22nd November 2023

Dear Parents and families

As we reach the halfway point of the second half of the Autumn Term we are reflecting on the hard work and progress that our children have made this term, and looking excitedly towards the Christmas Festivities that will be coming up!

It was wonderful to see you all at Parent Consultations before half term and share the children’s successes. As we assess what the children have learnt and plan for the coming year, we are so proud of their achievements. The children continue to work hard and enjoy a wide and enriched curriculum. We are very appreciative of our extra teachers, Mr Berry from Saints South West and Lisa from Razzamatazz with their weekly P.E. and Dance lessons. We hope you enjoy reading what your children have been up to each week in the class newsletters and it encourages your child to talk to you about their learning.

As we know attendance is key for children to have consistency in their learning and for them to have those strong consistent relationships with children and adults in school. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you all of the impact attendance can have on learning:

**WHAT IS GOOD ATTENDANCE?**

100% = Our target for every child
97%+ = Excellent
96% – 97% = Good
94% – 95% = BEGINNING TO CAUSE CONCERN
BELOW 93% = WORRYING AND LESS CHANCE OF SUCCESS
90% = PERSISTENT ABSENCE SERIOUS ATTENDANCE CONCERN

**WHY IS ATTENDANCE IMPORTANT?**

* It creates good habits for life.
* Each lesson, each day, builds upon the last and leads into the next —this is how the teacher structures learning. If children miss a day in the middle of a section of learning, they struggle to build their understanding of the whole topic.
* It impacts their achievement, sense of security, and feeling part of the class.
* Children value school and their learning – and do better.

Devon’s Annual Consultation on School Admission Arrangements 2025-26 is now running and will close on Friday 5 January 2024. Details of the consultation are at [Admissions, transport and relevant areas consultation – Education and Families (devon.gov.uk)](https://www.devon.gov.uk/educationandfamilies/school-information/apply-for-a-school-place/arrangements-and-policies/admissions-transport-and-relevant-areas-consultation/) Comments in response are invited from interested parties. Responses must be submitted either by email to schoolsadmissionpolicy-mailbox@devon.gov.uk or in writing to School Admissions Consultation, Devon County Council, Room L60, County Hall, Exeter EX2 4QG by Friday 5 January 2024. All responses will be shared with schools and considered. A report will be presented to Devon County Council’s Cabinet meeting on Friday 9 February 2024 for determination including the individual admission policies for community and voluntary controlled schools.

It was wonderful to see so many of you at Paignton Library on Saturday. It was a great start to the Christmas season and we were very proud to have been asked to sing as part of the local Paignton community and to support our friends at Paignton Library.

Thank you to Mrs Burton for creating our Christmas Booklet with all the upcoming events [Letters for Parents - St Michael’s C of E Academy (stmichaels-lap.co.uk)](https://stmichaels-lap.co.uk/parents/letters-for-parents/) . Thank you also to our PTA who are busy planning and preparing for our Christmas Fair. Also a huge thank you to our teachers and children for all their hard work in preparing for their nativity performance, you are in for a treat! If you have any questions about any of the events then please do get in touch.

We are looking forward to decorating our tree with all your wonderful handmade decorations. Thank you to **AFR Roofing** for the kind and generous donation of our Christmas tree.

I wanted to let you know that I am due to have a hip replacement in the coming weeks and if it goes ahead as planned I won’t be in school in the couple of weeks running up to the Christmas holidays and for the 2 weeks when we return in the New Year. In my absence as Head Teacher the brilliant St Michael’s team will, as always, ably run the school on a day-to-day basis. The team will be supported by Mrs Huish, the Head Teacher at Dartington, who you may remember from our hub sports day and is a regular visitor to school  Mrs Huish knows the school, children and staff well and will be on hand to support the team and make regular visits to school along with Mr Grinsill, who is Head at Ilsham in Torquay, and who will be able to offer further support.  I know you will make them feel welcome if you see them in school. We are very lucky that as well as the fantastic staff at St Michael’s we are part of a family of schools that support each other and in turn add capacity to our small school when needed.

My 2 teaching days in Reception and Nursery will be covered by the wonderful Mrs Bidmead who is an experienced Early Years teacher, and who already knows the children and routines well, giving consistency to the children.  Miss Grant will continue to teach 3 days. We will have an additional member of staff to support the whole school on the days Mrs Bidmead is teaching in Reception and Nursery.

Lastly I would like to wish you all a wonderful Christmas break and look forward to seeing you in the New Year.

Kind regards

Mrs Edwards

Head of Academy