



## PARENTS' NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2011

Welcome back to a new term and a new academic year!

Welcome to our new children in Class 1, Maddie, Alex, Aaron, Max and Michael. It has been wonderful to see how well they have all settled in to school life and seem to be enjoying their busy days.

During this term we will be holding our Harvest Festival on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October, 2011 at 10.30 am and this year our efforts will be for Feed the Children UK which is a charity that helps and supports children in the UK and around the world. We will be collecting donations and/or dried foods such as:

Pasta	)	
Pulses	)	
Dried fruit	)	<b>Please ensure all food donations have at least</b>
Salt	)	<b>9 – 12 months shelf life</b>
Rice	)	
Sugar	)	

Children from school will take the food items and donations to the local Feed the Children collection centre in Exeter that afternoon.

We will also have a 'Wear it Pink' Day on Friday 21<sup>st</sup> October, when staff and children are invited to wear as much pink as they like and to donate money to Cancer Research.

The Tempest School Photographer will be in school on the morning of 3<sup>rd</sup> November. If your child does not attend school that day or if you wish siblings to also have their photograph taken you are very welcome to bring them in but please let Beverley know in advance.

I know it seems early in the term, so please forgive me, but the Christmas dates are as follows:

Christmas Lunch for staff and children - Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> December.

Our Christmas Play – (title yet to be decided) - Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 and Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2011. Both will take place at 10am.

The Christmas Party for the children will be held on the afternoon of Monday 12<sup>th</sup> December, 2011 and children are welcome to wear party clothes on that day or could change after the play if preferred.

We will once again be having Vranch House Christmas Goods for sale, these include packs of Christmas Cards made from art work by the children, Christmas puddings and 2012 diaries – further details to follow.

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Liberator Day – Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> November – we are hoping to run a Liberator augmentative communication day – we need 20 participants. This is an opportunity to explore and try a range of low tech communication devices and to speak to some 'experts' about how they are used etc. There will be refreshments and lunch for those staying all day. You would be most welcome to attend for some or all of this day if are interested in finding out more about Big Macks, and talkers. If you would like to come please ring school to let Tracey or Beverley know. See attachment for further details.

We are hoping to have a Therapy Open week so that you can see your children working on their physical activities but also to allow you a look at our therapy group sessions which are working very well. Further information to follow shortly.

Our Boardroom update has been completed and our Sensory Studio, which is being developed within our old Resources room will hopefully be completed in time for next term if not sooner. The companies that provide the equipment have bookings well in advance and there is a waiting list of two or three months.

There are several attachments with this newsletter which you will hopefully find to be of interest. With our Parentmail system we are restricted to three attachments per email so we may need to send some of the attachments separately. Speech Therapist, Cat Ward, has also passed on the following links which might be of interest:

- 1) for i-pad / i-pod users: list of lots of fun, free or v cheap (under £1) apps for i-pads suitable for children with complex needs from - 'my favourite apps for special learners' [www.multi-sensory-room.co.uk](http://www.multi-sensory-room.co.uk)
- 2) info sheets & resources re: communication and communication devices [www.callscotland.org.uk](http://www.callscotland.org.uk)

Every Easter the HCPT Pilgrimage Trust visit Lourdes with a group of children and a number of Vbranch House children have joined the group in previous years. The local organiser, Stephen Knight, would be pleased to hear from any parents who might be interested in their children joining the group's visit to Lourdes in 2012 or indeed hear from anyone who would like to accompany the group as a voluntary helper. Please contact Stephen on his mobile 07976 714750 by the end of October for further information on next year's visit. The HCPT also have a website [www.hcpt.org.uk](http://www.hcpt.org.uk).

School Council – we have recently held School Council Elections for a new Head, due to Connor leaving to attend mainstream full-time.

Grace has been elected as Head

Poppy, Libby and Jessica will be the Head's Helpers or Deputies, to share the workload!

All the children voted and it was a very close run election. Joshua in Class 3 is the reserve Council Head, should Grace change her mind or get fed up of the role!

School Uniform – We have in school a range of sizes of second-hand school sweatshirts which have been donated by parents because their children have either outgrown them or the children have moved on to other schools. Although we have kept some in school for spares we still have a number looking for a new home – please contact Beverley if you would like one of the second-hand sweatshirts as a spare.

Planners for October, November and December have been attached which show all the activities arranged so far for this term.

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28<sup>th</sup> September 2011