



Dear Parents / Carers,

There seems to have been some confusion recently over the use of, and reasons for, our water bottles in school. It appears that some parents may mis understand the water in school arrangements, so it is important that it is clarified for those who perhaps were not at St Anne's when the initiative was launched and maybe are not aware of our commitment to the children's health and well being in connection with our Healthy School & Food Policy.

The reasons for the water bottles

The medical profession has been telling us for many years that children do not drink enough water during the school day - and that the resulting dehydration contributes to a number of short and long-term health problems.

The links between water, dehydration, health and learning

How does drinking water link to health?

- Drinking adequate amounts of water regularly throughout the day can protect health and contribute to well-being.
- Drinking adequate amounts of water can help prevent a range of short and long-term health problems from headaches, bladder, kidney and bowel problems to cancer.
- Water has none of the health problems associated with drinks containing sugar, additives, sweeteners, acids or caffeine.
- To help keep teeth healthy, as well as brushing teeth regularly and visiting the dentist, we should cut down on added sugars. These are the sugars found in fizzy drinks, juice drinks, sweets, cakes and jam. It's best to stick to having these kinds of foods and drinks at mealtimes.

It's also important to avoid sipping sugary drinks or sucking sweets too often. This is because the longer the sugar touches your teeth, the more damage it can do.

How does drinking water improve learning?

- The key to boosting the capacity to learn is to keep well hydrated throughout the day.
- When we are thirsty, mental performance deteriorates by 10%
- Pupils concentrate better because they are not distracted by the effects of dehydration such as thirst, tiredness and irritability
- Can aid behaviour management by helping to settle pupils in the classroom.
- Children will achieve more when both their health and learning needs are met. Ensuring free access to water and promoting a regular water intake throughout the school day is a vital role for schools in promoting health and providing a healthy learning environment.
- On introducing water into school, we took a decision that we would have an agreed school water bottle and that it was clear plastic, to support staff in monitoring fluid intake.
- **ONLY WATER IS ALLOWED IN SCHOOL WATER BOTTLES**
- **ONLY WATER IS FREELY AVAILABLE ALL DAY**
- Other drinks, if required, may be consumed at break times and lunchtimes and should be sent into school in a container other than our school water bottle. This should not be confused with denying a child a drink, but managing the practicalities of, and supporting, the healthy school policy.

Water bottles are available from the school office and order forms are sited in the parent pockets.

Thank you in advance for your continued support and co-operation in this matter. Our only concern is for your child's health and well being.

