



Headteacher: Sharon Hunt
Milborne St Andrew First School
Hopsfield
Milborne St Andrew
Dorset
DT11 0JE

15th May 2020

Dear Parents,

I hope you are all continuing to keep safe and are managing to stay well, mentally and physically, in these turbulent times.

I am particularly grateful to our staff team, who have continued to provide support for you and your children both in the classroom and online, whilst managing to teach their own children and manage their own circumstances. I know that you really appreciate their efforts and I hope that the children have been able to maintain some form of structure in, what has been, a very changeable world for them.

Regarding their learning, remember that the children will need to go over things they have learned previously again and again, to get them into their long term memory. Even if you think they knew it well, it is worth quickly checking every now and then. Quizzes and crosswords can be a quick, fun way of doing this. A reminder too of the FREE e books available on Oxford reading owl website.

The staff and I have been so pleased to see and talk to the children. We really do miss your children. It really has been lovely seeing all the things that you have been getting up to, what you have learned together and how creative you have been in finding ways to help your children learn. We have even welcomed two new children to our school through Tapestry- there clearly is a first time for everything! We are also ready, and have started the process of welcoming our new Reception children to our school too, a very exciting time for everyone.

All staff are working across settings currently with transition too to ensure that all information is shared with those who need it most as we always do. If this is not done in classrooms in school we will do it another way, but information will be passed on.

You will have received my letter following the Prime Minister's announcement of 10th May and whilst there is a lot of discussion and planning going on in the background, there is nothing new to share as yet, but obviously you will be the first to know when there is.

If it does happen, it will be very different and I will share details of what that will look like with you so discussions can take place with your child beforehand about what school will be like and what different expectations there may be.

In the meantime, some good news! I received this notification from Doodle: (this will be announced in assembly so your children don't know yet)

Thank you so much for taking part in the 14 Day Challenge.

*I'm just sending you a quick message to let you know that Rabbit class came **second** and Robin class came **third** in the DoodleSpell competition out of more than 150 classes!*



GREENWOOD TREE
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We are really impressed by how well your children are using DoodleSpell. Congratulations and keep up the great work!

What a great achievement, especially as spelling was an area we are working on. Well done everyone and thank you for all your support in ensuring it is used well. It clearly works.

We have yet more good news. I am now able to share with you the wonderful news that Mrs Pratt is expecting a baby. Congratulations to her and all the family. This is a very exciting time for them.

We have also been thinking about how best to report to you on your child's progress at the end of the year. Usually we start to write these now. We also wanted to gather, in a practical but effective way, information about what you have learned about your child and progress made since they have been working with you so that this doesn't get lost.

Our plan is to report to you at the usual time in a slightly shorter format than usual. The report will outline comments on character and learning styles as it usually does, but will share achievement up until March. There will be a comparison with this information and where we would expect a child to be so you will clearly be able to see how well they are doing in comparison to other children their age whilst also seeing progress made to this point. You will also receive an objective led checklist (either in paper form or online) to complete for us, with some areas for adding comments and observations.

I have been asked to pass on some concerns about use of the countryside code:

It is great to see so many local people utilising the open spaces and Rights of Way for their daily exercise around us in Dorchester but it would seem many are unaware of the Countryside Code. Lots of new visitors (local families and young people) have been visiting our nature reserve during lockdown but failing to close gates behind them, leading to livestock escapes and presuming one can cycle anywhere in the countryside which you cant. We also had the BBQ/ Fire in Puddletown Forest <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-dorset-52438329> and many people are failing to put dogs on leads in livestock areas.

Below is a lovely, child friendly link explaining the code and would be a good learning opportunity.

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=countryside+code+videos&docid=607989527111339515&mid=A8DCBB1BAF9E61D9750BA8DCBB1BAF9E61D9750B&view=detail&FORM=VIRE>

We will also be interviewing soon for the post advertised for Year 3/4. We have had a lot of interest for which I was thankful (I was a little apprehensive as to how Covid might impact new appointments) and hopefully means we will have a strong pool to appoint from as there are some large shoes to be filled.

Do remember to check out my weekly passport challenges which are on the classes section of the website. They are all life skills or key experiences and therefore real learning.



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I will be in touch again later today with more information about the proposed return to school. In the meantime, again I urge you to think carefully about what you share with your children.

Take care and keep up the amazing work.

Yours sincerely,

Sharon Hunt