain face to face learning.
- If a member of your household has Covid, we would encourage you to support us by LFT testing children (over 5 years old) who are attending school. Doing this for 7 days (whilst they are most infectious), gives us the best possible chance of keeping Covid low and our community safe.
- There will be further changes from April 1st. and we will share these as soon as we have them.

Have a great weekend and I hope everyone is looking forward to hearing about their child's progress at Parent Consultations next week.

Yours Sincerely



Mrs Semmens

Head of Academy

