



Archdiocese of Birmingham

# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher: Mrs L. J. Yorke M.Ed.



St. Mary's mission: To love God above all things by: learning together, loving ourselves, loving each other, loving all people, loving life itself and constantly striving for excellence worthy of our God-given gifts.

## February is dedicated to the Holy Family

Our theme for the Spring term is: 'Options for the Poor and Vulnerable'

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Compassionate and Loving'



2nd February 2024

Dear parents and carers,

We have been reflecting this week on the presentation of Jesus in the Temple. We are reminded of the importance of being open and to present ourselves before God. The children have led some lovely prayer in school this week about this.

Our week concluded with the children dressing up in digits for our NSPCC number day and thank you to all those who donated to the charity. Next week, we focus on Online Safety and children's mental health. Please find details within this newsletter for how to support us and take part. We have our tea and talk on Tuesday 6th February at 2pm, for parents to join with staff for a 'natter' and hot beverages. This is a great time to also raise any issues you may have with SLT in an informal and supportive way. We look forward to continuing to work with parents to ensure that all our children are happy, safe and thriving. We break up next Friday 9th February at normal time for the half-term holiday and the children return on Tuesday 20th February. I will send next half-term's dates in next week's newsletter. Thank you for the birthday wishes too.

Have a lovely weekend,

Mrs Yorke

### *This week's Gospel and Prayer*

Mark 1:21-28

*"And His teaching made a deep impression on them because, unlike the scribes, He taught them with authority."*

Jesus,

We want you to leave your mark on us.

Open our hearts so that your words leave a deep impression.

Please help us to listen so that your words and actions influence us.

Help us to spread your message of love to everyone we meet today.

Amen

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- Jesus' teaching makes a deep impression on people because it shows us a new way to live.
- Listening carefully and following Jesus helps us to grow more like Him.
- We can show that Jesus influences us through our words and actions.

### Catholic Life in School

#### Reception Mass - 31.1.24 - Presentation of Our Lord



Reception along with their Y6 Buddies led a beautiful Mass in celebration of the Presentation of Jesus at the Temple.



#### Y4 Mass - St Josephine of Bakhita

Our next Mass will be in the **School Hall** on Wednesday 7th February 2024, starting promptly at 9:15am. Year 4 children will be leading our Mass and parents are welcome to attend.

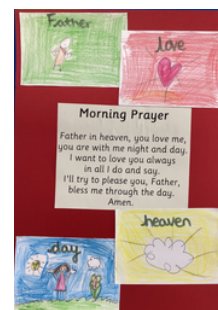
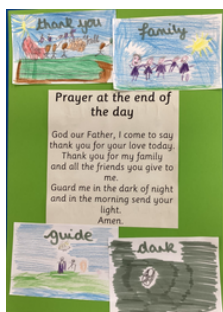
Reception news: -

In Maths this week, Reception used cubes to build different numerals and represented the number '8' in lots of different ways!



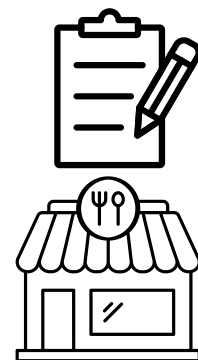
Year 1 news: -

Year 1 made their own prayer book, in RE this week. The children picked out words from the prayers and drew a picture to represent it!



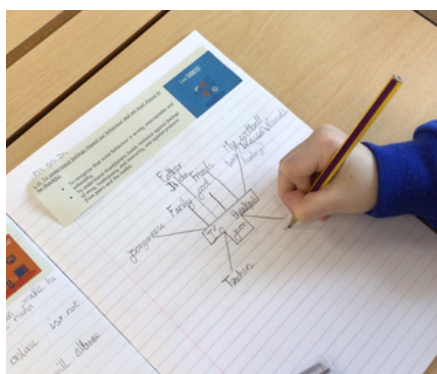
Year 2 news: -

Year 2 undertook Geography fieldwork this week and explored the different kind of restaurants on Harborne High Street.



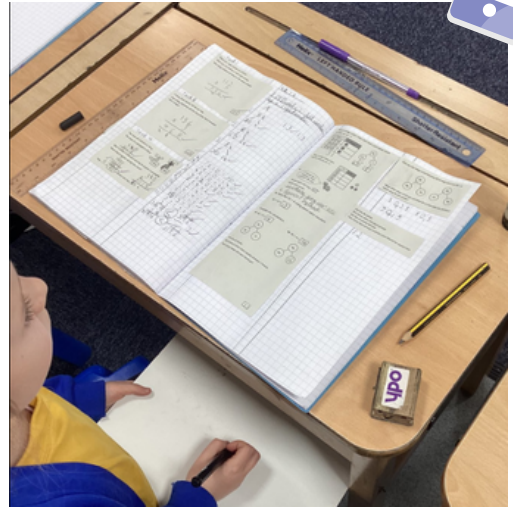
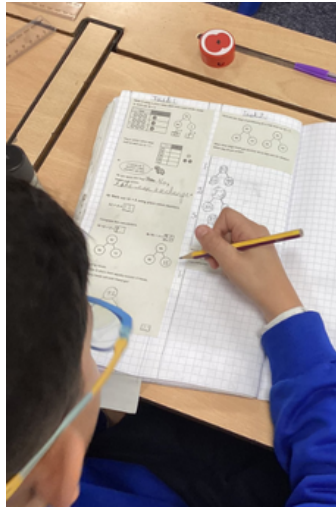
Year 3 news: -

In RSE this week, Year 3 reflected upon about what they are thankful for.



Year 4 news: -

In Maths, Year 4 have been dividing 2 digit by 1 digit numbers.



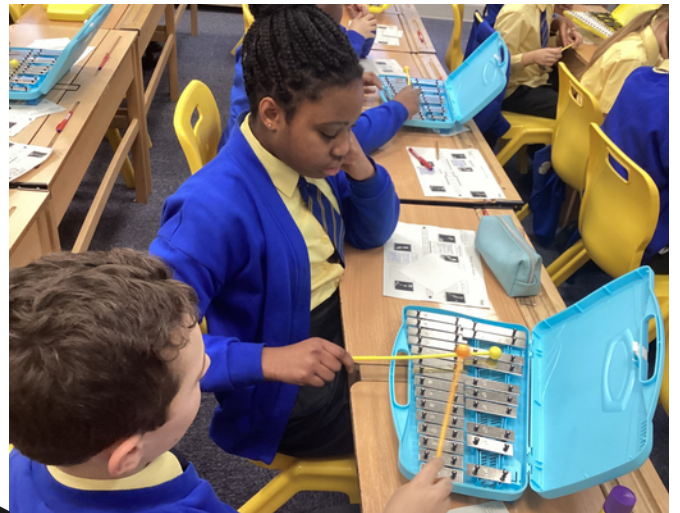
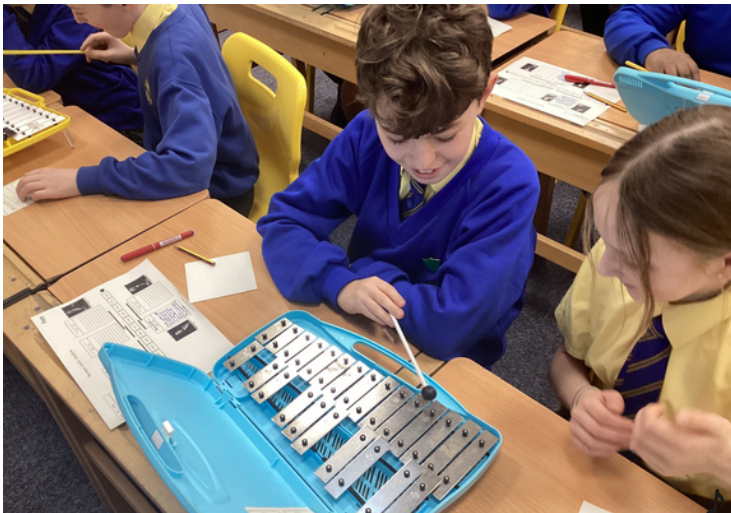
Year 5 news: -

This week, Year 5 learnt about online safety in Computing and how the British Value of Mutual Respect, is just as important online as it is in real life.



Year 6 news: -

Year 6 studied Baroque composers and composed their own melodies in Music this week.





# Number Day 2024



The whole school celebrated NSPCC Number Day on Friday 2nd February. Everyone had fun on this mega maths day while raising money at the same time!



## A Special School Celebration ...



# HAPPY BIRTHDAY

The whole school came together on Friday to wish Mrs Yorke a happy birthday. Mrs Yorke was presented with cards, presents, flowers and a cake to celebrate her very special day! Happy Birthday Mrs Yorke!





We are thrilled to announce that St Mary's are about to embark upon an 18-month whole school improvement programme called **OPAL** (Outdoor Play and Learning) to improve opportunities for physical activity, socialisation, cooperation, coordination, resilience, creativity, imagination and enjoyment through improved play. The programme is being rolled out after half term.

The award-winning OPAL Primary Programme is the result of over 20 years of testing and development in over 800 schools and has been used all over the world.

OPAL is based on the idea that, as well as learning through good teaching, your children also learn when they play. As 20% of their time in school is playtime, we want to make sure that this amount of time (equivalent to 1.4 years of primary school) is as good as possible.

One reason why we are implementing this programme is that childhood has changed, and many children no longer get their play needs met out of school. For example:



- The average screen time per day for children is six hours;
- The average outdoor play time per week for children is five hours; and
- The percentage of UK children who only play outdoors with other children at school is 56%.



There are many proven benefits for schools that carry out the OPAL Primary Programme. They usually include: more enjoyment of school, less teaching time lost to disputes between children, fewer accidents and greatly improved behaviour.

Play is not messing about. It is how children learn all of the things that cannot be taught, while also having fun. As we develop our play opportunities for your children, you may find the school is asking you for resources and below is a list of resources that we currently seeking. We will also be making changes about how the children use the school grounds. They may use more of the grounds, for more of the year. Your children may get a bit messier, be exposed to more challenges and have greater freedoms to play where, with whom and how they like. The experiences the school is fostering are essential for children's physical and mental wellbeing and are in line with all current good practice advice on health and safety, wellbeing and development.

If you would like to learn more about the OPAL Primary Programme, please look at the OPAL website ([www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk](http://www.outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk)), where you will find lots of useful information and videos about OPAL.

The school is funding this amazing programme and we are also being generously supported by the PTA. We would also be grateful for your help with donations of play resources.

**We will be collecting donations of the items below in the W/C 5th February 2024.**

Old pots and pans (no lids)		Plastic or wooden kitchen utensils (no knives or sharp utensils)	
Small world toys e.g.: cars, people, planes, trains, animals etc		Old clothes - children's dress up or adult day clothes e.g.: hats, shirts, skirts, scarves	
Haberdashery e.g.: fabric scraps, ribbons etc		A table will be set up outside of school at drop off/pick up next week to collect donations of <b>these items only</b> .	



**Keep an eye on X (formerly Twitter) and this Newsletter for OPAL updates!**

## Reading Update!

Work is well underway on the School Library and we are hoping that we will be able to unveil it very soon. We are very grateful to the PTA who have generously purchased new furnishings and equipment to make the space more comfortable. The PTA are also funding a very special surprise for the School Library which we will be keeping 'under wraps' for a little longer but we can't wait to share it with you soon!

Watch this space for more updates!

THANK YOU

**World Book Day is Coming - Thursday 7th March!**

It's not long now until the biggest event in the reading calendar: World Book Day! We have an exciting day planned and we will be letting you know our plans when we return after the half term. In the meanwhile, why not find your reading superpower?



Listen to books being read aloud

Take books home to read



Choose the books YOU want to read

Find your reading superpower



Ask for ideas on what to read next



Have fun reading!



Make time to read



A very well done to our latest Blue Peter Book Badge holders!



## Extra Curricular Activities

Well done to Olivia in SF for her performance in the Chris Smith Cup with Harborne District FC



**APPS AND THEIR AGE RATINGS**



**Safer Internet Day - 6.2.24**

Tuesday 6th February is Safer Internet Day. Children in school will learn about online safety and how the Internet can be used safely to make changes for the better. We would be delighted if you could join us in celebrating the day by continuing the conversation at home. To help you with this, for the UK Safer Internet Centre have created some free activities and information for parents and carers which are available at: [saferinternet.org.uk/SID-parents](https://saferinternet.org.uk/SID-parents).



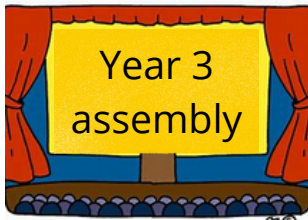
**Tea and Talk - 6.2.24 at 2pm**

Our next Tea and Talk for parents is a combined event with Safer Internet Day. As well as the opportunity to talk to other parents, there will an opportunity to find out important information about how you and your family can stay safe online.



**Pet Shower - 7.2.24**

Year 3 have planned a 'Pet Shower' for the entire school to take part in, in order to support 'Pet Search Rescue West Midlands' - children can dress as their favourite animal or wear any clothes with an animal print on this day. We are asking for donations for the sanctuary i.e. pet food, puppy pads, cat litter, sawdust, blankets...



**Year 3 Whole Year Group Prayer Assembly - 9.2.24**

Year 3 parents - please join us for Year 3 assembly on Friday 9th February. The doors will open at 9:10am for a prompt start at 9:15am. The children look forward to seeing you.



**INSET DAY - 19.2.24**

School will be closed to all children on Monday 19th February for a teacher training day. We look forward to welcoming the children back for the start of the new half term on Tuesday 20th February.



**Thinking Day - 22.2.24**

On 'World Thinking Day' any Girl Guides, Rangers, Brownies and Rainbows can come to school wearing their Girlguiding uniform to show that they are committed to international friendship and understanding.



First Communion children, Yr3, Parish preparation continues to be on a Saturday 9.30 - 11.00am in the Parish Hall, with Sister Brenda and her team of Catechists, - there will be Saturday sessions altogether. First Holy Communion Masses will be celebrated the weekend June 8/9th. Not too late to register - speak to Fr John or Sister Brenda if you're child is ready to make their First Communions



Confirmation children, Parish preparation sessions will run on Saturdays 11.30 - 12.45 in the Parish Hall, again with Sister Brenda and her team of Catechists, - 8 Saturday sessions in all. The Confirmation Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday May 21 at 7.00pm, by Bishop David Evans.

Reminders

Healthy snacks for break time

Parents of KS2 children, you are welcome to send your child to school with a healthy snack (e.g. a piece of fruit) to have at break time. All infant children (YR/KS1) are provided with a piece of fruit through the government's free fruit scheme.



NO PARKING!

Thank you to our parents who are being considerate with their parking. Unfortunately, we do have some parents who continue to park illegally on double yellow lines and in no stopping zones; and blocking our yellow barrier. We are also having complaints that parents are blocking / parking in private roads. **I am currently in discussions with the Diocese and Police about this.**

Many of our residents are elderly and it endangers our children - this lack of care really is unacceptable.

Your information / car registrations are being passed on to the police and city council. Please report any illegal parking on:

[https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20109/parking/1983/report\\_an\\_illegally\\_parked\\_vehicle](https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20109/parking/1983/report_an_illegally_parked_vehicle)



Put the safety of our children and community first when parking.

This is an Operation Encompass School

KEEPING SAFE

We are an operation encompass school. Therefore school is working alongside the police to ensure support for any child who has been involved in or witness to domestic abuse. Please find more information about this on our website or contact the school office.

Pastoral Team

If you require any support from school please speak to a member of our pastoral team





Place2Be's

# CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

5-11 FEB 2024



Dear Children,

As I am sure you already know, it is Children's Mental Health Week this week.

To mark this, I would like our focus to be 'my relaxing place.'

I would like to see photographs of where you relax. Is it at home, in a den? Is it at the local park, watching the ducks? It is at a lake, surrounded by nature?

Is it looking out of the window at the world going by?

I'd love to see any place you take time for yourself and relax. You can send me your photos via eSchools where I will display them outside my room as a reminder to take to some time for yourself each day.

Many thanks,  
Mrs Tame

## Do not book holidays during term time

This is a reminder that holidays during term time are unauthorised. If you intend to take your child out of school during term time, we ask that you complete a holiday request form at least 2 weeks prior to the leave date where possible. Parents may be fined by the Local Authority for taking unauthorised leave of absence. Children need to be in school every day so please ensure holidays are only booked during school holiday time.

Good attendance, continues to be a school and government priority. Good attendance is 96% and above Remember below 95% is a concern and below 90% is classed as persistent absence. If you have any problems with regards to getting your child to school or you are struggling to improve your child's attendance, please speak to Mrs. Yorke or Mrs. Davis.

We will announce the attendance for the previous week in this section of the newsletter each week.

## Attendance and Punctuality: -

Our attendance for last week was -

**Week 29/01 - 02/02**

Class	YRB	YRT	Y1L	Y1F	Y2E	Y2G	Y3L	Y3T	Y4J	Y4M	Y5M	Y5F	Y6R	Y6O
%	98.6	90	91.2	95.6	95	97.6	97	96	90.9	97	98	96.3	97.4	97.9
Lates	5	7	2	4	4	0	0	1	2	2	5	0	1	3
Whole School Attendance so far this year						96.3%			School Target				97%	

Well done RB: - Our attendance champions!

# Star of the week

*Congratulations to the following children who have shone in school over the last week:*

- Year RB Seb *fantastic independent writing this week where he wrote a story about a bear in a cave!*  
Year RT Stefan *For excellent behavior and getting onto gold this week!*  
Year IF Reena *Trying extremely hard with her work!*  
Year 1L Aayush *Having a super first week at St. Mary's!*  
Year 2E Alvin *For fabulous writing!*  
Year 2G Joshua *For his beautiful exciting writing based on 'The robot and the bluebird'*  
Year 3L Miguel *For working really hard in French and completing all of his work!*  
Year 3T Marta *Always thinking of others and showing great resilience in her learning!*  
Year 4J Raman *For being a really kind friend, helping our new starter to settle into St Mary's!*  
Year 4M Joshua *For his contributions in class discussions!*  
Year 5F Kaya *For always being ready to learn and helpful*  
Year 5M Arthur *Fantastic attitudes to reflections across all subjects!*  
Year 6O Alex *Really enthusiastic participation in lessons!*  
Year 6R Mar *For having a positive attitude to learning every day!*

