

St. Michael's C. of E. Primary School

Wednesday 21st July

www.stmichaelscofe.co.uk

“But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”

Matthew 24:15



It never rains, but it pours...



So goes the well known saying and although this week has been short, it has been nothing short of eventful. Lots of highs and lows but hopefully, all your children will remember is a week of fun.

The week began with me having to make a very difficult decision; to close a Year 1 class while we awaited confirmation of a COVID test which fortunately turned out to be negative. The children returned yesterday and were treated to a morning of sports, lead by the Y6 children who themselves had held their own sports day on Monday afternoon. It was break from anything that they have done before but the overwhelming response was of fun for the children and gratitude by the parents.

When I arrived at school on another warm Tuesday, I was greeted by a positive COVID test but thankfully, the person in question had not been in contact with anyone since Friday and therefore was not a known risk. The children in Foundation Stage came in and spent much of the morning going 'Wet & Wild' which was a welcome relief to the heat of the past few days for all. I joined them for 30 minutes to help them mark the end of their first year with us.



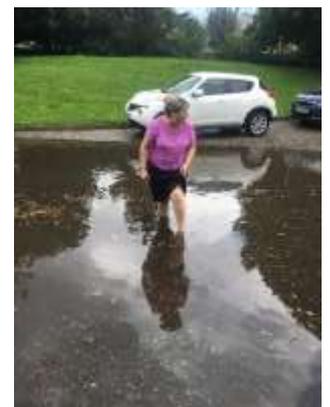
Having dried myself off, I settled back at my desk and was talking to the lovely office ladies when Mrs Gardner came in to say a child had become locked in the shed! The meeting was paused immediately and I went to free the child. Somehow the lock had been activated, and without a key, the only option was to force the door. I was impressed with how calm the child remained while I edged some sturdy twigs above and below the mechanism to bend the frame and door out of shape to free him. I was also pleased that the frame and door remained intact, but to prevent a similar situation, I removed the lock altogether.



The sky went incredibly dark just after all the children left and then the thunderstorm struck. One teacher went to leave but as the hailstones fell, she thought better of it for a while but it was the rain which was the biggest issue. At the same time, a Hoover blew up in the Y2 classroom so those carpets may not be as clean to start the final day.

Yet again, the deluge threatened to enter the school via the main entrance, kitchen and Y3 classrooms because the drains could not cope and the flow from the Clare Road path was a torrent. At one stage, Mrs Jenkins hitched her skirt quite high and waded out to her car to load up (it got deeper as she moved towards my camera) and then Miss Reid kicked off her shoes and went in, armed with a broom to clear the drains of debris. Together, she and I spent the next hour clearing the front and back of school so that the water drained completely. Just the task of clearing the dirt and mud before children and parents come back on site tomorrow...bring on the jet wash!

If we get it right, you may not even have noticed when you came in this morning.





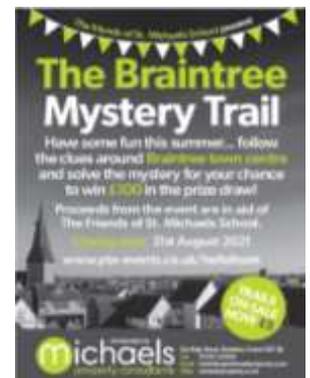
All in all, an eventful three days (and this is written on Tuesday night so who knows what will happen that I won't have time to write about tomorrow).

We have come through so much this last year, and I have been heartened again and again with how the staff have coped and how this has been appreciated by the parents. Teaching is such a rewarding yet demanding profession; one that never starts at 9:00 or ends at 3:30 (far from it) but it is in the moments of joy and achievement that we see in the children we are blessed to work with each day, that make it all worthwhile.

Despite all the challenges, which this week has been a microcosm of, you will see me and my staff here each day, filled with positivity (the right kind), optimism and ready to take on what the day brings. Thank you for working with us; we always try to do what is right for the whole school and sometimes this won't suit individuals – I'm always happy to speak to parents – and you'll by now know where I am every day.

I can't see into the future as to what September will look like in school; it's hard to remember what some of the 'normal' things we used to do are. However, I see this as an opportunity to reshape our future in some ways. One thing I was very excited about was the new kitchen we were to have; unfortunately, today I heard that the money for this was not available from the Diocese so this is not going ahead this summer. Some of the money we would have been putting into this will now be spent on a 'cabin' to run some further groups in – this will hopefully be in situ on P1 when we return. We also will have our fantastic new classroom and nurture provision open in September so still lots to excite us.

We face 6 weeks away from school, hopefully with good weather, time and freedoms to enjoy. One thing that I am bringing my niece and nephew to is the FOSM's 'Braintree Mystery Trail' – it will indeed be a mystery because they don't know the town at all – if you didn't look at this last week when it was an attachment, I've made this image 'clickable' to take you straight to the purchasing site. As the Sensory Garden and the area by Clare Road have shown, they spend any money they raise back on the school to help make it that little bit more special.



When we return, it will be without Mrs French and Mrs Cottis who have been with us for many years as valuable LSAs and are choosing now to retire; we wish them both a long and healthy retirement with time to enjoy the things that bring them pleasure. Mrs Burrell, our current Y5 MDA, is also moving on after 15 years with us – thank you for all the support you have given at lunchtimes. Miss Harvey-Nevin, who although having only been with us for the year, has made a big impression on Foundation Stage where she has worked. We also say another goodbye to Mrs Goodman; she has been wonderful this year, stepping back into Year 5 as a temporary solution in October and then remaining with us to the very end, offering the class an amazing range of experiences. She knows that the door is always open to return.



The new year is exciting in so many ways; but those moments will come. For now, on behalf of all the staff, I wish you all a very healthy and happy summer. For the Year 6s who leave us, and for some families, this is the end of many years working with us; take all the positives you have learned and go on to make yourselves proud in your secondary schools. I know the Year 6 team are incredibly proud of you and have great faith in all your potential – I have seen you grow over many years too and can recall many fond memories of you all.

Enjoy the break; we certainly all need it.
remember that the children return on Thursday 2nd September.

A. Cumpstey

Andrew Cumpstey

