

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Newsletter No 3

November 2020

'Serving with Love; Striving for Excellence'

Dear Parents/Carers,

I appreciate how difficult it is to keep up with the ever evolving situation and changing guidance. I am very grateful to our team of staff and governors who continue to work tirelessly for each and every child, and also in communication with you. Despite the current situation, this term continues to be enriched with a variety of virtual educational workshops online, parent meetings, assemblies, competitions, fundraising and outdoor learning.

Monday 16th—20th November was National Anti-Bullying Week coordinated by the Anti-Bullying Alliance. Anti-Bullying Week happens in schools across England each November.

The theme this year is **'United Against Bullying'** with the aim to understand:

- We're all a piece in the puzzle, and together, we're united against bullying

Whether it is verbal, physical, online or in-person, bullying has a significant impact on a child's life well into adulthood. By making small, simple changes, we can break this cycle and create a safe environment for everyone. Because together, we can challenge bullying. Change starts with a conversation. It starts with checking in. It starts with working together.

- Change starts here
- Change starts now
- Change starts with us

This year the goal is to inform schools and settings, children and young people, parents and carers to know that it takes a collective responsibility to stop bullying. We are excited for this campaign as we want to create empowering, positive messages addressing the fact that when it comes to bullying **CHANGE STARTS WITH US!**

St Mary's recognises that this focus should not be for one week and is committed to long-term sustainable measures to prevent and deal with any form of bullying behaviour, working together with children and parents to address this important issue.

Thank you for your continued support.

Mrs Maureen Grabski
Headteacher

Christ the King

*Pilate summoned Jesus and asked him, "Are you the king of the Jews?"
Jesus said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:33, 36*

The Kingdom Jesus is talking about is the Kingdom of Heaven. No matter who we are or what we have done, Jesus offers us forgiveness, love, welcome and an invitation to a personal relationship with him. All we have to do is ask Jesus to be the King of our hearts.

Lord Jesus, your Kingdom is a Kingdom of truth and life. **Lord have mercy**
Your Kingdom is a Kingdom of holiness and grace. **Christ have mercy**
Your Kingdom is a Kingdom of justice, love and peace. **Lord have mercy**



*Dear Jesus,
I invite you to be the King of my heart.
Help me to follow your ways and live well in your Kingdom.
Amen*

HARVEST HEROES

Huge Thanks!

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to you for your generous donations for our harvest festival. The 'Caring Hands' charity were so pleased to receive the goods.

'Without your generous gifts, we would not be able to provide this food to everyone. So that means your school has saved lives this winter through your pupils' efforts.'

CAFOD

We are also delighted to say that the children raised **£500** for CAFOD, so well done to everyone who contributed and we thank you for your generosity.



CHILDREN IN NEED

On Friday 13th November St Mary's supported Children in Need. The children, led by their new School Councillors, were very creative this year; we had baking, aspirational costumes, games and the ever popular Pyjama Day. Thank you to all those who donated toward this very worthy cause and well done to the School Councillors for organising their first event.



ATTENDANCE

Whole school attendance currently stands at **97.28%** which is good. Thank you for continuing to promote good attendance with your child. Good attendance across the school year (96%) is important for your child's academic achievement but also their well-being and friendships.

Please remember to call the school on the morning of **each day** of your child's absence, stating a full and clear reason for their time off of school. Thank you.



E-SAFETY

As the evenings get darker, it can be tempting to spend more time on devices while in the house. It is

important to continue the conversations with your child about the games and apps they are using and who they may be talking to.

While parental controls do not manage to completely eliminate the risk, they are a good start.

Please visit internet matters:

<https://www.internetmatters.org/parental-controls/> or our E-Safety page to find guides for setting up parental controls for different providers:

<http://stmarysrgp.medway.sch.uk/e-safety/>.

Having parental controls and regular discussions about online behaviour and activity are the best way to continue to keep your children safe.

CLASS CHRISTMAS DAY



A class Christmas Day has been scheduled for **Wednesday 16th December**. This will be a creative day for children with lots of class Christmas craft activities, Christmas lunch and a Christmas film in the afternoon. Children are permitted to wear their own clothes on this day.

THE PRINCESS PROJECT

The Medway hub of The Princess Project is based at St Augustine's Church in Gillingham and aims to support mums who have young children.

In normal times, the hub is open every Monday in term time from 10 - 12 noon. During this time mums can expect a warm welcome and a chance to chat with other mums and volunteers, as well as have access to a service called Totcycle which is a baby and toddler goods exchange.

They also offer a befriending service aimed at young mums. Mums, aged between 16-30, are matched with a trained and fully checked support worker, who will meet with them on a fortnightly basis for up to 2 years.

Currently services are a little different, due to Covid-19 restrictions. Support can be offered online and families can book a slot at the hub to visit Totcycle.

If you would like to find out more about

The Princess Project visit:

<https://princessproject.co.uk/gillingham%20hub.html> or call Emma on **07851 196770**.

FINANCIAL CRISIS

Are you or anyone you know in financial crisis due to the Covid-19 pandemic? Contact Citizens Advice Medway on **01634 383760** or visit:

<https://www.medwayadvice.org.uk/page>

You can email Citizens Advice Medway at:

Info@medwayadvice.org.uk

CHARTWELLS

This year, we are planning a Festive Theme Week, including Christmas Lunch on **Wednesday 16th December**. Please see the school website for menu information and inform the school office by **Friday 4th December**, if you wish to book a dinner for your child this week:

<http://stmarysrgp.medway.sch.uk/chartwells/>



As part of our History focus this month, we have been remembering the soldiers who fought in the war, commemorating their sacrifices with a two-minute silence.

Year 6 were fortunate enough to take part in a Zoom Webinar where they learnt about the experiences of soldiers on the front line and the changes people had to make at home, including a Q&A session.

Year 1 also got to experience 'life in the trenches', turning their classrooms into a role play area and using their imagination to think, feel and discuss how it might have been if they were a soldier.

Miss Godley, History Subject Lead

YOUNG CARERS CLUB

We have now had two sessions of Young Carers Club which have been very successful. Our children are able to talk and play with others who are in a similar situation as well as have the opportunity to talk to a representative from CarersFirst for expert support.

If you think that your child or family could benefit from some advice from CarersFirst please contact:

Sophie Dumbrell, Home School Support Worker



ENSURING ACCESS TO REMOTE LEARNING

As there is a risk of localised outbreaks of Coronavirus (COVID-19) or of small numbers of individual pupils being unable to attend school, we have plans in place for pupils to continue with remote learning off-site.

Pupils who are absent from school due to self-isolating, a family member testing positive or awaiting their own test result, will be given a home learning pack, which includes up-to-date learning and activities aligned to the class lessons for that week.

Please note that if your child is absent from school because they are unwell or for another reason (medical appointment or unauthorised absence), work will not be sent home.

In the event of whole bubbles self-isolating or a local lockdown, the school will continue to provide teaching through Microsoft Teams and lesson material on our Home Learning page on our school website:

<http://stmarysrcp.medway.sch.uk/home-learning-2/>

COVID-19

Please follow this guidance if your child has any of the main symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19):

Do not send your child to school if they are displaying signs and symptoms of coronavirus and ensure that they get a test as soon as possible.

You will need to stay at home until you get the result and inform the school of their absence and the outcome of the test, as soon as you know.

Main symptoms

The main symptoms of coronavirus are:

- **a high temperature** – this means they feel hot to touch on their chest or back (you do not need to measure their temperature)
- **a new, continuous cough** – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- **a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste** – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

Most people with coronavirus have at least 1 of these symptoms.

What to do if you have symptoms

If you have any of the main symptoms of coronavirus: Get a test to check if you have coronavirus as soon as possible.

Stay at home and do not have visitors until you get their test result – only leave your home to have a test. Anyone you live with, and anyone in your support bubble, must also stay at home until you get the result.

To arrange a test:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/testing-and-tracing/>

If the test is positive, follow the guidance for households with possible or confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) infection, and engage with the NHS Test and Trace process:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance>

We ask that you implement these actions by following the advice set out here, together with wider public health advice and guidance.

PARKING CONCERNS AND COMPLAINTS

Parking around the school, dropping off or collecting children continues to be a problem, together with complaints from our local residents.

We are fortunate to be able to use the Church or Council carparks to alleviate this problem and I thank parents who are already using these facilities.

I continue to ask parents to please be considerate and not drive into Greenfield Road, to respect the safety procedures being put into place, in order to keep our school community safe.

There are yellow lines and zig-zag lines identifying areas where parking is not permitted. Please also avoid dropped kerbs for wheelchair access and pushchairs.

Cars parked illegally will continue to be monitored and reported to our local police, who are also monitoring this, together with our local council.

I hope that we can all work responsibly together in ensuring the access to our school is safe and I ask you to also please be respectful towards our local residents.

BREAKFAST CLUB

Should you wish to book a place at Breakfast Club from 7.45am at a cost of £2.50 a day, please fill in the forms held at the office. Payment needs to be made in advance to secure a place.

Please note that children must be in by 8:00 as they will not be admitted after this time.

AFTER-SCHOOL CLUB

Places for After-School Club are available for children from our Nursery to Year 6. Sessions run from 3:30 - 5:30pm (Monday- Friday) and cost £6.00 per day, £30 per week. Please contact the School Office to register a booking.

Payment needs to be made in advance.

CHILDREN DUE TO START SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2021

If your child's **5th birthday** is between **1st September 2021 and 31st August 2022** they will be due to start school in September 2021.

Applications need to be made online via the Medway Council website:

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200137/schools_and_learning/1059/applying_for_a_primary_school_place/3

You will also need to complete a Supplementary Information Form (SIF) and hand it into school.



Collect FREE funds for us
any time you shop with  **easyfundraising**
feel good shopping

Sign up now

Collect FREE donations for our school with all your online shopping!

A BIG THANK YOU to our School Supporters and our new supporters, who have helped to raise school funds through www.easyfundraising.org.uk and I am pleased to inform you that so far we have raised **£603.07!**

Please spread the word so that we can continue to raise much needed funds, to support our curriculum and events for the children, throughout the year.

All you need to do is register with www.easyfundraising.org.uk and then visit any of the 3,000 retailers to start shopping. After you have made your purchase, the retailer will make a donation to our school at no extra cost to you. Thank you!

Join, shop and raise here:
<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stmaryscatholicprimaryschool1/>

APPLYING FOR A SECONDARY SCHOOL PLACE IN SEPTEMBER 2021

You need to apply for a Secondary School Place if your child was born between 1 September 2009 and 31 August 2010. The deadline for Secondary School applications is **5pm on Monday 30th November 2020.**

WHY READ 20 MINUTES AT HOME?

Student A Reads	Student B Reads	Student C Reads
❖ 20 minutes per day.	❖ 5 minutes per day.	❖ 1 minute per day
❖ 3,600 minutes per school year.	❖ 900 minutes per school year.	❖ 180 minutes per school year.
❖ 1,800,000 words per year.	❖ 282,000 words per year.	❖ 8,000 words per year.
		
❖ Scores in the 90 th percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 50 th percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 10 th percentile on standardized tests.

REMINDER CHRISTMAS BREAK

School closes at **2.00pm** on **Friday 18th December** and re-opens for children on

Wednesday 6th January 2021