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Dear Readers,

It gives me great pleasure to be able to restart my monthly contributions to our local parish magazine and I would like to extend the same warm welcome offered to parents a few weeks ago to you – the readers in our parish. As always, it has been a genuine pleasure to see children returning to both our schools so positively, and dressed so smartly, with such a spring in their step. The beginning of the new academic year is always especially special as we welcome our new families with children who have just begun their educational journey with us in reception. To see such young children looking so smart in their uniforms and engaging with the beginning of their school lives is such a privilege; one that is not lost on those of us lucky enough to be working in schools.

At Burlescombe school, I am delighted to confirm that swimming started on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> September and will continue for a total of 12 sessions finishing on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> December. Whilst swimming in KS1 is not mandatory, we believe that it is an important life skill and with both schools situated close to a canal, I am very pleased that we can extend this important enrichment activity to children. Thank you to the Burlescombe PTFA, who have kindly offered to pay for the cost of the coach to transport children to and from Tiverton swimming pool. Swimming at Webber's school will commence in the spring term for half the school and continue in the summer term for the other half.

This is a good opportunity for me to make clear the excellent, and much needed, valuable work of the PTFAs at both schools. The money they donate to the school (funded by parents' engagement with their events throughout the year, to which you, as members of our community, are all invited) enriches the education of children at both our schools, and in the current educational funding environment, it is much needed. If you would like to join either schools' PTFA (which stands for Parents, Teachers & Friends Association, so you do not need to be a parent of a child at school), and contribute to shaping and organising the events they hold throughout the year, I know that you would receive a very warm welcome. Please contact either school office if this would be of interest to you.

After school clubs to enrich the educational experience of children have also begun at both schools with both sporting clubs, led by qualified sports coaches, and teacher-led clubs too. Teachers choose to run these clubs to enrich children's experience at school, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for willingly giving their time to do so.

I am pleased to confirm that we have appointed a new **Social Inclusion Officer** to replace Jen Marshall, who started the role last year. This represents Alumnis' continued commitment to the support of teachers, children and families in our communities, and we are very lucky to be in receipt of her services.

I am very pleased to announce that both schools now have representation on social media. Webber's and Burlescombe now have Facebook pages, on which you will find (in time) pictures of children engaged in their learning, comments from staff and photos of developments in school. Please do check them out and help us spread the word of all the good work going on in our schools.

I have some exciting news to share about Burlescombe school. Staff worked very hard over the summer holiday to create our new, discrete **library**. This is an area which will be used to work with small groups of children and also gives children a relaxing, comfortable space to choose and read books. Have a look on Burlescombe's new Facebook page to see what it looks like. I would like to thank the staff at Burlescombe school for working so hard to create this wonderful new space.

Finally, I would like to make you aware of an exciting opportunity that has arisen at Webber's school. We currently have a vacancy for a teaching assistant to work in Key Stage 2 supporting the learning of children under the direction of the class teacher. This position is 0.6 (mornings only) and is a 12-month fixed term contract in the first instance. If you would like any further information, please do contact me at [r.roffey@alumnismat.org](mailto:r.roffey@alumnismat.org).

I look forward to continuing the tale of our two, local primary schools in the next edition of the parish magazine, and until then...

Take care and Climb to your Highest.

R. Roffey