Newsletter: Friday 21st September 2018

Message from Mrs Anderson...

We have had a wonderful two weeks at school, with our year 6 pupils going on residential, year 1 having a welly walk to Kinterbury Creek, together with our first mass of the school year and our very special Harvest Mass today. Thank you to you all for your kind donations of food for our Harvest display, this is being donated to the Salvation Army food bank. This will make such a difference to so many families.

Next week will be very busy as our year 4 and 5 children will be going to London for a two day experience. This will be an action packed two days, full of memories that will be treasured for a lifetime. Look at our facebook page and see what they are doing!

Plymouth CAST- Vision and Values Consultation

We are delighted that Raymond Friel has taken up the post of Chief Executive Officer at Plymouth CAST. St Paul's is one of the family of schools that belongs to this multi-academy trust. It is wonderful to be able to say that we already seeing the impact of his joining the trust. Raymond would like to consult with everyone in relation to our 'Visions and Values' for Plymouth CAST. Attached to this newsletter are some of the pages that are relevant to you as families in this consultation, please can I urge you to take the time to read and consider the questions. It is so important that we all feed into the consultation, as Raymond wants to hear the voice from all of the schools.

Myself and the leadership team are offering a time where you can share your views linked to the consultation. This will be on Friday 5th October at 2.30 in the school. Please join us and talk about the key points. If you cannot make this meeting please send your thoughts either by email to me on manderson@stpaulsplymouth.com- labelled Vision and Values Consultation, or send them in to the office for my attention. This is your turn to have a voice so please take the time and use it.

Keeping our children safe...Parking in the lane

Please help us keep all of our school community safe. It is really dangerous for our children if people park on the yellow lines or the zig zag lines outside of school- please walk a little further to keep our children safe. Barn Lane is a one way road, please use it this way and DO NOT reverse out of it. One of our children was nearly hit by a car reversing.

Parent Governor...

As you were all aware there is a vacancy for a parent governor- we are delighted that two parents have put their names forward. There is one vote per family and your child will be bringing home the ballot paper and summary of the two people who have volunteered. Please can you get the ballot papers back to the school by the end of next week.

Parent Advisory Group...

As a school we have a parent advisory group who meet about 5 times during the year- this is a group of parents who discuss key areas, for example how we can secure more community engagement, home learning, or some of the school policies when they come up for review. We meet of a morning for no longer than an hour. We like to have a representative from each year group- ir you are interested please let me know, then we can arrange our first meeting. Our current representatives are, Mrs Reid (Year 1 and 5 parent), Mrs Glendinning-Eke (Year F and Year 3 parent), Mrs Holloway (Year 1, 3, 5 parent), Mrs Mackie (Year 6 parent)- we would love a representative for years 2 and 4). Email me if you are interested: manderson@stpaulsplymouth.com

Accelerated Reader...

In Key Stage 2 this year we are using Accelerated Reader. This is an online tool that monitors and manages independent reading practice whilst promoting reading for pleasure. Once the children have read their chosen book, which is at their reading level, they then have a chance to take an online quiz. This is 10 multiple choice questions about the book they have just finished which, if they get correct, gives them points. We will be rewarding our children through this reading scheme in several different ways. One of which is the 'millionaires club' for those children who have read a million words. These certificates and celebrations will be rolled out over the course of the year.

School Library...

We are really excited about our school library space which has had a makeover over the summer. Additionally, we have updated our library stock using a generous grant from the Foyle Foundation. Each child now has a library account which allows books to be issued to individuals. Can we please ask that these books are looked after and, if lost, a replacement made or payment provided. Only one book can be issued at a time and classes have dedicated time to visit the library and change their books. In KS2 the library books will be issued instead of reading books as the children are choosing books that are at their reading level.

CAFOD 'Brighten Up'...

On Friday 5th October we will be raising money for CAFOD. Their theme this year is 'Brighten Up'. So we invite the children to come to school in their bright colours and donate £1 to CAFOD. This money goes towards helping make the world a brighter place for communities living in extreme poverty.

Gospel message from Maisie

In this weekend's Gospel Jesus cautions his disciples that they must not obstruct anyone who is working in the name of Jesus. It would be good to think that Jesus is asking us in the Church today to simply stop and listen. It may be difficult to hear those who are critical of how some in authority have acted. It may be hard to listen to the pain-filled stories of the victims of abuse. It may be tough to discern which calls for change are legitimate, and the work of the Spirit.

But if we're to be true to the whole of today's Gospel, then we need to apply Jesus' own test: "whoever is not against us is for us." Voices calling for honesty, compassion, truth, forgiveness, contrition-sound a lot like the voice of Christ. May the Spirit help us to listen.

Masses: 27th September - St Vincent de Paul- Y5 & 6
4th October - St Francis of Assissi - Y3 & 4

Attendance: 100% attendance- will it be you?" The winning class this week is Y5 with 100%.

The whole school attendance for the week is 95.30% we really need to aim to get 97%!

Star Learners for last week were: Lincoln & Molly Fu, George E & Eden - Y1, Alfie & Bailey - Y2, Ben & Lucy - Y3, Lily & Thomas - Y4, Rudi & Masie - Y5 & Callum & James - Y6

Star Writers this week are: Harry Fu, Aidan Y1, Lily-Louise Y2, Healey Y3, Jack Y4, Poppie Y5 & Leo Y6

Star Readers this week are: Florence Fu, Goelle Y1, Millie Y2, Yasmin Y3, Ellie Y4, Zac Y5, Summer Y6

Best wishes
Maria Anderson

SOUTH WEST CELEBRATE WEEKEND

A joyful and faith-filled event for all the family!

13th/14th October
Notre Dame School, Looseleigh Lane, Plymouth PL6 5HN

Main Speakers: Maria Heath, Fr. Oscar Ardila, Charles Whitehead
Separate streams for children & young people
Lively worship, drama, a variety of workshops, family Mass

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Online booking now open (Prior booking essential)
More details: www.celebrateconference.org
Email: southwest@celebrateconference.org
Rebecca 01395 489902
Or Susanne 01803 606256

(*Poster Erratum*: 16 -22 Conference Fee should read: £15)

OUR VISION

Catholic education is part of the mission of the Church "to preach the Gospel to all nations: to enrich all people with the light of the Good News, which, by its essence, is aimed at transforming the human person and setting him or her on the path that leads to salvation." [1] In our schools, **our pupils will encounter the living God**, as revealed in Jesus Christ, perhaps for the first time in their lives. They will encounter His love and truth in the Gospel, Religious Education, the liturgies of the Church and in the pastoral care and attention they receive.

They will be invited on a journey of transformation to **become more loving and compassionate human beings** so that they will grow into adults who will help to make the 'civilization of love' a reality. The Catholic school has at its foundation a belief in "**the dignity of a human being**." [2] This anthropology gives rises to an understanding of education which "aims at the formation of the human person" [3] – a rounded education which involves their spiritual, moral, physical and intellectual development. A vision, in other words, of human flourishing based on the Gospel revelation.

Catholic schools were established firstly to allow Catholic parents to exercise their right to choose a Catholic school for their child. The Church, however, **welcomes those who are not Catholic** to its schools and has never defined the Catholicity of its schools according to the numbers of Catholic pupils. "In the certainty that the Spirit is at work in every person, the Catholic school offers itself to all, non-Christians included." [4] In our context in Plymouth Diocese, with relatively low numbers of Catholic children, this inclusive and welcoming approach is all the more central to our vision.

From the beginning of its work in education, inspired by the example of Jesus, a priority for the Catholic school has always been the education and care of **the poor and marginalised**. This is re-affirmed in recent documents, beginning with the *Declaration on Christian Education* at Vatican II, which urges "pastors and all the faithful to spare no sacrifice in helping Catholic schools fulfil their function in a continually more perfect way, and especially in caring for the needs of those who are poor in the goods of this world or who are deprived of the assistance and affection of a family or who are strangers to the gift of faith." [5]

The personal transformation through education which is offered in our schools is not only so that our pupils will become better human beings but so that they will contribute to "the building of a world that is more human." [6] They will in other words be invited to contribute to **the common good**, the development of a world which is more just, where the dignity of life is protected and promoted, and **the earth, our common home**, is cherished as part of a simple and selfless lifestyle.

In the view of some, the purpose of education is primarily to serve the market economy and the individual inasmuch as they achieve well-being based on economic success. The Church's view of education is based on service. "Knowledge is not to be considered as a means of material prosperity and success, but as a call to serve and to be responsible for others." [7] This does not mean that we do not want our young people to benefit from material prosperity, but it defines the purpose of knowledge acquisition from a Gospel perspective. Catholic schools believe that every child is **gifted and called** to do good in the world according to their ability. Helping them to discover their gifts and calling is a key part of our work. Our schools should encourage and develop a **culture of vocation**.

The kind of curriculum which serves such an altruistic agenda is about more than just the acquisition of knowledge for personal success. In keeping with a vision of human flourishing for the common good, the Church encourages in its schools the development of "a multiplicity of **skills that enrich the human**

where children of all abilities and backgrounds flourish;
where all look to for good practice and innovation;
where vulnerable educational institutions look for support;
where 'the gospel is preached at all times; where necessary, using words' (after St Francis)."

This statement is not associated in CAST with the excellence the Church expects of its schools. It is time to consider a new vision statement, derived from the Gospel and the teaching of the Church, focused on excellence and high standards. Following the consultation process, the Board will consider a new vision statement on 26 October to express the 'step change' that is required to ensure that Plymouth CAST fulfils the expectations of the Church.

OUR MISSION

Our mission statement is an expression of how we will go about making our vision a reality. The mission of Catholic schools takes places in a local context and, depending on the circumstances, different aspects of the Church's vision may be highlighted. Our current mission statement is:

"Our Mission is to provide outstanding education and learning in a safe environment where Catholic values are promoted and encouraged for the benefit of all."

This mission statement does not seem to be 'owned' by the schools in the Trust and, like the current vision statement, is not in practice associated with the highest expectations of the Church for its schools. It is not widely displayed in schools and it seems very much a forgotten statement. The intention is to 'refresh' this mission statement with a renewed sense of energy and commitment, a statement which captures this moment in the history of the Trust, a moment of renewal and re-commitment.

Many institutions also have a motto, or in business terms a 'marketing strap line' – a neat summary of what the 'brand' stands for (e.g. Nike - "Just do it" and Adidas - "Impossible is nothing"). Many Catholic schools and dioceses have a motto, often in Latin. Plymouth CAST currently does not have a motto, but it may be worth considering this to help us to project our mission more effectively into a crowded world of signs.

Please use the attached proforma to provide a summary of your community's responses to the following 7 questions:

Question 1.

Gospel value: Integrity, do what you say

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called children of God"

Gospel value: Non-violence, committed to peace

"Blessed are those who are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven"

Gospel value: Courage, standing up for truth

Question 3.

What do you do to make Gospel values a reality in your school? What more can you do?