

20th July 2020



Dear Families,

Here we are at the end of the year, and what a year it has been! I really don't want to use the words 'unprecedented' or 'journey', but what an *unprecedented* year it has been and what a *journey* we have been on together. That's it, I won't say either word again!

What a year!

Looking back to the first term, we had our hugely engaging local history and geography topic 'The Three Hares' with a showcase assembly at the end of October to share our learning. I was delighted that this was attended by so many families and members of our local community. KS2 children had a Comic Masterclass with Kev Sunderland and our younger children enjoyed a trip over the road to the Fire Station! A group of children represented the school at The Ability Games and five of our choir sang at Okehampton College. We were all transfixed by Merrick's enthralling story telling about the Dartmoor tinnners and Theatre Alibi's memorable performance of 'I believe in Unicorns.'

Our Global Goals topic really inspired the children to think about the environment, a theme which has continued throughout the year, with children campaigning and litter picking in the local area. The whole school enjoyed assemblies and workshops on the theme of Recycle, Reduce, Reuse. Two classes went to The Eden Project and learnt about biodiversity. We also had our Harvest Service, Remembrance Service and Christingle at the church. We had visits from local artist and friend of the school Steve Dooley and renowned author Sue Mongredien. Our cross country, football and netball teams all competed locally and two classes showcased their newly acquired talents playing steel drums.

Our Christmas Fayre was brilliant, and we were so lucky to have Santa take time out of his busy schedule to visit us. Well done to our PTFA for organising this. The whole school put on a fantastic performance of Lights, Camel, Action (who could forget those apt one liners?) and we made a huge angel which joined the angels from North Tawton and South Tawton at Exeter Cathedral where the trio received a lot of praise from visitors.

In January our theme was Heroes and each class learned about heroes from history, local heroes and personal heroes. We also celebrated National Story Telling with a focussed week of developing the art of capturing an audience with voice and movement alone. At the end of the term, each class presented their learning in another well-attended showcase assembly. We were treated to drama, song and some excellent storytelling! Year 6 team represented us and 'did us proud' at the Rotary Quiz.

The second part of the Spring term was curtailed by the restrictions and then partial closure due to the Covid 19 pandemic, however we did manage another cross country run, our year 6 residential to Grenville House, a brilliant Book Week and dress up parade, and Magic Lantern workshops for each class. Our Poetry Recital was performed to classes rather than in an assembly which was a great shame as the finalists had worked so hard on their projection and performances.

Throughout the year we have had bake sales raising money for charities and local expeditions to Padley common, the town and church. Our School Council have worked hard to consult the community to develop a school prayer, school logo and organised playtime resource and space schedules. Our Young Leaders were trained to lead playtime activities and look after our school equipment.

Unfortunately, so many exciting opportunities have not been able to go ahead due to the partial closure and restrictions, this included our Easter Service and whole school performance of Midsummer's Night Dream. Also our annual swimming and cricket sessions, and I had also organised golf sessions for the summer term. We would also have had our sports day – which would have been called The Chagford Olympics. I hope we will be able to resume all of these events in summer 2021.

Arrangements for Tuesday

Please bring your children to school for the allocated times, we have staggered entry and exit so there are not too many people at the beginning and end of the day. If you need to queue, please use the tape markings to socially distance. Parent volunteers will be selling uniform – more details below. This session in school is an opportunity for the new classes to spend some time in their new classes and get a feel for what life will be like in September. We only have half the class in the morning slot, and half in the afternoon slot to meet the current guidance. In September it will be the whole class.

A message from the PTFA

Weather permitting, tomorrow (Tuesday 21st July), one of us will be outside school selling used school uniform which has been kindly donated over the year.

We will be outside at drop-off times between 9am and 10am and again between 1pm and 2pm.

Please remember to keep your distance and bring plenty of change with you.

It's nothing personal but if we can all avoid contact that would be ideal!

Shirts, blouses, shorts, skirts from 50p

Dresses, trousers, jumpers and cardigans from £1

Fleeces from £2

Sadly, our fundraising for the school has come to a standstill for the time being so feel free to be more generous if you can.

If you have any uniform you would like to donate there will be a box you can drop it into and we will do this again in September.

Wishing you all a fun safe summer!

We would also like to take this opportunity to wish Seantelle, Chantal and Izzy all the very best. We would usually make a big fuss at the end of year assembly or encourage them to allow the children to 'sponge' them at the summer fete but none of this can happen this year so please know you are all going to be greatly missed!

Virtual hugs for everyone.

The PTFA.

To the Chagford children

Thank you for welcoming me to your school. I have really enjoyed getting to know you all and I can't wait to pick up where we left off in September. Well done for all you have achieved this year and for coping so well with the school bubbles and home learning. I really hope next year will be 'back to normal.'

To our Year Six

I have not known you long, but I know you have been an absolute credit to this school not only this year, but for many of you since you joined in the early years. I am so sorry that your final term with us has not been the one we all wanted for you. I know you would have performed brilliantly in your SATs (you were working towards an excellent set of results) and you would have put on a fabulous end of year performance. We all wish you all the very best in your learning ahead, and hope you will keep in touch with us!

To our families

Thank you for supporting me in my first year here. Your friendly hellos have been much appreciated! I have got to know some of you very well and I hope you all know that I am 100% here to support you and your family to have the very best experience at school.

The PTFA have been amazing! The successful book drive has brought quality books in for our library. A huge thank you to those of you who advertised and organised this. Refreshments and events have been a great way to bring in the local community and raise much needed funds. I am so sad we were not able to collaborate for the end of year events, but I am very excited about resuming our work together in the year ahead.

To our Three Hares Governors

We must never forget the volunteers who are working hard behind the scenes on all things to do with policy and compliance. This is a vital role played by a few great people. Emma Neath and the whole group have been particularly busy during the partial closure supporting leadership during this challenging time. I thank you for working so hard for our three schools and communities. We have two more meetings before the end of term to ensure we are ready for September.

To our staff

You are an amazing team and I am honoured to work with you. I have been so impressed by your dedication and hard work born out of a love for Chagford School. The enthusiasm, additional hours and personal expense that you give willingly is much appreciated. I wish you all a very restful summer holiday, you really deserve it!

The Three Hares leaders

Throughout the year I have worked closely with Sunita Chauhan and Sarah Marvin, the Heads of the North Tawton and South Tawton schools under the inspirational leadership of Liz Underwood, our Executive Head. I cannot thank these three enough for the support and encouragement they have given me over the year. As you know from her letter, Liz Underwood has a great vision for Chagford which I share and am excited to work with her to bring to fruition.

Farewells and welcomes

It is with sadness we say farewell to Chantal Sorrell, Seantelle Green and Izzy Clarke who have been vital to our team. Another big thank you to Chantal for all of her work on the grounds and teaching environmental studies here at Chagford over many years. We wish Miss Green all the best in her new teaching appointment and all the very best to Miss Clark as she starts her graphic design degree at university.

Miss Ovens will be returning to school in September as Mrs Robertson! We wish her a very happy wedding day – albeit not the one she and her fiancé had planned.

Miss Coleman has been in to school this week meeting the team and planning new and exciting activities for her class.

September Reopening

We have lots of exciting news for September which I know Mrs Underwood shared in her letter on Friday. I am very excited about having a sports coach, and finally being able to use the field.

Due to Covid 19, there will be some restrictions to mixing classes, lunch provision and staggering entry and exit and break. The Governors, Unions and Trustees are currently looking at our risk assessments for the reopening for September and I will publish on the website as soon as it is agreed.

Extra-Curricular activities

We have a different approach to clubs for the coming year. As many of you are aware, the traditional breakfast club and after school club model was not working for us, only a few families were using this and it was not cost effective. From September we will continue to have before and after school provision, but it will be in the form of extracurricular activities. These will change during the year. There will be a charge which will be used to support school funds for extracurricular resources, payable in advance. We are always looking for local volunteers to support us, so if you have a passion or talent, please get in touch! At the moment we do have restrictions regarding visitors, volunteers and mixing groups, but all being well, so far we have the following on offer:

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
8am – 9am	Saints – sports	Running Club	Dance	Den building	Cooking
Lunch time	Mindfulness	Recorders	Young leaders	Chess	Lego
3.30 - 4.30	Baking	British Sign Language	Dressmaking	Art	Journalism
	Saints – Sports	The Mess Y6	Football Y4&5	Netball	Football Y6

Online Safety

Earlier in the year, I led Anti bullying workshops and talked about online safety. Please can I urge you to check filters and safety measures on your computers and devices at home? It is so easy for children to access sites and play games which have inappropriate content, or contain scam pop ups and viruses. There is great advice on <https://www.nspcc.org.uk/keeping-children-safe/online-safety/>

Miss Penny's Summer Holiday Family Challenge – Have Fun!

We have a suggested selection of holiday activities you may wish to complete – no pressure or expectation! Please see attached.

Keep safe everybody.

All the very best,

Tara Penny
Head of School

Summer Holiday Challenges

Here are some activities to keep you busy over the summer holiday.

The Library Reading Challenge

The Silly Squad Summer Reading Challenge is here!

With the disruption caused by COVID-19, the 2020 Challenge has launched as a digital activity to keep children aged 4-12 reading over the summer. The Challenge will run from June to September. The digital Challenge is fun and free to access, featuring games, quizzes and digital and downloadable activities. Children completing the challenge will be eligible to receive a Summer Reading Challenge medal and certificate, and we are hoping that we will be able to offer these for collection by the end of the summer. More info coming soon!

Although our library buildings are currently closed, we have boosted the number of children's books available to borrow via our e-lending platforms, and from July we will be hosting lots of Silly Squad events and activities on our Facebook pages, so look out for those!

<https://www.devonlibraries.org.uk/web/arena/children-src>

Local Art Gallery

We will be learning about our local area in September. During the summer holiday, paint or draw a favourite place in your local area. Bring in your creation so we can fill the walls with lovely work making a local art gallery.

Calling Our Nature Lovers

Sign up to RSPB's Wild Challenge. There's lots of fun wildlife challenges to complete

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/fun-and-learning/for-families/family-wild-challenge/>

The Book of Hopes: Words and Pictures to Comfort, Inspire and Entertain Children in Lockdown

I put this in the newsletter some weeks ago. It's a lovely online book with short stories and poems. Babcock will be putting activities here for you to access.

<https://www.babcockldp.co.uk/improving-schools-settings/english/teaching-sequences/the-book-of-hopes>

Family Sports Day

This term we would have had The Olympics in Tokyo, and in Chagford! This summer holiday you could organise a family sports day for the garden or local open space. Who will win the egg and spoon race?

Maths Challenge

How many ways can you make the number 2020? Challenge yourself to find unusual ways rather than just adding. Older children – don't forget the rules of BODMAS!

Keep a diary

Keep a diary or scrap book of fun events and activities you do this holiday.

Read, read and read some more!

The most important activity to encourage your children to do over the summer to help them be ready for September is reading.

Here are 10 Top Tips:

1. Encourage your child to read

Reading helps your child's wellbeing, develops imagination and has educational benefits too. Just a few minutes a day can have a big impact on children of all ages.

2. Read aloud regularly

Try to read to your child every day. It's a special time to snuggle up and enjoy a story. Stories matter and children love re-reading them and poring over the pictures. Try adding funny voices to bring characters to life.

3. Encourage reading choice

Give children lots of opportunities to read different things in their own time - it doesn't just have to be books. There's fiction, non-fiction, poetry, comics, magazines, recipes and much more. Try leaving interesting reading material in different places around the home and see who picks it up.

4. Read together

Choose a favourite time to read together as a family and enjoy it. This might be everyone reading the same book together, reading different things at the same time, or getting your children to read to each other. This time spent reading together can be relaxing for all.

5. Create a comfortable environment

Make a calm, comfortable place for your family to relax and read independently - or together.

6. Make use of your local library

Libraries in England are able to open from 4 July, so visit them when you're able to and explore all sorts of reading ideas. Local libraries also offer brilliant online materials, including audiobooks and e-books to borrow. See [Libraries Connected](#) for more digital library services and resources.

7. Talk about books

This is a great way to make connections, develop understanding and make reading even more enjoyable. Start by discussing the front cover and talking about what it reveals and suggests the book could be about. Then talk about what you've been reading and share ideas. You could discuss something that happened that surprised you, or something new that you found out. You could talk about how the book makes you feel and whether it reminds you of anything.

8. Bring reading to life

You could try cooking a recipe you've read together. Would you recommend it to a friend? Alternatively, play a game where you pretend to be the characters in a book, or discuss an interesting article you've read.

9. Make reading active

Play games that involve making connections between pictures, objects and words, such as reading about an object and finding similar things in your home. You could organise treasure hunts related to what you're reading. Try creating your child's very own book by using photos from your day and adding captions.

10. Engage your child in reading in a way that suits them

You know your child best and you'll know the best times for your child to read. If they have special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) then short, creative activities may be the way to get them most interested. If English is an additional language, encourage reading in a child's first language, as well as in English. What matters most is that they enjoy it.

More information and advice can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/10-top-tips-to-encourage-children-to-read/10-top-tips-to-encourage-children-to-read>