

11th March 22

Dear Parents,

Looking to a bright and hopeful future

With the days getting lighter and some glimmers of sunshine this week, we can feel Spring is coming! With this, we have flowers and plants blossoming at Ellacombe and have been showing these to the children in Worship. They've been excited to see the growth of the purple crocus at the front of school and are keen to keep everyone off the grass! Thank you all for being aware of this.

Enriching Curriculum and Community Experiences

There have just been so many exciting opportunities for children this week, all aimed to bring their learning to life and enrich the curriculum subjects. Here are just a few:

- EYFS have been to see a real-life theatre performance to bring their love of stories to life! We're delighted to have been able to cover the WHOLE cost of this trip.
- Y1 have welcomed older pupils into class, to retell their favourite stories. The older pupils have been creating their own story bags, with illustrated pebbles to help them tell the story; with real 'storyteller' voices!
- Y2 have deepened their learning about animals and habitats with a trip to Paignton Zoo! We're delighted to have been able to cover the WHOLE cost of this trip.
- Y3 have been finding out more about the prehistoric world to prepare for their trip to Kents Cavern soon!
- Y4 have been developing their musical skills with Ukulele lessons with musicians from Torbay Music Hub delivering weekly lessons!
- Y5 pupils have had a visiting artist develop their printing skills in art and creating their own 'fossil prints'!
- Y6 have been learning more about famous Scientist's in readiness for British Science Week next week and the teachers are busy planning for 'Summer Term Transition' events already!

Phew what a busy week!

We've also had our termly visit from our RWINC Phonics Consultant. She spent the whole day with our Phonics Team, looking at the super progress the children are making, watching teachers teach and giving us top tips to keep our phonics as super special and expert as possible. This is especially important as we are into the second half of the school year and teachers are working hard to help children learn the skills to be ready for the next school year. **Year 1 Parents please keep an eye out in this week's class newsletters for links to videos your child can do watch at home with you to build their confidence and fluency with Phonics.** Once children are fluent



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FLOURISHING FUTURES

with their phonics, we really see them fly with their reading- a skill for life (and certainly one they need as they go into Year 2)!

Talking about World events with pupils

We will all have seen the tragic scenes in Ukraine over the past few weeks. As these upsetting events continue, children here are more likely to be hearing about this from the news, families, or friends. We know how important it is to talk with children about world events in a safe, impartial way. This means we have open discussions around what is happening and how although, things can happen which are sad and upsetting, people are coming together to help one another and show kindness. As part of our collective worship next week, we will be opening the conversation about the events in Ukraine. This will centre around how countries in Europe are full of kind, caring people but unfortunately, one President has decided to invade another country. We will focus not on the war and fighting, but on people leaving their homes to be safe, and the way in which so many are helping in different ways and showing kindness.

We know here in Torquay our community is rich and diverse and this is not about one nation against another but about tragic events which have left people worried and how out of this, others are showing kindness. In doing this, we create a safe space for children to talk about any worries they have, having seen the news or just hearing about events from others. This will be done in an age-appropriate way, led by myself. Older pupils in Y5/6 will have the opportunity to watch 2 Newsround videos on the events to help them make sense of what they are more likely to be seeing online or hearing from others.

We thought it would be helpful to share the links to these with parents as others may wish to watch with their children and have those conversations too.: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/60522331>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/60554258>

Parent Learning

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

COVID

Unfortunately, this has not gone away and this week we have had staff off poorly with this, as well as a few children. We are sticking with our current measures to try and break any chains of transmissions. We just do not want any outbreaks locally as we saw the

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devastating impact this had in January with several classes having to work remotely, such was the chronic impact on staffing. Thank you for your continued support with being alert to any symptoms, wearing face coverings when coming to school and testing pupils when they are coming to school, if there is Covid in the household.

Finally - Parent Consultations- WOW, we have had one of the best turn outs at Ellacombe. Teachers have been buzzing with the feedback they have been able to give about the hard work and dedication that pupils are showing in their work. I hope you found these sessions helpful in having that formal pause and review of your child's progress.

Have a great weekend and we can't wait for Science Week next week

Yours Sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Semmens".

Mrs Semmens
Head of Academy