

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Newsletter No 6

February 2022

'Serving with Love; Striving for Excellence'

Dear Parents/Carers,

We have enjoyed a positive start to the year and we look forward the next half of our Spring term!

We are hopeful that we have now got through the worst part of the pandemic and as a school we are beginning to resume pre-pandemic school life, in full. This week, we are celebrating whole school Mass on Ash Wednesday as we begin the season of Lent. This will be the first time that we have been together since February 2020 and I am sure this will be a very moving Mass for our school family.

I am also delighted to welcome parents back into school for planned events throughout the rest of the school year, beginning with our KS1 and KS2 SATs meetings for Year 2 and Year 6 parents next week.

Continue to check our newsletters and website: www.stmarysrcp.medway.sch.uk for upcoming events where additional up to date information can be found. You can follow us on our official school Twitter account

[@stmarysrcp_1894](https://twitter.com/stmarysrcp_1894). 

Thank you for your continued commitment and support.

Mrs MJ Grabski
Headteacher



Deepening our Faith

Within six weeks, we'll celebrate the most important feast of the Church's year: Easter. Through Baptism, we share in the life, death, Resurrection and Ascension of Our Lord Jesus Christ and then, at Pentecost, we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. We are given the new life of Christ to be lived out in this life but to be experienced in its fullness in heaven, sharing the very glory of God's life.

'Lent' is our preparation, connecting with 'Spring', new life and a joyful season of grace. Ash Wednesday emphasises the three aspects of Christian living: Prayer, Fasting and Alms Giving. Ashes are a mark of our repentance and begin our preparation for Easter. Lent provides us opportunities to support each other, as there will be moments of weakness and temptation for us, just as Jesus had to face very real temptations for forty days in the desert. We might say, 'It was easy for Jesus!' It wasn't. He too had to struggle to do the will of God. His victory was achieved through prayer, fasting and obedience to the word of God.

Virtue would be meaningless if there was no evil, no struggle. Virtue involves a choice between good and evil. Every time we overcome a temptation, it makes us stronger. Each right choice makes the next right choice more likely and easier. The story of Jesus being tempted is a consoling one, as it shows us that there is a price to be paid to succeed in the struggle but the Holy Spirit will always be with us. Spiritual progress towards Easter is a gift but we need to play our part by wanting that gift and creating the conditions to receive it.

*Lord, thank you for this special season of grace that is Lent.
Bless each member of our family as we journey together towards Easter.*

Amen





THE DUCHESS OF CAMBRIDGE READS CBEBBIES BEDTIME STORY FOR CHILDREN'S MENTAL HEALTH WEEK

Children's Mental Health Week is a key national moment for spotlighting and recognising children's mental health. This year children and adults are being encouraged to consider how they have grown emotionally, recognising that trying new things can help people move beyond their comfort zones, and that challenges and setbacks can help them to mature and adapt.

The Duchess chose to read *The Owl Who Was Afraid of the Dark* by Jill Tomlinson to align with this year's theme of 'Growing Together'. The book follows the story of Plop, a baby barn owl, who is helped by others to grow in confidence and overcome his fears.

The Duchess highlighted the crucial need for parents and carers to look after their own mental wellbeing, and the impact that this has on the children in their care.

Her Royal Highness launched her landmark survey on the Early Years, '5 Big Questions on the Under-Fives', which aimed to spark the biggest ever conversation on early childhood that will ultimately help bring about positive, lasting change for generations to come. The research revealed that whilst 90% of people acknowledge that maintaining parental mental health is crucial to support the health and happiness of their child, in practice the majority of parents struggle to prioritise their own wellbeing.

The theme for this year's Children's Mental Health Week was 'Dress to Express' and focuses on 'Growing Together', through emotional growth from challenges and setbacks. We looked at creative ways children and adults can share feelings, thoughts or ideas through art, music, writing, poetry, dance, drama, photography and film, or just doing activities that make them feel good.

Download resources: <https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/parents-and-carers/>
<https://parentingsmart.place2be.org.uk/>



<https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/hub/quick-tips-to-save-energy/> <https://www.thegreenage.co.uk/100-ways-to-save-energy-in-your-home/>

The Eco council will be looking at energy saving ideas for St. Mary's. Here are some tips to help you save energy at home.



SAFER INTERNET DAY

Safer Internet Day 2022 'All fun and games? Exploring respect and relationships online', promotes safe and positive use of digital technology. There is an amazing range of information and opportunities online, and its potential to inform, connect and inspire us. The campaign focuses on how we can know what to trust online, supporting young people to question, challenge and change the online world. It explores how influence, persuasion and manipulation can impact young people's decisions, opinions and what they share online.

Use these free resources to talk to your child about online safety this Safer Internet Day. They include activities, conversation starters and information to help parents and carers talk to their children about how to navigate the issue of reliability of information online in a safe, responsible and engaging way.

Download the resources:

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/safer-internet-day-2022/advice-for-parents-and-carers>

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/foster-carers-and-adoptive-parents>

<https://saferinternet.org.uk/guide-and-resource/grandparents>



MATHLETES 2022

Congratulations to the following children who have been chosen to represent their class as Mathletes this year. They will take part in

competitions, share their ideas and promote maths across the school.

Class	Mathletes
Maple	Ihuoma
Yew	Ruby
Juniper	Ben
Poplar	Teddy
Pine	Gargi
Birch	Annie-Rose
Cedar	Siji
Oak	Ashley Tolu

So far, the children have carried out surveys and shared their ideas about their maths lessons. Year 6 have already competed in their first maths battle, with Oak class narrowly defeating Cedar class.

Miss Staunton
Mathematics Lead

YEAR 5 POETRY

Last term, children from Year 5 put their poetry skills to the test and wrote Kennings about people that inspire them. We sent these off as entries to a Young Writers competition, which will see children's work published in a book, and many children were successful. Congratulations Year 5!

We look forward to reading your published work.

ATTENDANCE

Whole school attendance is currently at **95.31%**

Please remember to call the office on each day of your child's absence from school if they are unwell.



WORLD MATHS DAY 2022

This year, World Maths Day will be celebrated on the 23rd March 2022. On this day, millions of students across the world are invited to compete in Live

Mathletics challenges to determine a global winner, while also participating in fun activities that highlight the wonder of numbers.

From 9th March, when your child logs into Mathletics, they will be able to participate in the warm up period. On 23rd March, just log in to Mathletics as usual and your child can take part in the 'live maths games'. There will be 20 live maths games that will count towards your child's World Maths Day score. Each game lasts 60 seconds and there will be prizes awarded by Mathletics for top scorers.

Good luck!

Miss Staunton
Mathematics Lead

NATIONAL NUMERACY

National Numeracy are a charity committed to building the nation's number confidence and skills. They have produced a **National Numeracy Family Maths Toolkit** which is full of ideas and free activities to help families enjoy maths together. You can access all of these resources for free on the following link:

<https://www.nationalnumeracy.org.uk/helping-children-maths/family-maths-toolkit>

They have also provided top tips for parents and families:

Be positive about maths. Don't say things like "I can't do maths" or "I hated maths at school"; your child might start to think like that themselves.

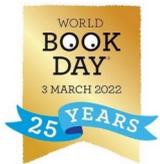
Point out the maths in everyday life. Include your child in activities involving maths such as using money, cooking and travelling.

Praise your child for effort rather than talent. This shows them that by working hard they can always improve.

If you struggle with maths yourself, try their free online tool '@National Numeracy Challenge' to improve your own maths level.

Miss Staunton
Mathematics Lead





WORLD BOOK DAY

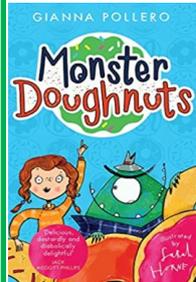
This year, to celebrate World Book Day, all children (and staff!) will be invited to take part in our vocabulary parade on **Thursday 3rd March**.

We would like you to choose a word and dress up as a clue to that piece of vocabulary. Preferably, this would be an ambitious word which other children might learn about on the day – you might even teach the staff some new vocabulary!

You do not have to spend a lot of money on this outfit; try to make it from items you already have at home. Ideally, you should also have the word displayed on you somewhere. There will be prizes for winners across the school. Google ‘vocabulary parade’ for some inspiration.

We kindly ask each child for a £1 donation to take part in this and the other festivities of the day. These contributions will go towards book-related events we hold throughout the year.

Mrs Bennett
English Lead



AUTHOR VISIT

Gianna Pollero, author of the ‘**Monster Doughnuts**’ books, will be visiting our school on Friday 4th March. Children in years 3, 4 and 5 will be taking part in sessions with her. However, **all** children in the school have the opportunity to purchase her books at a discounted price and all books will be signed by Gianna herself. If you would like to purchase any books, please pay via ParentPay.

Mrs Bennett
English Lead

BALANCE BIKE COMPETITION

On Thursday 24th February, a select group of pupils competed in a balance bike competition. The competition took place at Greenacre Academy and was hosted by Greenacre Sports Partnership. Our team competed against nine other schools from Medway. The pupils participated in individual races and team relays. The pupils represented our school with pride. They were determined, resilient and demonstrated great team work.

We are extremely proud to announce that we came in at 2nd place! A huge congratulations to all members of the team.



WALK ON WEDNESDAY

Some updates on Walk on Wednesday: so far this year as a school we have managed to take **945 cars off the road** by walking to school on a Wednesday so thank you for your great efforts!

Oak class and **Birch class** are our top two KS2 classes at the moment.

Beech class and **Willow class** are our top two KS1 classes so far. **Keep up the great walking (scooting, riding, park and stride). The KM team give out many great prizes (see below) to individual classes so those extra few walkers could make a difference.**

Prize Schedule for Buster's Book Club and Walk to School – Term 4

Date	Prize/s
Weds 23 February	2 x two K'Nex sets – ‘Gears’ and ‘Levers and Pulleys’
Weds 2 March	1 x KickStart Sports visit to your winning class 1 x book bundle
Weds 9 March	1 x two bean bag seats for your school library / reading corner 1 x book bundle
Weds 16 March	Author session via Award Publications (details TBC & this may have to be pushed back slightly as we await author availability dates)
Weds 23 March	1 x class trip to Hornby Museum & Visitor Centre in Thanet 1 x book bundle

CASHLESS & PARENTPAY DEADLINE

As mentioned previously, the school was aiming to go cashless from September 2021.

Thank you to all the parents that are already using ParentPay for all payment items.

We will no longer be accepting cash or cheques in school after Friday 1st April 2022.

If you have not previously set up an account and have mislaid the original letter, please let the office know and we will endeavour to supply a copy before this date. Many thanks.

Mrs Good
Finance Manager

OASIS LUNCH CLUB UPDATE

Oasis has been taking place during lunchtimes since the beginning of the academic year and lots of children have benefitted from attending.

The children have been painting, playing board games, drawing, colouring and building models; all in a safe, relaxing environment where they can talk, support and listen to one another.

These are some of the things children have said about Oasis Lunch Club:

'I feel happy in Oasis.'

'Oasis is amazing!'

'Oasis is calm and safe.'

'It's really good and fun!'

If you would like to know more about the wellbeing support offered by the school then please see our website or feel free to call **Sophie Varnham**, our Home School Support Worker, for a discussion about how we can support your child.

Mrs Varnham

Home School Support Worker

FAMILY FIRST

Great news...The UK's best family magazine is now free to all parents & guardians- Enjoy!

Please click on the link below:

https://issuu.com/sevenstarmedia/docs/ff_issue_9_digital100122



Like & follow us on
facebook

Stay safe.
The Family First Team

FAMILY LIVES

Family Lives have launched their new website which has been developed to be more accessible, user friendly and easy to navigate. There is now a library style system to help find and organise the content and resources. The new website has a traffic light system of support services, showing opening times and which services are available. Find it here at <https://www.familylives.org.uk/>



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 **£725.35!**

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/>

DIARY DATES

TERM 4

Monday 21st February - Friday 1st April

SCHOOL CLOSURES 2PM FRIDAY 1ST APRIL



EASTER BREAK

Monday 4th April - Monday 18th April

TERM 5

Tuesday 19th April - Friday 27th May

MAY HALF TERM

Monday 30th May - Friday 3rd June

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY

Monday 6th June (School Closed)

TERM 6

Tuesday 7th June - Friday 22nd July

STAFF DEVELOPMENT DAY & PLATINUM JUBILEE DAY

Friday 24th June (School Closed)

Monday 27th June (School Closed)