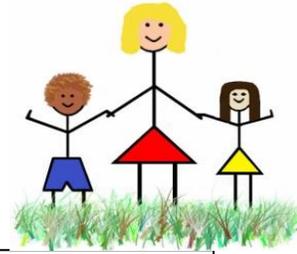




ST MARY'S CATHOLIC NURSERY, INFANT & JUNIOR SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2016



Sunday 28th February - 4th Sunday in Lent



This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Designated safeguarding officer in the Nursery & Infants' School is Mrs M Quinn and in the Junior School is Mrs. G Owens, Deputy Safeguarding Officer for both schools is Mrs Hulme and the Governor Safeguarding Officer is Mr. A. Scully. The schools have safeguarding & protection policies which can be viewed at the school office.

Although the sharing of photographs with family and friends is a great thing to do, please be reminded of the schools safeguarding procedures and refrain from taking pictures at school events. Thank you for your support regarding this as we all need to work together to look after our pupils.

Dear Parents/ Carers

Welcome back after the half term break to cold mornings and brighter days. This is a really quick term with less than 4 weeks to go.

Welcome also to the school joint newsletter. We are trialling this format, together with a joint date list for your convenience. Hopefully this will give you a better overview. If there is a workshop in either school you are very welcome to attend unless it is year group specific.

This year we are in school for the majority of Holy Week which gives greater opportunity to share and show respect and reverence to Jesus, thinking about the final week of his life. We hope to see many of you at the Easter Reflection.

Exciting activities continue to be built into the curriculum both in and out of the school. Thank you to parents for your support in enabling us to do this, both financially and in the supervision.

Thank you for supporting the ongoing workshops held in the schools, feedback from this has been really positive and undoubtedly beneficial to the children.

Following the recruitment evening, we have been successful in employing two new classroom support posts both in the infant and the juniors, Miss Brennan and Mrs Kerlander in Early Years and Mrs Roper and Miss Flannery in Key Stage Two. We will also be starting two new lunchtime supervisors in the infant's school. We also have posts advertised for teaching staff. We say farewell at the end of the term to Mrs Cook who is leaving to take up a different post. We wish her good luck and thank her for the time spent at St Mary's.

Safeguarding Further to our requests prior to Christmas we remind all parents and carers that taking photographs in school is not permitted without prior permission. To ensure this is being observed and to avoid any misunderstanding we ask that smart phones and other devices should not be used within the school grounds. For data protection reasons we also request that lists of children's names from school must not be held on any personal devices. If you do have any such list we ask you to delete these with immediate effect. Thank you for your understanding.

Spiritual, Moral, Social & Cultural Development

Ash Wednesday marked the beginning of the season of Lent and this year, at the Nursery & Infants' we celebrated it in school. Father Paul came in and distributed Ashes and talked to us about Lent being a special time of prayer preceding Holy Week. This Lent, during our journey of reflection, we're asking everyone to think about the impact we have on our world. God's gifts are meant for all to share and our Catholic faith calls us to be good stewards of the planet and to be good neighbours to each other. So how can we help? Perhaps we could deny something we enjoy and send the money to our brothers and sisters overseas. Cut out things that harm the environment or perhaps cut out doing things we enjoy for 5 minutes and pray for the needs of others. This year we are supporting the work of the Catholic Children's Society Lenten Appeal. Collection boxes will be going home and can be returned after the Easter holiday.

'There is so much noise in the world! May we learn to be silent in our hearts and before God,'
Pope Francis.

During Lent we are encouraging everyone to find moments of silence where we can stop and listen to God.

The season of Lent started at the Junior School with Ash Wednesday and we were fortunate to have Bishop Paul with us on this day to lead our whole school liturgy and distribution of ashes. It was a very prayerful and reflective service including periods of silence. In addition, Lectio Divina takes place every Thursday lunchtime throughout Lent.

Health & Safety

We appreciate how difficult it is sometimes to park close to the school but you really must not park in the carparks for the local public houses or across resident's drives please. I have ongoing complaints from neighbours with registration plates identified and if people don't respect this plea then we may have no alternative other than to publish car details.

Thank you for your continued support in this matter.

Uniform

Please be reminded that all school wear needs to conform to school uniform colours and this includes coats, hats, scarves and gloves. Boots are not classed as appropriate school footwear. However boots and wellingtons can be worn for the journey and then changed on arrival in school. We will shortly be sending a reminder of the correct uniform to be worn at both schools following the Easter break, hopefully this will help you in good time for your shopping spree. Thank you to those families who always comply with school colours as requested.

Stitch Design will be increasing prices slightly from April for the school uniform items. If you would like to purchase any new items, it may be advisable to do so before April!

School Office

Please be reminded that only prescribed medicines can be given in school by school staff (if prescribed four times a day). All other medicine will need to be administered by a parent or nominated person. For those with asthma, we have been advised that all children should have a small spacer in school and your child should know how to use the inhaler and spacer. This should be in a sealed clear plastic bag with your child's name on and you are responsible for taking this home half termly to clean.

The junior school website is currently under development. Please be aware that not all items will be up to date and we will let you know when it is. Thank you.

School dinners - We have had several queries from parents regarding school dinners at the Junior School. We are currently looking into various issues raised and will report back as soon as we have completed our investigations.

Active Kids Vouchers

Please remember to send in your Active Kids Vouchers from Sainsbury's as these are used to purchase equipment in each school.

Expansion

The end of this term will see the phase two works coming to an end with the addition of a new internal PE store too at the junior school. The conversion of the new entrance office at the front of the school will start a few weeks into next term.

Internet Safety

Thank you to all parents and staff who attended the E-Safety talk on Thursday 4th February. Steve Welding E-Safety advisor to the London Borough of Sutton gave very useful tips and hints for parents on how to best protect your child on-line. If you happen to miss this event don't panic another E-Safety event will be held in the summer term at the Infant school.

Useful websites include -

www.thinkuknow.co.uk - The Child Exploitation and Online Protection (CEOP) Centre has set up its own website which has been designed and written specifically for children, young people, teachers, parents and carers.

www.kidsmart.org.uk/ - Kidsmart is an award winning internet safety website for parents and those working with children. It has been developed by the children's internet charity Childnet International and has excellent information on many of the technologies used by children, with guidance on how to 'stay safe' online.

www.saferinternet.org.uk - Here you will find e-safety tips, advice and resources to help children and young people stay safe on the internet.

Governors

The next full Governing body meeting is on Tuesday 22nd March. Notification of meetings to discuss forming a hard federation will be sent out to parents soon.

NURSERY & INFANTS' SCHOOL

News from Nursery

To celebrate world book day we have been reading the story of the *Gingerbread Man* and learning about different types of books. We visited our school library to look at the different types of Fiction and Non-fiction books. We made a list of things we needed to make a library role play area in the Nursery. The children have practised reciting the *Gingerbread man* story and the repetitive refrains e.g Run, run as fast as you can you can't catch me I'm the *Gingerbread man*. The children designed their own gingerbread men in the writing area and they also made *Gingerbread men* out of Ginger play dough in the tactile area. On Tuesday Miss Penston, Miss Brookman and Mrs Conway dressed up as the characters from the *Gingerbread man* story and we all helped to tell the story together with actions. We look forward to wearing our pyjamas and bringing in our favourite bedtime story to share with each other on Friday.



News from Reception

Last term Reception enjoyed learning about the topic "Which was the biggest dinosaur?" The children were fascinated with the dinosaur eggs. They made daily observations of any changes and took care of the baby dinosaurs. We had fun using different size boxes to make our own dinosaur models, then we used mud-rock to make our models stronger and finally we painted them. We also used non-fiction books to read new facts about dinosaurs and used our phonics knowledge to label and write facts about them. In Maths we learned how to subtract two single digit numbers compared the length and height of different objects and sequenced familiar events. The big WOW of the term was making their dinosaur masks and going on maths number hunt. The children were really proud of their masks, concentrated on their design and spoke about the characteristics they would have if they were dinosaurs.

News from Year 1

Last half term our topic was about "Splendid Skies" the children looked at the different types of weather experienced around the world. The children looked at poems linked to different weather and have focused on using adjectives in their writing. In Maths we carried on looking at adding numbers to make 5, 8, 9 and 10 including finding missing numbers in number sentences that they are beginning to use inverse operations to solve. We continued to investigate 2D and 3D shapes, looking at their properties and using the vocabulary to describe them to their partners. The children are looking forward to beginning their new topic "Moon Zoom" especially as they have a planned visit from an astronaut.

News from Year 2

Last half term our topic was "Beat Band Boogie". The children found out about what an orchestra was, listened to stories connected to music and wrote reports on music, concerts and dance. In science they experimented with sound and how it changes. They made musical instruments in D & T and in Art created movement canvasses. The topic ended with a talent show, showcasing our musical talents to parents and the rest of the school, which was a huge success.

Nursery & Infant Curriculum

English: Friday 4 March is World Book Day! Letters have already gone home regarding costumes. Do please remember that children will still be outside at playtime and lunchtime, so will therefore need their school coats and shoes to keep them safe and warm. Activities will be taking place in different classrooms during the day, and we are lucky enough to have some pupils from St Philomena's coming into school to read to the children stories that they have written themselves! Reception will be holding their Cinderella Ball on World Book Day as well, so it will be exciting to see all the fairy tale characters enjoying themselves at the ball!

Handwriting and Early Reading Workshop: Thank you to all the parents who attended this workshop - it was fantastic to see so many people there. We do hope you found the information useful and that you have been able to access everything that we have put on the MLE. If you have problems accessing the MLE, please contact the school office.

SMIF

Thank you to SMIF for funding the new equipment in Year 1 outdoor area, this will provide activities to promote creativity and curiosity, qualities that are essential in the formative years.

JUNIOR SCHOOL

News from Year 3

Year 3 have been plagued by a stone giant! He has been in the classrooms, making an awful mess and up to no good. Thankfully, Year 3 have been able to come up with some excellent instructions to prevent further visits from this terrible pest.

We hope you enjoyed the sculptures that the children made at the end of the half term; they managed to put their skills to good use whilst making clay pots in history.

We are looking forward to designing and creating our party sandwiches in DT as well as celebrating World Book Day.

News from Year 4

A huge welcome to Mrs. Roper, who is a new addition to the year 4 team at St. Mary's, she will be supporting across the year group.

February started with Tudor day, all the children enjoyed the activities, which included making Tudor love knots for their loved ones, pomanders to ward off foul smells from the damp streets of Tudor London and impress visitors with their 'Who am I?' Tudor portraits. Thank you to year 4 parents who helped with these craft based activities and who gave up so much of their time throughout the day.

To end our science topic on nutrition and skeletons, year 4 undertook different activities in order to investigate how our body reacts when our muscles work hard. Why not ask your child to measure your pulse; they should be very good at it now!

News from Year 5

We hope you all had a lovely half term!. We are beginning to plan our Easter Reflection, which we would love to invite Parents to attend as part of their prayer journey during Holy Week. It will be taking place on Wednesday 23rd March, with further information to follow. In Literacy we have been looking at persuasive writing. As part of lessons we worked in groups to think of a topic to debate about using persuasive sentence starters! Then each group performed the debate, with the rest of the class as the lovely audience. We would like to thank all our parents who kindly volunteer to help walk us to swimming there and back. The children always enjoy swimming on a Friday as part of their PE curriculum. We will be going on a trip to Bough Beech next term as part of our Geography topic. We would love parents to come on our trip to Bough Beech if you are able to help please email the school office. Further information about the trip will soon follow!

News from Year 6

As always, Year 6 has been constantly busy with preparations for the end of their primary school days. This has involved a lot of intense hard work and the students are constantly looking at ways to improve their work, and reflecting on how they will achieve this after their PAR interviews.

After some fantastic persuasive writing to the Prime Minister, the students will be examining the life of Walter Tull, and using their research in a variety of writing genres to really show off their fantastic writing skills.

In history, we continue to examine the life of children in Victorian times and have even been using this knowledge to help write our own songs for a Victorian marketplace (lyrics AND music!!).

With Mr. O'Sullivan still enjoying the Australian sunshine far too much, we are happy to introduce Ms. Flannery to assist us all in the Year 6 classrooms. Having been an ex-St Mary's pupil herself she has been a welcome addition and source of advice for how enjoyable the rest of the year can be! Welcome aboard Ms. Flannery!

Junior Curriculum

For this month we are recommending www.crickweb.co.uk which is a collection of apps and games that are arranged into age and curriculum areas - our favourite math's game is 'ball juggling'.

Thank you for attending our English evening, if you didn't get a chance to see our notice board we have a few helpful apps to recommend.

First up is an app we use at school called 'handwriting abc'. It clearly shows children how to form letters and builds up a systematic approach to cursive handwriting. The second is 'spellfix' an Allan Peat app that challenges children with spelling games.

Remember Friday 4th March is World Book Day! We cannot wait to see the children dressed up as book characters from their favourite books. There are some fantastic ideas for costumes on the World book aid site. This can be found at: <http://www.bookaid.org/get-involved/world-book-day/world-book-day-dress-up/>. Don't forget we are awarding prizes for the most original costume/most unusual book choice!

Friends of St Mary's

The children's disco has been booked for Friday 11th March. Thank you for your contributions following your spring clean, we are making a great collection of stock ready for future sales.

Travel Plan

JTA's (Junior Travel Advisors) continue to work hard to make travel to school a healthy, safe and enjoyable experience every day. They will be sending a questionnaire for each family to complete during March. The questionnaire can be accessed on Google Drive via each pupil's Google login. The questionnaire will be there during Holy week.

Please note that it is a **FAMILY questionnaire** and should have input from both parents and children. The data collected will help JTA's make decisions about the provision that needs to be made to facilitate different methods of travel to school. In addition, the data will help the aims of the school travel plan over the next year.

Thank you for your support.



As Martin Luther King famously said, 'before you finish eating breakfast in the morning, you've depended on more than half the world'. Despite our dependence on farmers and workers for the foods, drinks and products that we love, about 795 million people are undernourished globally.

Fairtrade fortnight runs from 29th February until 13th March 2016. Article 24 of the convention, reminds us that we are all entitled to nutritious food and a healthy environment. It states that richer countries must help poorer countries to achieve this. Fairtrade fortnight is your chance to make this article a reality. Take a look at the web site to find out how you can help. <http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/get-involved/current-campaigns/fairtrade-fortnight-2016>

What will you do to make a difference?