



Archdiocese of Birmingham

ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Vivian Road, Harborne, Birmingham, B17 0DN

Telephone: 0121 464 2141

Email: enquiry@stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

www.stmaryrc.bham.sch.uk

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.

March is dedicated to St. Joseph

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

Our virtues for this half term are: - 'Faith-filled and hopeful'



8th March 2024

Dear parents and carers,

A massive thank you to all of our parents and visitors for giving up their time to talk to the children this week about the range of careers available to them. The children really enjoyed the talks and had lots of questions. They all looked fabulous in their various outfits and it was great to talk to them about what they would like to do when they are all grown up. Our visitors gave wonderful feedback about the behaviour, intelligence and articulation of the children, which was wonderful to receive. The children also really enjoyed our World Book Day event - they spent the day 'comfy' in their lounge wear and pyjamas and we posted lots of photos on our social media as we celebrated the enjoyment of reading. Today, has been a wonderful, spiritual conclusion to our week as One Life Music led us in our whole-school retreat. We have thought about what it means to remember Jesus and not be distracted. We also learnt new songs and signing. This week, we have had damage to cars of staff and parishioners - I will write to parents next week but please do not stand close to or lean on the cars when you come to pick up your children. When you have collected your child/ren, please do not allow them to run around the car park. Thank you.

Mrs Yorke

This week's Gospel and Prayer

Exodus 20: 1-2

'God spoke all these words. He said:

"I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt".'

Reflecting on this week's Gospel message we learn:

- God promises to guide us so we can live in freedom.
- God guides us through His word, through Jesus and through the Holy Spirit.
- We can Give, Act and Pray during Lent, to respond to God's guidance.

Father in Heaven,

Thank you for your great guidance!

Help me to listen to Jesus by loving you and others well.

Forgive me when I don't follow your ways.

Amen

Catholic Life in School

Year 2 Mass - 6.3.24 - 3rd Week of Lent

Year 2 led us in our Mass this week on the theme of prayer. Excellent signing and singing children.



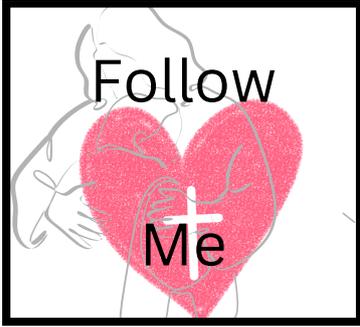
Reception Mass (with Y6 buddies) - 4th Week of Lent

Our next Mass in Church will be on Wednesday 13th March 2024, starting promptly at 9:15am. Reception children will be leading our Mass with their Year 6 buddies. All parents are welcome to attend.



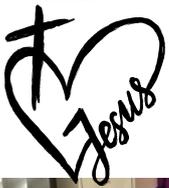
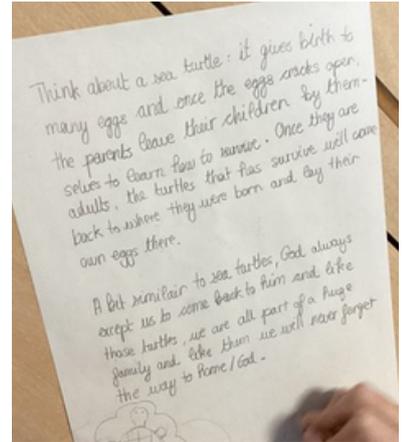
Our Lenten Journey

Religious Education



Remember Me - Whole School Lent Retreat - 8.3.24

Today, the staff and children have taken part in a retreat day. OneLife Music led us in thought-provoking prayer and worship, designed specifically for this important and precious time of observance.



Throughout the day, we reflected as school family on what it means to be a follower of Christ.



"During this Lent,
let us all ask the Lord:
Make our hearts like yours."

-Pope Francis



Lent prayer... at home

Charity: - **CAFOD** JustOneWorld

**THE BIG
LENT
WALK**

KS2 are walking 200km for CAFOD
this Lent - please sponsor us!



[https://schools.
walk.cafod.org.
uk/fundraising/
st-marys-big-
lent-walk2025](https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/st-marys-big-lent-walk2025)

£52
raised
so far



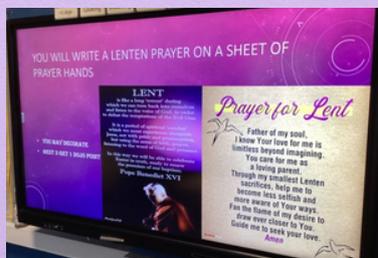
Prayer and Liturgy



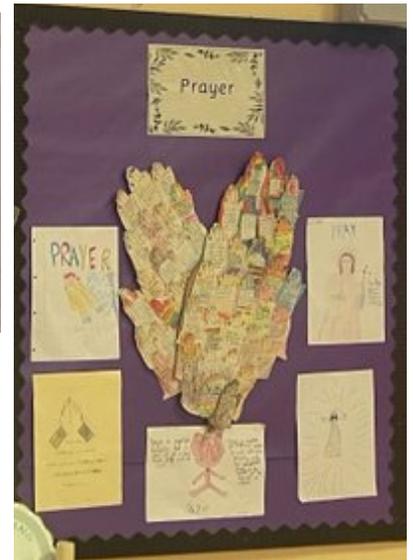
We are encouraged to
follow the
commandments. This
week we will go forth by
thinking about the rules
we will follow to be a
good follower of Jesus.



The children have been leading
different elements of prayer.



Prayer



Lent Reflection

During Lent, we focus on penance, prayer, fasting and almsgiving. However, Laetare Sunday - the Fourth Sunday of Lent - Rose vestments lift some of the gloom of the season by reminding us that Christmas and Easter will soon be here. We can grow in gratitude and thanks - for all that we have been given— our life, our family, and our free will to love God and our neighbour.



Gratitude

scripture

"Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good,
for his steadfast love endures forever!" -

Psalm 107: 1-3

reflection

There are lots of things to be thankful for. It is important to give thanks to God and each other and appreciate what we have. This Lent, we can show gratitude to God for his love and mercy, by turning our hearts outwards to our neighbours and the whole of creation, living out our school mission 'loving all people' and 'loving life itself.'

open question

What are you thankful for? How can you show and give thanks and be generous, this Lent?

Task

A Creative Reflection Express and show what you are thankful for! This may be a picture, drawing, prayer or poem. Share your creations with us. All collective work will be displayed in the school hall.



thanks

*Supporting our Lenten charities: -
FOCUS Birmingham, CAFOD, homeless charities...*

**Year
R**

Reception class will be baking cakes to sell at our Easter bonnet parade. Children will bake the cakes at home with their parents and money made will go to local charity - FOCUS Birmingham



**Year
1**

Year 1 will be visiting our residents at Heathcote House during Lent - gifting them with their time. The children are looking forward to reading, singing and playing games with the residents.



**Year
2**

Year 2 will be inviting members of the parish and local community in to school for a special tea party to celebrate their learning about Queen Victoria



KS2

*KS2 are taking part in The Big Lent Walk!
All KS2 children will be asking for sponsorship to walk 200km collaboratively over Lent. Your donations can change lives! All money raised through the Big Lent Walk will help fight poverty globally in countries like Afghanistan, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and South Sudan.*



**Year
5**

Year 5 will be learning about rivers in Summer and water distribution around the World. They will explore the question: 'Is there enough water for everyone?' This Lent, Year 5 will complete their Big Lent CAFOD walk, carrying buckets of water, to raise awareness of water poverty.



**Year
4**

Additionally, Year 4 children will continue their collection for homeless charities. Year 4 have been reading 'The nightbus hero in class' and would like to support local homeless charities during Lent - they will be asking for donations and working closely with parents.



**Spiritual
Council**

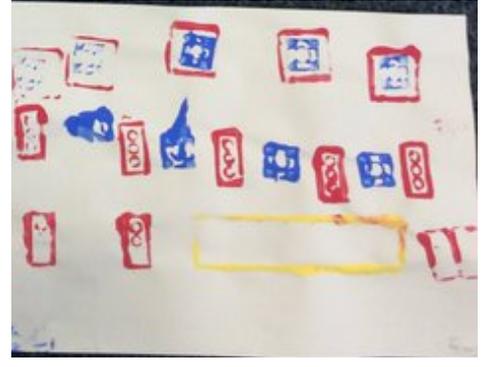
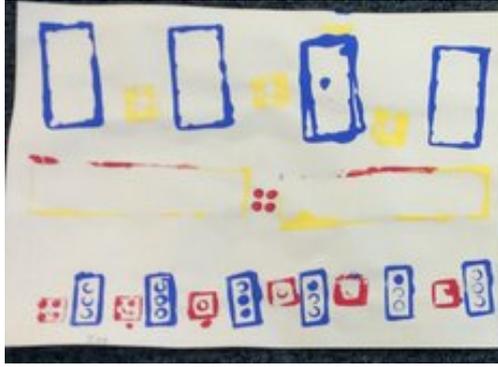
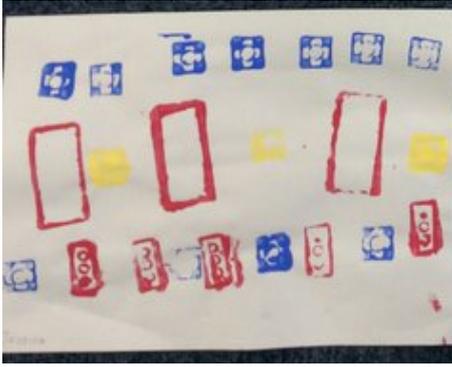
Community tidy up - litter picking in our local area around St. Mary's and high street - parents welcome to join us! Staff too!



This week's news

Reception news: -

In Maths, Reception class have been creating patterns using different four sided shapes.



Year 1 news: -

Year 1 have been thinking up adjectives to describe items that they would find at the beach.



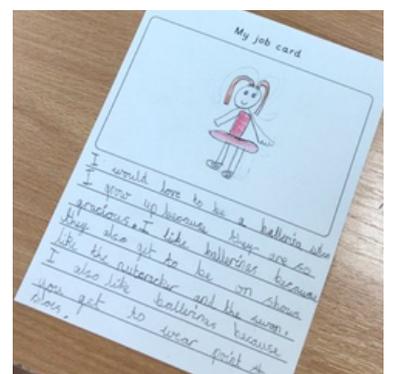
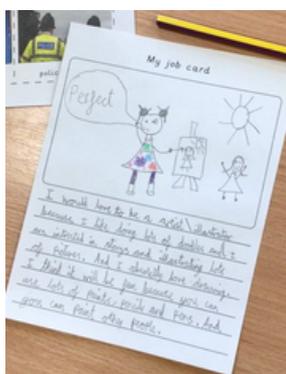
Year 2 news: -

Year 2 used Scratch to recreate their favourite stories



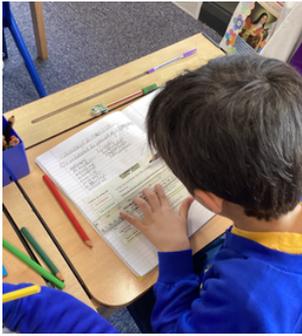
Year 3 news: -

Year 3 have been thinking about what jobs they would like to have when they are older and why.



Year 4 news: -

Year 4 learnt about the features of a playscript in English this week.



Year 5 news: -

Year 5 have been improving their hand-eye co-ordination in their badminton lessons.



Year 6 news: -

Year 6 have been fantastic Scientists, planning their own investigation and deciding on what variables there should be.



Careers Week

The staff and children would like to say a massive thank you to all our visitors, volunteers and parents who gave up their time to talk to us this careers week.

We have learnt so much in such a short amount of time.

Thank you Miss Heath for all of your hard work in organising our Careers Week.



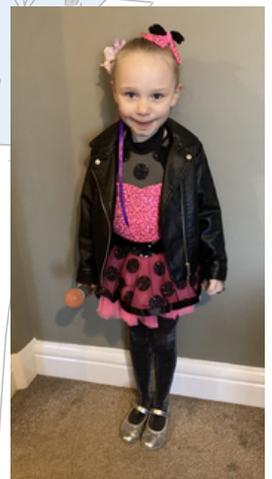
The children had a marvellous start to the week - dressing up as the job that they would like to do when they grow up.



Mr Packer spoke to the children of Year 4 and Year 6 and told them all about his career in engineering.



Mr Catoni taught Year 3 and Year 5 all about his job as a Scientist. The children learnt about different plants, DNA and why plants are important.



Reception class role-played teachers and doctors...



Year 2 found out all about the work of translators and interpreters.



Year 5 learnt so much from our female air quality scientist, who taught us all about how to make sure our world is safe.



Mr Noone told Year 4 all about the skills you need to be an accountant.



Dr Mahwish taught Reception class and Year 1 all about what it means to be a real doctor.



LKS2 found out everything they need to know about a job in law - to be a lawyer or barrister.



Reception class found out about volunteering or working for charities.



KS1 learnt about how to look after their teeth and their money in their career talks.



Year 6 learnt about tax from our special visitor, who works for HM Revenue & Customs.



World Book Day



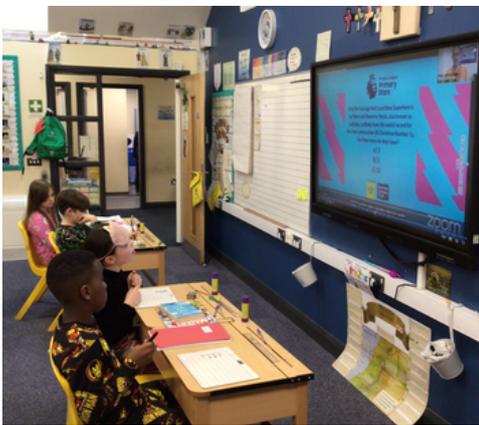
Mrs Noone led a special World Book Day Assembly



Every child visited the 'St Mary's Book Shop' today and took home a WBD book



The children enjoyed some fantastic online lessons and virtual events with authors!



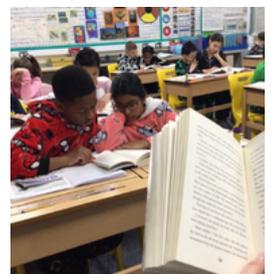
The children enjoyed a story with a cup of hot chocolate!



PAJAMA DAY We all wore our cosy clothes!



We all enjoyed reading and exploring books today!





**'Let Girls Play' -
Tolkien Football Competition**
Our girls were wonderful in their football tournament winning every game against the other schools. We are so incredibly impressed with them. Well done everybody.

Congratulations to the children involved in our Parking Campaign during UK Parliament Week - your efforts were noticed and we received this certificated from UK Parliament. Thank you Mrs Tame for organising.

**UK
PARLIAMENT
WEEK**

 **UK
Parliament**

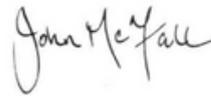
Congratulations!

Mrs Tame & St. Mary's School Council

**Highly commended in the UK Parliament Week
Champion of the Year Award category**



Rt Hon Sir Lindsay Hoyle MP
The Speaker of the House of Commons



Rt Hon the Lord McFall of Alcluth
The Lord Speaker





OPAL Update - Week 3

We've had another super week of fun and introduced a new play resource: cardboard. Coach Red led an amazing play assembly with both key stages and the children explored what could they do with a simple cardboard box. The ideas were incredible, and as you will see, the children are already coming up with ingenious ways to play with something that usually ends up in our recycling.

We're making changes all the time to OPAL - we've moved the dress up onto the playground to enable children to use the Astro for games. We're also going to repurpose the fabrics for den building which will be arriving on the playground very soon.

We working closely with our OPAL Mentor to get the very most of out of our play resources and available grounds so please watch this space for more OPAL developments to come!

If you do have any cardboard, fancy dress, old toys, kitchen equipment etc that you are getting rid of, please do bear us in mind - we need a regular stream of donations for OPAL!



Parents' Consultations

We look forward to welcoming you to our Parent Consultation Evenings this half term.

Booking is open for your Parent Consultation Evening Appointment

To book you will need to log on to eSchools using your parent log on details.

If you have forgotten your eSchools username and/or password, please contact the school office or send an email to forgottenpassword@stmaryrc.sch.uk

*Parents' evening appointments will be carried over two days -
Tuesday 19th March 2024 and Wednesday 20th March 2024.*

Our consultations will be hosted in the school hall.

After consultation with the teacher, your child's teacher will give you your child's books to look at.

You will then have time to look at the books in one of the Year 3 classrooms. In the other Year 3 classroom, we will have the book fair. Please do not take photos of the books - we have photos of children often stuck in and we do not have all the necessary permissions for the books to be photographed.

There will be a parent questionnaire to complete too.

After looking at your child's books, please leave them with the TA in the classroom and you can either go to your next appointment, or leave the school via the playground and main gate.

The appointment with the class teacher will last for ten minutes and timings will be strictly kept to. Please do not arrive any earlier than 5 minutes before your first appointment to help us keep numbers in the hall to a minimum and to allow for a timely well-organised evening.

Your children (those attending the school) will not be allowed to attend the appointment in the hall, if they are with you, we can look after them in the Year 2 classroom. If you need an interpreter, this should not be your child. It would be preferable if pre-school children, babies and older children do not attend the appointment so that you are able to focus on the consultation.

We are unable to look after pre-school children in our classrooms.

During parent consultations, key staff will be available for you if you have any concerns. Our SENDCo, Mrs Fowler, will be sat at a table in the hall. No prior appointment is needed, but if you would like to speak to Mrs Fowler about SEN, she will be available.

SLT (Mrs Yorke and Mrs Davis) are also present in their offices, should you need to discuss anything with them.



Interested in Gaelic football?

To access any GAA course you need to have registered on the learning.gaa.ie portal

If you need to REGISTER a profile on the learning portal:

Using your phone camera: SCAN the 1st QR code, at STEP 1.

(Registering a profile is required to give GDPR consent for us to hold data and takes about 3 mins. The rest is a click tab process so it's very easy).

If you already have registered a profile – Log in to the portal and proceed to STEP 2.

Free Gaelic Football Taster Session

Saturday 23rd March 1.30–2.30pm
Queensbridge, B13 8NB, Access off Moor Green Lane

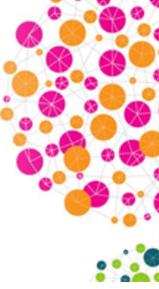
Come and Join us for a fun-filled Gaelic football session for boys and girls aged 5–17!!

Please email attendance; stbrendansbirmingham@gmail.com

Brendans GAA Birmingham 
@st_brendans_gaabham 
@BrendansGAA 

| STEP 1 | STEP 2 |
|---|---|
| <p>Registration</p> | <p>Enrolling on course</p> |
| <p>Use your mobile phone to SCAN this QR code so you can register on the learning portal:</p> | <p>Log on to the portal using your email and password.</p> <p>SCAN the QR code below and enter the Enrolment Key (CASE SENSITIVE) and that is you registered on the course:</p> |
|  |  |
| <p>or access the Learning portal using this URL:</p> <p>https://learning.gaa.ie/user/register</p> | <p>ICGG Dual Birmingham April 2024 Enrolment Key: BIRApr24 or access the course using this URL: https://learning.gaa.ie/lms/course/view.php?id=17657</p> |

British
Science
Week
2024



8-17 March

British
Science
Week
2024



Celebrating the diverse people
and careers in science & engineering

#SMASHING
STEREOTYPES
@ScienceWeekUK

British Science Week - WB 11.3.24

British Science week is returning on the 11th of March. It will be the 30th anniversary of the event and, fitting in nicely, the theme this year is 'time'. We have lots of exciting activities planned for all the children, as well as live lessons and looking at careers in the STEM field.

As always, there will be poster competition, with entries being split into age groups - (EYFS, KS1 and KS2) - look out on twitter for more details soon!

Children in KS2 will also be taking part in 'The Big Plastic Count'.

This is a week-long initiative to raise awareness of how much plastic we are using and the effects it has on the environment. Each child in KS2 will be given a tally sheet to keep a record of how much plastic they throw away. Mrs Tibbatts will then collate the results - these will join thousands of other entries to be presented to UK Ministers, in the hope of phasing out plastic pollution!

**THE BIG
PLASTIC
COUNT
11-17 MARCH**



Year 2 Harborne Library Visit - 12.3.24

Year 2 will be visiting Harborne Library next Tuesday.

2E will leave at 9:00am

2G will leave at 10:45am

If you are a parent who would like to attend and support walking to and from the library, please let the Year 2 staff know.

Council House Visit - 13.3.24

Mrs Tame and our School Council will be visiting the Birmingham Council House on Wednesday 13th March 2024. They will have a guided tour and the opportunity to speak to Councillor Jayne Francis.



WB 11.4.24



INSPIRE Workshop (Mothers' Day) – 12th March 2023

We will soon enter the fourth week of Lent - our theme is gratitude and giving thanks.

We will be hosting a special INSPIRE workshop for one parent to attend in school.

On Tuesday 12th March, mums (or any family member over the age of 18) have the opportunity to come in to school and to work with their child on an area of the school curriculum.

Please find the timings for your workshop below...

NB - Please note that Year 2 have already held their INSPIRE workshop before this date to fit in with their marvellous middle and Indian cooking experience.

Please sign up using the school gateway, so that registers can be created and we know who is coming in to the building on this day.

All children will take part in their lesson, even if a parent or family member is unable to attend.

Please note that we do not have the room for more than one parent per child to attend.

We look forward to showcasing our lovely learning to you.

Unfortunately due to the nature of the INSPIRE, with a parent joining in with a lesson, it is not appropriate to bring pre-school children and babies to this event.

Teas and coffees will be set up for adults to purchase throughout the school day and money made will go towards our PTA projects. Prior to the workshop (or afterwards if you are about to attend another workshop) - please make your way to the school hall and you will be guided to the next lesson.

Please arrive 10 minutes before your first workshop.

| start time | workshop | where |
|-------------|--|------------|
| 9:00-10:00 | Year 4 prayer service + go forth activity | hall |
| 10:15-11:15 | Year 3 DT sewing activity - Egyptian collars | Y3 classes |
| 11:30-12:30 | Year 6 Confirmation Workshop | hall |
| 12:45-1:45 | Reception and Year 1 gardening session | outside |
| 2:00-3:00 | Year 5 music workshop | Y5 classes |





WB 18.4.24

World Down Syndrome Day - 21st March 2024 Sunflowers & Socks



Sunflowers and socks...what's any of this got to do with Down Syndrome?!

World Down Syndrome Day is a global awareness day officially observed by the United Nations since 2012. The date, 21st March (i.e. the 3rd month of the year), was chosen to reflect the fact that people with Down Syndrome have 3 copies of chromosome number 21.

Down Syndrome is a naturally occurring genetic condition caused by an extra chromosome. Babies with Down Syndrome are born to parents of all ages, races, religions and background. Down Syndrome usually causes varying degrees of intellectual and physical disability, and some associated medical issues. Approximately half of all children born with Down Syndrome have a heart defect and approximately half have problems with hearing and vision. Everyone with Down Syndrome has a learning disability so it takes longer to learn new information and master new skills; most children with Down Syndrome will learn to walk and talk but they will do so in their own time. Many will use Makaton sign language to help them communicate.

Above all else, children with Down Syndrome are just that – children. Like any other children, they want to have friends, be included, have fun and enjoy life! Our little boy, Seán, who happens to have Down Syndrome definitely believes in having fun and enjoying life! His enthusiastic waving at random strangers, the enormous hugs he gives his big sisters every night, his joy at hearing Baby Shark for the zillionth time, the cheeky grin when he pretends he's going to share a bit of his food, the pride with which he demonstrates a new skill, and the ease with which he puts a smile on the faces of those around him, are the traits and characteristics that define him, not the fact that he has Down Syndrome.

We are delighted that St Mary's have chosen to mark World Down Syndrome Day again this year. We very much appreciate the opportunity to raise awareness and help ensure that all of our children grow up in a caring and inclusive environment that welcomes diversity.

Now, to explain the sunflowers and socks....

*Down Syndrome UK run a **sunflower challenge** for World Down Syndrome Day. They invite children in participating schools to plant sunflowers in advance of World Down Syndrome Day and watch the flowers grow, reflecting on the fact that, just like sunflowers, every child grows and blooms uniquely, in their own time. Every child at St. Mary's will have the opportunity to plant their sunflower next week.*

Rock your socks! *The idea of this campaign, which is observed around the world, is simply to get people talking about Down Syndrome. Socks were chosen as the basis of this international campaign because chromosomes are thought to look a little bit like pairs of socks. Wear your brightest, boldest and/or mismatched socks on **21st March** and when somebody asks you about them, tell them you are raising awareness of Down Syndrome.*

Thank you to Mrs Yorke and the staff at St Mary's as well as all the children and parents who will be joining in the World Down Syndrome Day celebrations and doing their bit to help raise awareness. We are always happy to have a chat and would really encourage children to ask questions and find out more about Down Syndrome and what it means. We've learnt a lot over the last 3 years since Seán burst into our lives and are keen to encourage open conversations with children to help them understand, accept and embrace diversity so that children like Seán can grow up in an inclusive environment.

Look forward to seeing everyone rock their socks!!!

Mary, Phil, Cara, Josie & Seán Tomson

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



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 04/03-08/03

| Class | YRB | YRT | Y1L | Y1F | Y2E | Y2G | Y3L | Y3T | Y4J | Y4M | Y5M | Y5F | Y6R | Y6O |
|--|-----|------|------|------|-----|-------|------|------|---------------|------|------|------|-----|------|
| % | 84 | 97.6 | 93.3 | 97.9 | 93 | 96.6 | 98.6 | 98.6 | 96.6 | 98.3 | 98.6 | 99.3 | 100 | 99.3 |
| Lates | 6 | 3 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 2 |
| Whole School Attendance so far this year | | | | | | 96.4% | | | School Target | | | | 97% | |

Well done 6R: - Our attendance champions!

Dates for this term

Spring theme -

Spring 11 Virtues

March

WB 11.3.24

12th March 2024 - am

12th March 2024 - all day

13th March 2024 - all day

13th March 2024 - 9:15am

13th March 2024 - 10:00am

15th March 2024 - 9:00am

19th March 2024 - evening

20th March 2024 - 9:30am

20th March 2024 - evening

21st March 2024 - all day

21st March 2024 - all day

21st March 2024 - 9:00am

WB 25th March 2024

26th March 2024 - 2:00pm

28th March 2024 - 11:00am

28th March 2024 -

Options for the Poor and Vulnerable

Faith-filled and Hopeful

World Down Syndrome Awareness Month - Grow your sunflower

British Science Week

Year 2 visit to Harborne library (9:15 2E and 11:00 2G)

Mothers' Day Inspire workshops in school

Malympics Day in school

Reception class Mass in Church (alongside their Year 6 buddies) - parents too

School Council visit to the Council House

Year 6 prayer service for parents

Parent Consultation Evening

Whole School Mass in Church - 5th week of lent - parents are welcome

Parent Consultation Evening

World Down Syndrome Awareness Day - Wear Odd Socks

RT non-school uniform day for St. Teresa of Calcutta

Reception Prayer Service for parents

Holy Week

Reception Easter Bonnet Parade and cake sale

Year 6 Stations of the Cross in the Church for KS2 and parents

Break up for Easter holidays

1:40 finish time - Reception classes

1:45 finish time - KS1 classes

1:50 finish time - sibling group

2:00 finish time - KS2 classes

Star of the week

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

- Year RB Eliana For some excellent independent writing this week!
- Year RT Shindara For excellent listening and hard work during our phonics lessons this week!
- Year IF Norrie For working consistently hard in every lesson!
- Year IL Grace For always trying her best!
- Year 2E Monty For super spelling scores every week!
- Year 2G Danaya For always trying her best in everything she does – well done Danaya!
- Year 3L Anthony For always using good manners and trying his best in his maths learning.
- Year 3T Alarna For trying to challenge herself in Maths and for her super participation in DT.
- Year 4J Noah For always participating in maths lessons.
- Year 4M Gabriele For his super effort to concentrate and stay on task.
- Year 5F Rhea For being kind, compassionate and working hard.
- Year 5M Amber For making amazing progress in her reading.
- Year 6O Flevin Always having a positive attitude!
- Year 6R Deshane For always working really hard and being enthusiastic about his learning.

