

# St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Newsletter No 4

December 2020

*'Serving with Love; Striving for Excellence'*



Dear Parents/Carers,

I would like to thank all our parents for your continued commitment and support for all our staff, especially as this term has been extremely challenging for our whole school community.

Teachers have secured seamless transitions to Home Learning and live lessons, where it has not been possible for year groups and pupils to attend school. I also express my gratitude to our amazing staff who have gone above and beyond to ensure that the school stays open for the pupils, despite having a significantly reduced staff capacity and for their extraordinary hard work in the face of unprecedented circumstances.

On behalf of our staff and governors, I wish you all a happy, blessed and peaceful Christmas.

**Mrs Maureen Grabski**

**Headteacher**



## *'Let us Walk in the Light of the Lord'*

The theme of light figures prominently during the season of Advent and St Paul urges us to turn away from darkness and live in the light. But what in practice does this entail?

There was a wise and learned Rabbi who was asked, 'How can you tell when the night is passed and the day is on its way back again?' One said, 'When you can see an animal in the distance and you can tell whether it is a sheep or a goat.' Another said, 'When you can see a tree in the distance and you can tell whether it is a fig tree or a peach tree.' Another said, 'When you can see a person in the distance and you can tell whether it is a friend or an enemy.'

But the Rabbi was not impressed and he replied, 'When you can look at the face of any human being and see there the face of a brother or sister, because if you cannot do this, then no matter what time it is, for you it is still night.'

We are a people on whom the light of Christ has shone and still shines. We must, therefore, strive to walk in the light, the light of truth and life, the light of holiness and grace, the light of justice, love and peace.

Nevertheless, darkness still has power over us. Darkness can take many forms. Any kind of hatred or lack of forgiveness are forms of darkness. It takes courage to recognise the darkness in our lives. There is no joy in living in darkness but with God's grace we can free ourselves from the darkness and experience the joy of walking in the light of truth and goodness.

*The most precious light of all is the light of love.*

*Love lights up everything and brings hope.*

*Lord, may the radiance of your glory light up our lives and  
bring us safely through the shadows of this world to everlasting light.*



### CLOTHES AND UNIFORM DONATIONS

We would be very grateful for any donations of small, Nursery or Reception size clothing, particularly socks, tights and trousers.

We still have a large collection of school cardigans, jumpers, summer dresses and trousers. If you would like some uniform for your child, please let the school office know and we will do our best to provide the items you require.

### 'MY SHINING STAR'

We would like to say a massive thank you to all of you who have donated goods so far. If you have not yet donated but would like to, it is not too late. We are still collecting for this charity which supports families who have a child undergoing cancer treatment. Goods that can be donated are:

**Sweets and chocolates (boiled sweets are very good for those having chemo)**

**Toys, games, puzzles, pencils, pens, colouring books etc. from babies to 18yrs.**

**Toiletries such as toothpaste, shower gel, deodorants, shampoo etc.**

**Clothing such as socks, caps etc.**

**Baby items such as wet wipes, vests, bibs etc.**

All items donated will be very much appreciated but must be NEW to ensure no infections are transmitted. Thank you so much for your generosity in these difficult times.

**Sr. Kay**

### SCHOOL NURSE

Our School Nurse is still available for a telephone conversation if you have any concerns about your child. Please get in touch if you would like an appointment to be arranged for you.

### MEDWAY FOODBANK

Our Home School Support Worker, Sophie Dumbrell, is able to issue Medway Foodbank vouchers to families in need. If you have any difficulties of this kind then please do not hesitate to contact us to discuss the issues and get some support.

### 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.

### 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](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.**

### FAREWELL

At the end of this term, we say farewell to Mrs Eatwell, Mrs Savage, Mrs Whitehead and Mrs Dhillon. On behalf of the school community, we thank them for their hard work and contribution to St Mary's and we wish them all the best for the future.

### 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 towards this very worthy cause and well done to the School Councillors for organising their first event.



We were able to raise a fantastic **£317**. Thanks again to everyone for their kind donations.

**Miss Johnson, School Learning Council Lead**



**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](http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk) and I am pleased to inform you that so far we have raised **£607.15!**

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.



**NON-UNIFORM CHRISTMAS DAY**  
On **Wednesday 16th December**, the children will be able to wear their own clothes for the day. The teachers are planning a day filled with Christmas crafts and activities for the children to enjoy, Christmas lunch and a Christmas film in the afternoon.

**MEDWAY LIBRARIES DECEMBER BOOK CLUB:**  
**8-12 Year Olds: *Northern Lights* by Philip Pullman**  
*Lyra Belacqua lives half-wild and carefree among the scholars of Jordan College, with her daemon familiar always by her side. But the arrival of her fearsome uncle, Lord Asriel, draws her to the heart of a terrible struggle – a struggle born of Gobblers and stolen children, witch clans and armoured bears. As she hurtles towards danger in the cold far North, Lyra never suspects the shocking truth: she alone is destined to win, or to lose, the biggest battle imaginable.*

- Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December, 4-5pm

Please email [emily.maycock@medway.gov.uk](mailto:emily.maycock@medway.gov.uk) to book. You can read the book for free [here](#).

**ROOF REPAIRS**  
Over the Christmas break and during the Spring term, we will be undertaking some repairs to a section of our school roof. In the main, the repairs will be carried out at weekends and out of school hours.  
During the week, any repairs will be confined to the inner area of the roof only and therefore will not cause any disruption to the school day for the children and staff.

**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 <sup>th</sup> percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 50 <sup>th</sup> percentile on standardized tests.	❖ Scores in the 10 <sup>th</sup> percentile on standardized tests.

FINISH		
	Main Gate	Top Gate
2:00	Reception Pupils	Year 5 Pupils
2:10	Year 1 Pupils	Year 2 Pupils
2:20	Year 3 Pupils	Year 4 Pupils
2:30	Nursery Pupils	

***Siblings are to leave together at the time of latest allocated sibling time via their designated gate.***

**BOOK SALE**  
Thank you to everyone who bought books at our second-hand book sale and also to those who donated books. We raised over £100 which will go towards new books and furniture for our library.

**BOOK FAIR**  
Thank you to everybody who participated in our Virtual Book Fair. As a result, St Mary's will be receiving a large selection of books worth **£440** for our children to enjoy.  
We would also like to say a huge thank you to our PTA who generously bought the school a PSHE bundle of books which will be very gratefully received.

**On behalf of all at St Mary's we wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!**  
School closes at **2.00pm with a staggered finish on Friday 18th December** and re-opens for children on **Wednesday 6th January 2021**

