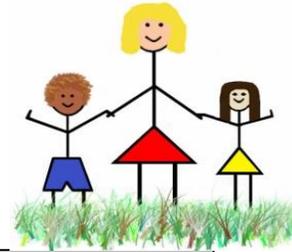




ST MARY'S CATHOLIC NURSERY, INFANT & JUNIOR SCHOOLS NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 2016



Sunday 9th October - 28th Sunday in Ordinary Time



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 Parent/ Carers

Welcome back after the summer break, how good it's been to say that in person to many of parents in school at meetings already.

All pupils have made a brilliant start to the year. We have welcomed some new staff Mrs Kwasniewska and Miss Hamlin in the nursery and infant school and Miss Atkinson and Miss El-Shoura at the junior school as well as newly employed Mrs Dowsett as midday supervisor.

We held our usual feast day events including Mass celebrated by Bishop Paul. Bishop Paul also blessed the new buildings at the junior school.

To mark the start of St Mary's Catholic Federation, the children were treated to live animal shows. These went down with great glee and excitement.

Thank you to parents who have attended the information evenings at the start of the term, it is important that we continue to share knowledge and build successful relationships. We were extremely pleased to have a good turn out for the E safety meeting held last week. It never seems to surprise us that so many scams and internet tricks are out there. We need to work together to keep our children safe. This can be taught and addressed in school but we also need parents to set the best of examples out of school when using social media and other technology. Please be selective when posting items on facebook etc.

Please be reminded that the use of phones and cameras are not allowed on school grounds and that includes taking pictures of lists, photos and posters around school. It has been reported that class reps have posted these items on social media . Please remind each other if this happens again. Thank you.

A very warm welcome goes to Mrs Mc Guinness and Mr Parsons who have joined the Governing Body as parent representatives. This term's governing body meetings start on 4th October with the sitting of a new " Inclusion Committee".

Good luck and best wishes to all our families for a successful new school year.

Safeguarding Further to our previous requests 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 **Nursery & Infant School**

Thank you for your continued support at our Thursday morning liturgies. You are very welcome to any of our services whether your child's class is leading the liturgy or not. We would also remind you to read and share the Wednesday Word with your child. This is a valuable resource to use at home and at Mass with your whole family. Year 2 were invited to the celebration of Mass at the Junior School on our Feast Day.

Junior School

As usual, we started the school year with a lovely Feast Day Mass, celebrated by Bishop Paul followed by a family picnic in the school grounds. During the Mass the new Y6 Chaplaincy Team were commissioned into their roles and presented with chaplaincy badges. The team are full of ideas and are looking forward to help with leading our Rosary prayer session which will take place each Thursday lunchtime next month.

Health & Safety

Please be reminded that, the roadways within the school grounds are still used by cars and can be a potential risk to your child. Please remember that dogs are not permitted in the school grounds at any time.

Uniform

Please be reminded that all school wear needs to conform to school uniform colours and this includes coats, summer hats and all other accessories. Hairstyles also need to conform to school policy. Thank you to those families who always comply with school uniform as requested.

Governors

Thank you to all parents who have returned the gift aid forms. This makes a big difference as we are able to claim £7.05 for every £25 donated. Please remember to send these in if you have not done so. All payments for Governors fund can be made on Parentpay at www.parentpay.com

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.

Please remember that any absence from school must be reported to the school office on the morning by telephone (**not by email**) followed up in writing. Also, please advise the school office if someone other than your normal contacts is going to collect your child by phoning before 2pm. If later than this we can not guarantee getting the message to your child when calling late in the school day.

Active Kids Vouchers & Woodcote Vouchers Please remember to send in your vouchers as these are used to purchase equipment in each school.

Parentpay

Please be advised that there is a useful help page for any issues you may encounter with your Parentpay account. Please refer to the help pages on this link before calling the school office.

<https://www.parentpay.com/parents/using-parentpay/faqs#paypoint>

School Dinners

Please remember to keep up to date with payments on Parentpay ensuring you pay enough money on to your child's account in advance. If you receive an email reminder from the school please ensure you act promptly should a debt have incurred.

Internet Safety

Thank you to all those parents who attended the E-Safety meeting on Monday evening. We will be organising another similar event at the Junior School in the Spring term.

Please find information as suggested by the Parent Forum at the recent meeting. 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.

NURSERY & INFANTS' SCHOOL

News from Nursery

During the past two weeks the children have started their time in our Nursery. They have settled fantastically making new friends and enjoying their new setting.

Reception

The children have settled beautifully into Reception. They are enjoying their time trying new activities and making new friends. Last week marked the beginning of our topic 'How many colours in a rainbow?' We had a messy colour day, it was great fun the children made handprint and footprints and we even went on a colour hunt! During the coming weeks we will continue to take part in exciting activities that link to our topic.

News from Year 1

Our topic this term is all about 'The Enchanted Woodland'. The children had a fantastic time dressing up as their favourite fairy tale character for our fairy tale dress up day. The children have enjoyed reading various fairy tales which they have retold in their writing and role played. In Science, the children have been researching and identifying different types of common plants and trees. Alongside this they have also examined the different types of leaves and trees found in our school grounds.

News from Year 2

Welcome all children back to school. They have settled into their new classes and rising to the challenge of the work ahead. Our topic of "Muck, Mess and Mixtures" started with a messy day where the children enjoyed a variety of activities designed to make a mess. We also celebrated Mass with the juniors for the Feast of the Nativity of our Blessed Virgin Mary on the 8th September.

Book Look



27.9.16

Dear Parents and Carers,

At the beginning of another school year we would like to inform you that following positive parent feedback we are again inviting you to 'Book Look' each week.

'Welcome' to those who are new to our school. At Saint Mary's we offer all parents and carers the opportunity each Friday, at collection time, the chance to pop into your child's classroom for a few minutes to take a look at one of their books.

Each day the children have fun playing and working hard; they are very proud of their achievements in class and 'Book Look' gives them the chance to share this with you.

We are aware that throughout the country children are regularly asked by parents, "What did you do in school today?" and that often the reply is, "Nothing"! Our aim is to make learning memorable through engaging topics and lessons. We all know the importance of conversation and how talking about our experiences helps us to consolidate our knowledge. 'Book Look' is an invitation for you to have a few special minutes with your child in their learning environment so they can explain to you an aspect of that weeks' learning with one of their books as a prompt for this conversation.

The book displayed on your child's desk will be on a rotation of different curriculum subject areas each week from: **Maths**, **English**, **R.E.** and **Topic**. In addition, as a new initiative this year we will add **Reading** by giving you the opportunity to share your child's scheme book within the school environment. We have lots of outside areas in addition to the classrooms which you may wish to take advantage of at these times.

'Book Look' is not a time for teachers to talk with parents about individual issues but of course it is important that parents do talk to us should issues arise. If this is the case then please do contact your child's teacher (either directly or via the school office) and they will be happy to arrange an alternative time to meet with you.

Mrs M Quinn
Executive Deputy Headteacher

JUNIOR SCHOOL

News from Year 3

Year 3 have had a great start to their career at the juniors, working hard on their literacy topic of 'Library'. All of the arrangements for transition last term have allowed a settled progression. On Monday 19th September we visited Westcroft Library. There we learned more about the rules of the library and developed our love of reading with the staff - we even got to go on a book hunt! Looking ahead to the rest of autumn term we are excited to continue learning about the Ancient Egyptians and create our Egyptian inspired cushions - thimbles at the ready! In geography, we have become more familiar with the school environment having created our own map of the classroom and the school grounds. We're sure not to get lost now!

News from Year 4

4 Poplar and 4 Ash have prepared and shared their class assemblies; we look forward to 4 Rowan's in November. The children have enjoyed discovering stories from different cultures and learning about the similarities and differences that families can experience both in the UK and all over the world. Year 4 are looking forward to celebrating their learning about families at the end of the current RE topic. All children are excited about the preparations for our first school Mass - the annual Harvest Mass.

News from Year 5

Year five have been journeying with Lila and Chulak to Mount Merapi, ask us for a plot summary or a description of the fire-fiends grotto and prepare to be amazed! In maths we have been number detectives analysing calculations and deciding which method is best. We are also preparing for our visit to Pizza Express by studying existing pizzas and coming up with our own design brief - Mrs Richardson's favourite is the pepperoni and pineapple idea!

News from Year 6

It has been a steady start for Year 6 this month as we have dived straight into the curriculum. The students are fitting into their new roles as leaders of the school as they prepare to receive their Year 6 Privilege Ties. In Literacy we have been looking at Journeys, in particular the journey of a young boy in the Amazon Rainforest and oddly, the journey a small pebble makes from the beginning of a volcano to ending up in someone's pocket. We have also begun preparing for a trip to Preston Manor to apply for a job as a servant in a Victorian Manor. The students have eagerly written their application letters (although they are not too eager about the meager pay conditions) and are looking forward to a fun day of role play!

Music

Choir club have started with a chorus of singing with over 130 children taking part in choir! A selection of children from Years 5 and 6 will be performing at the St. Elphege's Year of Mercy concert next Thursday 6th October at 7pm till 9pm. The concert involves 8 Catholic schools' in the borough showcasing singing and musical performances.

The choir are working on The Scratch Youth Messiah (in support of WaterAid) on Sunday 27 November 2016, Royal Albert Hall at 2 pm and will be performing with professional soloists and orchestra and be part of the massed choir performing with other schools. Please hand in your form as soon as possible so numbers can be finalised.

Please note there will be **NO CHOIR next Friday 7th October** as it is the school disco.

PE & Sport

Our new PE cupboard has been built, equipment moved in and the teachers have been limbering up in readiness to get their PE lessons and clubs underway. Clubs are starting over the next few weeks, keep your eye out on the new sports board in the hall and listen out for announcements in assembly.

Sports Leaders are meeting this week to get their playground games underway and continue to ensure that the PE equipment is ready to use as and when it's needed. We have some good ideas on how to spend this year's PE funding but I welcome your ideas and input too!

Year 3 are trialling the Daily Mile initiative which we hope to roll out across the school. The idea is to introduce physical activity into the children's day with the minimum of fuss. It takes place outside in the fresh air and will take 15minutes from chair to chair. It is proven that doing this will improve the physical, emotional and social health and wellbeing of our children - regardless of age or personal circumstances. It is a profoundly simple but effective concept and its impact can be transformational- improving not only the children's fitness, but also their concentration levels, mood, behaviour and general wellbeing.

I'll let you know next month how its going! Mrs Birch