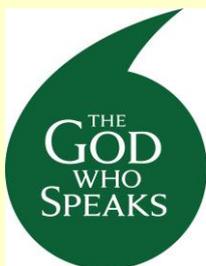


St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Newsletter 14 February 2020

Headteacher: Miss Patricia Pickering



Newsletter

Dear Parents

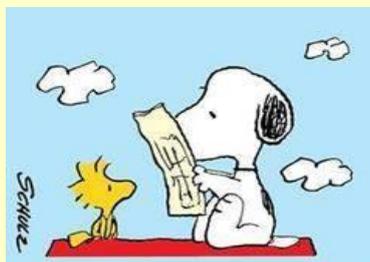
Although short, it has been a very busy half-term with lots going on for staff and pupils.....

Staffing

We welcomed Miss O'Brien to Year 1/2 and Miss Jackson to Year 3. Both teachers have enjoyed these first few weeks at St Mary's.

Book Week -

Read to Me



Mrs Lawrence is organising another fabulous Book Week for after half term (2nd - 6th March). The theme is "Read to Me". The week will be full of fun activities, competitions and inspiration, serving to bring reading to the forefront of the curriculum. Of course, we will all be dressing up on Thursday 5th March, World Book Day. The Travelling Books Fair will be running Thursday and Friday after school. We look forward to your support.

Spring Term Curriculum Showcase

As you are aware we embarked on a newly planned curriculum throughout the school this term and both pupils and teachers are very much enjoying the fruits of their labours.....We would like to share with you the fantastic learning that has been going on, thus, each phase are planning a 'Showcase' to which parents are invited - the dates of which are:

- **EYFS 'Toy Stally' - Fri 13th March at 2:30 pm**
- **KS1 'The Great Fire of London' - Tues 31st March at 9:10 am**
- **LKS2 'Street Party' - Thurs 26th March at 2:00 pm**
- **UKS2 'An Ancient Greek Experience' - Wed 29th March at 2:30 pm**

Do put these dates in your diaries... The children themselves will be providing you with invitations and more details about the events in due course.

Spelling Shed

St Mary's have recently signed up for an online resource called 'Spelling Shed'. It is a fun and interactive way for children to practise their spellings which has had excellent reviews from schools all around the country. Your child should now have their login and we would love to hear how they get on completing their assignments during the half term. They can earn points, medals and honey pots to make their avatar more individualised as well as topping the league in school and nationally. Have fun with some super spelling over the break!

Upcoming Events

- **Thurs 27th Feb, 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th March & 2nd April 8.00am**
Early Morning Mass for Lent
- **Sat 29th Feb**
12pm Confirmandi Retreat
6pm Confirmandi Mass
- **2nd - 6th March**
Book Week
- **7th March 9.00am**
Parents' Session for Confirmation JPll Centre
- **Wed 11th & Thurs 12th March**
Parents' Evenings
- **Sat 14th March 6.00pm**
Confirmation Mass
- **28th March Parents' Session for First Holy Communion JPll Centre**
- **29th March 9.30am Mass**
Reconciliation Enrolment
- **1st - 3rd April**
Y4 Residential Manor Adventure

After School Club

Don't forget about our new After School Club which will commence in St Mary's after Easter. You can register, book and pay online. For more details please look on the website, call or email highflyers@hotmail.co.uk (Telephone: 07766 290242) www.highflyers.org.uk



St Mary's Choir

Our wonderful choir of 50 children from Years 3 to 6 took part in 'Children Singing for Children' at St Edburg's Church on Wednesday evening. This event is organised by the Rotary Club of Oxford Spires to promote a love of music and singing to raise money for the Oxford Children's Hospital Charity. Our Choir performed 'For the Beauty of the Earth' and 'Seek Ye First' brilliantly under Mrs Hall's tutelage.

As many of you have already commented, our children were a credit to St Mary's School. I would like to thank those of you who came to support and enjoy the concert. My sincere gratitude goes to Mrs Hall who has given of her time so generously and with enthusiasm to prepare the children for this performance.



Sporting Update

This term, UKS2 have taken part in both athletics and hockey competitions. Overall the St. Mary's team came 2nd in the athletics and 6th in the hockey. The sports games values were demonstrated well by all our pupils, but children were chosen specifically for being determined and for having self-belief. The recipients of these awards were Naty Dinis, Maximus Timson and Kolunji Roberts. We will be taking part in a netball competition shortly after half term.

In football, we played both girls and boys matches this term. The boys played Langford Village, St Edburg's and Longfields while the girls played Chesterton and Langford Village. Please feel free to come along and support the girls' team when we play our only home game against Eynsham at Brookside School on March 16th!



A reminder that all children in KS1 and KS2 received a log in to Times Tables Rocks Stars at the beginning of the school year and should be accessing it regularly at home to practise their times tables. Times Tables Rocks Stars is an interactive computer program that enables children's confidence and ability in times tables to grow.

To access the tables that your child's teacher has set for them your child will need to play in the "Garage/Gig" or "Arena" section. They can of course enjoy playing the other games too but these games will use up to the 12x12 tables.

To encourage children to use Times Tables Rocks Stars at home we will be awarding certificates to one child from each class in KS1 and KS2 each half term based on their efforts in Times Tables Rocks Stars. The first certificates will be awarded at the end of the Spring Term.

If you have any difficulty logging into Times Tables Rocks Stars please speak to your child's class teacher.

Thank you for your support.

Parents' Evenings

Parents' Evenings have been arranged for Wednesday 11th and Thursday 12th March. As usual, we will be using the eSchools Learning Platform to book appointments.

Letter from the Governing Body

Dear Parents,

At the start of every academic year the Governing Body, along with the Headteacher, prepares the School Improvement Plan, a list of actions that the staff and governors want to take to make the school the very best it can be for pupils, staff and parents!

This year a key objective has been to redesign the school curriculum. The aim is to ensure the curriculum is 'broad and balanced' and that it equips our pupils to have the 'skills and knowledge' to succeed as they progress to their secondary schools of choice. Recent changes in the OFSTED inspection framework, which will have a much stronger focus on schools delivering a high-quality curriculum, have been a factor in this work.

St Mary's staff have been hard at work developing and implementing this new curriculum, with new topics being delivered from the start of this year. As Governors we have been impressed with the quality of this work and we are confident that the pupils will both benefit from, and enjoy, this new curriculum as it is rolled out.

Staff and pupils are planning a series of events where parents will be invited into school to see examples of the new curriculum and to find out more. These are scheduled for March and we very much hope you are able to participate.

With very best wishes,
Your Governing Body

Sacramental Preparation

Our Year 6 children will take part in a retreat day with Parish Catechists on 29th February and will be Confirmed by Bishop William Kenney on Saturday, 14th March at 6.00pm.

Children in Year 3 have begun their preparation to receive the Eucharist for the first time on 3rd May and 17th May.

Pupils in Year 2 will be prepared for the Sacrament of Reconciliation ready to make their first Confession on Wednesday, 17th June at 6.30pm. There is a meeting for parents of Year 2 children on Tuesday, 24th March at 7.00pm in the John Paul II Centre and an Enrolment Mass on Sunday, 29th March.

I ask you to keep all those children preparing for the Sacraments in your prayers over the coming months.

Coronavirus

Just as a matter of information for you, the Director of Public Health has emailed schools regarding the ongoing Coronavirus situation. It is recommended that the best source of up to date and reliable information on the ongoing situation and advice is the gov.uk website which is updated daily at 2pm.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/wuhan-novel-coronavirus-information-for-the-public>

Advice is there is no need to make any changes to your normal day to day activity and living. You can also help yourself by taking the usual precautionary measures that would help slow the spread of almost any germs, including Coronavirus:

- Always carry tissues to catch your cough or sneeze
- Bin used tissues as quickly as possible
- Wash your hands often with warm water and soap

Father Hudson's Care

As always, during the season of Lent, after half-term we will send home with the children the Good Shepherd Appeal boxes from Father Hudson's Care for them to put their spare change in. This, I hope, will remind them that Lent is a time of prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Father Hudson's Care is the Social Care Agency of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Birmingham and it offers help to those in need - children, families, adults. Please give generously to this worthy cause and we look forward to receiving your filled boxes after Easter.

Lenten Masses

The Holy Season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, 26th February. There will be a whole school Mass in The Immaculate Conception on that day at 9.30am. I hope you will make every effort to attend this Mass to receive ashes.

During Lent, Canon John and Fr Rob will be celebrating early morning Mass once a week in school for parents and children. This is an opportunity for those of you who lead busy working lives to have time for reflection and receive the Eucharist. Over six weeks, the Masses will be on Thursdays - 27th February, 5th, 12th, 19th, & 26th March and 2nd April at 8am. We will be serving breakfast after Mass (before school) with donations going to the Batthula Care Trust (www.bcaretrust.com).

I hope that many of you will be able to join us for early morning Mass and, of course, share breakfast with us.

Finally, I wish you all an enjoyable and restful week with your families and look forward to seeing you on Monday, 24th February.



P M Pickering
Headteacher