

IF YOU *Believe,*  
YOU WILL RECEIVE WHAT YOU  
ASK FOR IN PRAYER.  
-MATTHEW 21:22

*Believe and Achieve*

# Claypole Church of England Primary School Newsletter



Parental Involvement & Engagement

[www.claypoleprimary.org](http://www.claypoleprimary.org)

## Dear Parents/Carers,

We recognise that in order to be successful, our children need support from both home and school. As partners, we share the responsibility for our children's success and want you to know that we do our very best to carry out our responsibilities.

Parents are the first and on-going educators. Historian Howard Zinn said: *"We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world."* What a powerful gift, for a child to know that their parents and their teachers are working together... to think: 'they want the same success for me.' When you combine the tidal force power of parental love with the professional expertise of a devoted teacher, we get our children across the gap. Together we can transform our school into a collaborative community that puts the children we live our lives for at the heart of all that we do.

There is a range of key information on our website (Menu...Parents...New to Claypole... <https://www.claypoleprimary.org/new-to-claypole/>) for families and a book/booklet that can be shared at home together. I've also uploaded a video tour of our school and a few stories being read by some of the adults in school.

Shared on this newsletter are all the different ways that we involve families in school and keep parents/carers up-dated with school and your child/ren's progress.

We are always eager to improve and love hearing great ideas too – please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any thoughts on how we can make engagement/involvement amongst school & families even better.

Best wishes,  
*MWells*  
Martyn Wells  
Headteacher



**Transition Days  
2025**

- Tuesday 24th June**  
5pm - 6pm
- Monday 30th June**  
3:45pm - 4:30pm
- Monday 7th July**  
1:15pm - 3:15pm
- Monday 14th July**  
1:15pm - 3:15pm

**Claypole**  
Church of England  
Primary School

KOINONIA

PEACE

JUSTICE

RESILIENCE

RESPECT

TRUST

CONTENTMENT

## Parent/Carer Engagement

One of the most important gifts we can offer young children is positive view of themselves. Without this gift, they will flounder throughout life and be constantly seeking re-assurance from others as they cannot see it from within. In order for children to achieve great things, they have to surprise themselves. They have to break out of that image that has been constructed of themselves and realise what they are capable of achieving. You can't just be told you can succeed – you have to experience it. Letting children experience authentic success is the only way to truly transform a child and let them understand their potential. Good teachers do not have to be parents. But teachers and parents do have a lot in common & in all my years of teaching, I have never met a parent or a teacher who didn't desperately want their child to succeed. Together, we are all preparing the children for their future – with a shared vision we can all work together to promote awareness, tolerance, values, responsibility, diversity so that the children can be responsible, caring and active... with opportunities to achieve (not their potential – but beyond their potential) and experience success every day.



At first, I thought of teachers as the bridge builders in education because we create opportunities for our children every day. Over time I realised that it's networks of schools and families and community groups that build the bridges. Teachers do help build the bridges but we have a much more up-close and personal role: we are down on the ground in the classrooms and we know which children get onto the bridge and get across and which ones don't. And we often know why. We have the power and the privilege to work with individuals – we can get down on the trail with our children and their families and we can find their safest crossing. And furthermore, because teachers are devoted and caring our families trust us to help them. We are the trail guides – we know how to help and we can build relationships that offer up opportunities to help.

## Being Included

- ✓ Progress Meetings a.k.a 'Parent's Evening' (in the Autumn & Spring terms with a written report shared in the Summer);
- ✓ 'Open Days' (where families can join the adults and some of the children to experience our outstanding curriculum across the school);
- ✓ Performances (inc. Sports Day, Annual Pancake Race, Christmas plays, Harvest festival, Young Voices Concert, Choir/Musical performances);
- ✓ Opportunities for children to showcase their learning (visiting the classroom to be shown recent 'new knowledge & skills');
- ✓ Consultations (to gather views... usually through Google Forms but also by talking with you);
- ✓ Workshops (to provide insight, understanding, guidance and ways of supporting the children);
- ✓ Special events (inc. seasonal fayres & festivals, church services and village & PTFA events);
- ✓ Sharing expertise & knowledge (if we find out you've got some amazing knowledge that could be shared with the children, we'd love for you to come in and spend time sharing it with the children);
- ✓ and refraining from jargon (where possible).

There are occasions where families are unable to join us so we try to take photographs and video which are then shared across our media platforms.

## Contact

As well as being able to contact your child's teacher in person or phone, you'll receive the class email address too. If we have any concerns, we won't leave it until 'parents evening' – please don't do the same. If you have any concerns or queries, we'd like to know about it as soon as possible.

## Getting Involved Yourself

Volunteering for the PFTA or helping in class is a great way to be involved in school life. Attending school services, performances and fayres is a great way of meeting people too.

## 'Open Door'

Although not a physical open door, we do operate an 'open door' policy: we welcome families and are always approachable and ready to listen.

## Communication

Our favourite form of communication is talking directly with parents/carers. We like to be able to pop out at the end of the day to share successes that your child has had too. We may even reach out with good news from class using an app called 'Class Dojo.'

## Class Dojo

Class Dojo is a school communication platform that teachers, children and families use every day to build close-knit communities by sharing what's being learned in the classroom home through 'Dojo points,' photos, videos and messages.

Click: <https://www.classdojo.com/en-gb/about/> for more general information about Class Dojo.

As part of our behaviour principle, we like to celebrate positive behaviours. Class Dojo allow successes with parents and families through the Class Dojo app. We can also let parents know what is happening in the classroom and parents can use Class Dojo to let us know of successes outside of school too.

We ask for any concerns, questions or formal messages that need reporting, recording or responding to to be shared through our formal channels (via telephone or email).

## Plenty Of Notice

As a busy family man myself, I know how important it is to be given plenty of notice for events.

Schedules can be hectic but with advanced planning, we find that most parents/carers are able to attend our events and stay up-to-date with school life.

Each newsletter has the latest dates and we give families as much notice as possible.

## YouTube

We have an active YouTube channel. We like to keep families up-to-date with our Collective Worship themes by uploading one video a week. We also use it to share successes, experiences and films the children have made over the term too.

To get an alert that a video has been shared, subscribe to our channel:

[https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC\\_JipkHxVps\\_wrgSm7eIVNg](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC_JipkHxVps_wrgSm7eIVNg)



## Digital Communication: ParentMail

You will soon be sent instructions on how to activate a 'ParentMail' account which school uses to send emails to families with:

- Weekly newsletters;
- Important updates;
- Latest news.

The system also includes a 'text' feature which allows schools the ability to send text messages to families with, for example, ETA's if a school trip is running late...



## Visibility

- ✓ The way we welcome & present ourselves (from the first smiling face in the office to an easily navigated & accessible website);
- ✓ Visibility (in the form of a physical presence - being out on the yard or the gate in the morning, at the end of the day, going with them to sports events and performances] ...
- ✓ Visibility in the sense of sharing what excellence looks like... what constitutes high expectations – being visibly clear about the standards and expectations and developing a depth of understanding of what can be achieved).

## Social Media

We love sharing successes and experiences in school. We use both Facebook & X (formerly Twitter). You can follow us too by finding these handles:



## Curriculum Updates

We share snapshots and detailed booklets about the topics & themes the classes learn about each term. These are shared on the class pages on the school website and also uploaded via our media platforms.

We also share suggestions of books and places to visit to enhance the children's learning outside of school too.

## Actionable Information

We provide information to keep families up-to-date as well as experiences & successes and we also make sure that we provide information that parents/carers can act on... this could be opportunities for parents/carers to support/prepare their child for activities/assignments, or information about upcoming extracurricular activities. It could be some latest research about the impact of the length of time a child reads for each day... with the information we share, we try to make sure it's meaningful.

## Tapestry: EYFS Journal

In EYFS, we use an online learning journal called 'Tapestry' which allows staff and families to record, celebrate and respond to their children's learning and development. Parents or carers are able to view their child's progress, the activities provided for them, and how much fun they're having, whilst also uploading their own comments and media. The communication between staff and parents that Tapestry enables, helps build a shared understanding of how every child can reach their full potential.

## Language Barriers?

Not a problem: we've got some really fancy tech in school that has helped us interpret families who speak English as an additional language.

## Involvement or Engagement

*"Parent involvement is more a 'doing to' while engagement is a 'doing with.'"*

Larry Ferlazzo

