

October Newsletter 2023

Dear Parents/ Carers

We hope you had a lovely and restful half term holiday. **Welcome to the Advent 2 Term.** Whilst this is a long term of 9 weeks, it will be packed with fun learning and lots of events to enjoy. In this newsletter we share some highlights from last term and notify you of events for this term. We look forward to seeing you in school and working in partnership with you this term.

Flu immunisations



The local NHS nursing team will be at St Mary's school on the **10th of November** for the annual free flu immunisations. You have received a letter, with the information, including the web link to the www.leicsandrutlandimms.co.uk site for the **online consent and the unique school code:**

LE138295. Please complete the form online- do not return any forms to the school. Reminders will be sent closer to the date. The access to the online system will close on the 9th of

November



School Uniform: Advent 2 Term

The children should now be wearing their winter uniform until the start of the Summer term (After the Easter holidays.) The Winter uniform is the blue shirt and tie, with black or navy- blue trousers, skirt or pinafore. On PE days, pupils come to school wearing their PE kits. We would advise wearing black or navy-blue tracksuits for PE in these colder months, white or blue t-shirts only. On PE days **all jewellery should be removed.** If earrings cannot be removed, please put earring tape **over it at home.** The only jewellery allowed are ear studs (not hoops) and analogue watches. Smart (digital) watches or fit bits cannot be worn in school.

A reminder to label each item of clothing please. There are increasing amounts of jumpers in lost property, which we cannot return to children as they are not named. Thank you for your support on this.

Attendance Matters

Thank you to all parents who attended parent teacher meetings last term. Hopefully your class teacher has told you what your child's attendance is. If your child's attendance is above 95%, then they have made a great start to the year. We do recognise that on occasion, absence is unavoidable, or there has been genuine illness. Evidence shows that pupils with consistently high attendance and punctuality throughout their time in school, gain better end of year results.

St Mary's aims to maintain all pupil's attendance at the highest levels possible, considering individual pupil circumstances and needs. As part of our pastoral care, when a pupil's attendance has fallen below 95% and there is significant absence, we explore if there are any additional support systems we can put in place, working with parents. As always, we appreciate your continued support, please do not hesitate to get in touch if there is anything further you wish to discuss. Please ring the school office every day your child is ill, stating what the symptoms are and not just my child is not well. This helps the school have the correct code on the registers.

Please see the NHS information previously on Class Dojo: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Thank you for your cooperation.

Achievements/ Events in the Advent 1 Term

Junior Boys and Girls football: Charnwood Tournament



Pupils have had writing published in the Young Writer's competition.

A Fabulous Book Fayre



Welcome to our new Foundation St Anne's class. The Year Five children will be their Prayer Partners



Thank you for your generosity we had a fantastic Harvest Liturgy, giving much needed items to John Storer House and a fantastic Macmillan Coffee/ cake afternoon raising over £250.



A new School Council and Chaplaincy team



Lovely Trips out: Twycross Zoo, Charnwood Museum and Queen's Park

The Chaplaincy Team met with two other schools at a day at the Rosmini Centre. Our 4 young leaders had a lovely day with other groups across the St Thomas Aquinas Academy.



The Studio and Learning lounge have been developed into a SEND intervention and counselling area, with sensory activities for children. Mrs Rutledge and Mrs O'Connell support children in these areas.



As well as the Catholic Faith- we had two weeks learning about Judaism and Islam last term

Pupils also visit fortnightly the Abbey Field Care home



Reminders/ Dates for the Advent 2, Lent and Pentecost Terms

Friday 27th October: Year one and Two sleep over

1st Nov: All Saints mass : 9.15a.m church

2nd Nov: All souls Liturgy : 9a.m : school Hall

Friday 3rd Nov: Disco postponed

From November 6th week: toast and hot chocolate will be sold- 1 class per day

Thursday 9th November: Remembrance Liturgy

10th November: Flu vaccinations

13th November: anti bullying week

14th November: Open Day- new EYFS parents

16th November: Loughborough College performance in school

17th November: Training Inset day – pupils not in school.

Friday 24th November: after school- Christmas Film night

Saturday 25th November: St Mary's Church Parish Fayre

27th Nov: Advent Wreath Blessing Liturgy

Friday 1st of December: Menphys Carol concert De Montfort Hall

5th Dec: Open Day tours for parents

6th Dec: Parents' mental Health forum in school

Thursday 7th of December: St Mary's School Christmas Fayre After school

Friday 8th Dec: In school mass Feast of the Immaculate Conception

Tuesday 12 Dec: EYFS Nativity

Wednesday 13th Dec: Year one and Two Nativity

Friday 15th December: Own Clothes day

11th Dec : Pantomime morning

Tuesday 19th of December: Ks2: junior carol concert in the Church at 6p.m

22nd Dec: last day of the term- school in all day. Christmas Parties- children come dressed in Party clothes.

Christmas Holidays: 25th December to the 5th of January 24.

Children return to school for the Spring term on the 8th of January 24

LENT TERMS 2024

Friday 19th January: Film night

Thursday 8th February: 1.30p.m – 6p.m: Parent Teacher meetings

Friday 9th February: Valentines Disco

Thursday 21st March: Talent Show

Friday 22nd March: Own Clothes Day

Friday 17th May: Pyjama Day and film night

PENTECOST TERMS

From 3rd June: Ice Poles to be sold at lunchtimes

27th June: After school- Summer Fayre

Curriculum: please see your child's class page on dojo for further information about learning in class and on the class page on the school website

Religious Education

The pupils learn from the Catholic Come and See programme, doing 3 units, but have also learnt a week each on other faiths Judaism and Islam. They spend two hours a week on RE.

RSHE- relationships, sex and health education and Personal Development Curriculum

The new RSHE Ten Ten lessons programme of study is being used at St Mary's this term, in line with the blocked curriculum for the other foundation subjects. Teachers do inform parents and share resources as appropriate before the lessons with parents. Parents were also invited to the consultations of using these materials before the school adopted this programme. Teachers are happy to share what the children are learning in these lessons. The lessons follow the Catholic ethos, but also address wider lessons from PHSE, such as citizenship, money responsibility, friendships and staying safe. The RSE is currently on the school website, the new RSHE materials will be placed on the website this term. The school has a sequenced and progressive personal development curriculum for each year group, which addresses areas such as road safety, water safety, online safety and British Values such as democracy to name a few.

English and Mathematics

English and Mathematics are taught in the mornings. Year Two to Year Six have a daily lesson of each of these subjects. Reading is at the centre of the English lessons and Junior pupils also have an additional reading session with their teachers in the afternoon, twice a week- called shared modelled reading. EYFS and Year one focus on early reading and phonics through the Little Wandle programme. Each class also has a story time at 3p.m. The White Rose maths scheme is used to teach Mathematics, but pupils also practise times tables on rock stars.

PE: Physical Education

Mr Headley and Mr Mitchell are the school's new sport's coaches. Each class has about 2 hours of PE, as they do the daily mile in addition to their PE lessons. The junior classes also have a half term of swimming lessons. This important life skill is an essential part of the PE curriculum, as Year 6 pupils should be able to swim 25m on their front and back. The pupils learn a range of skills. This term they will be doing gymnastics and dance.

Foundation subjects: History, Geography, Science, Art and Design and Technology, Music and Computing

This Academic year some subjects such as Geography, History, Art, design and Science are taught in blocks- hence called the blocked curriculum. The subject is taught each afternoon for two weeks, rather than having 1 lesson each week spread over the half term. The school has adopted this approach, as it enables pupils to remember more and apply more complex ideas in their work as they are focusing on 1 subject for the week. This also helps pupils with SEND needs. Music is taught weekly by Mrs Leaney on Wednesdays. All classes have the opportunity to learn musical instruments, but the Junior classes will have their own recorder to learn this year. All the teachers are learning this too. The classes all have computing lessons, using the school's laptops and tablets which have a secure filtering system. In each lesson they learn about online safety.

Parent teacher meetings October 23 and Survey Comments

Thank you so much for meeting the teachers on parent's evening or in that week. Thank you to parents who filled in the Surveys- very positive. A few samples below.

"I'm happy with same Mary's School. All staff are very helpful. I can't see anything that can be improved-the children are happy."

Good at: "Supporting local communities."

Good at: "Keeping us up to date with my child's progress, supporting the learning, keeping the children constantly engaged and learning new things every day."

"Teaching to a good level- helping children to make friendly relationships with others."

Communication: "Impressed with dojo." "Works well through dojo"

"The school is doing well at promoting Academic excellence and promoting sports and other activities for children, promoting and living out the Catholic life of the school."

"Facilities – always clean."

"We are really happy."

"Communication- easy to talk to- everything is very good."

"Well- co-ordinated curriculum and love the reading culture."

Areas parents would like to see developed : You said- We did

"Ensure doors open promptly in the mornings." Staff reminded of doors open at 8.35a.m.

"Helping children to understand the importance of study for their future life more." (We will have a vocations/ jobs week inviting visitors to talk about their jobs and what qualifications they had to get.)

"More notification of bad behaviour." We will be using the school registration system of Arbor to send you more timely reports on good and negative behaviour. *"Notify earlier about certificates."*

"Nothing- we are really pleased with everything."

"Improvement of the toilet facilities and playgrounds." The head teacher will continue looking for grants to improve the playground facilities and toilets. Your fundraising with the FOSM helps immensely with this. This Academic year the fencing in the Junior and infant playground will be improved this term. The trim trail in the junior playground will be removed this term and this Academic year a new trim trail will be installed.

"More activities and art" There is an increased range of extra-curricular clubs including art and singing clubs this term. The pupils have all been engaging in more art lessons this term. We will be doing some whole school art activities this Academic year.

"Talent exploration activities." Fosm talent show- but will also have more enrichment afternoons- where children can develop talents and inviting visitors in for this.

The St Thomas Aquinas Academy will be sending out parent surveys from Arbor to all parents to be filled in between the 6th and 20th of November. Your feedback really helps the school to improve, so we are very grateful for the time you take to fill in Surveys.

After School wrap around club/ Extra Curricular Clubs

Thank you to the teaching assistants who run the After-school wrap around care club. Mrs Darcy and Mrs Guyatt have now retired from the after school club to spend more time with their families, so Mrs Heald and Mrs Wilson will be running the club Monday to Thursday until 5.45p.m. You can also use the after-school club until 4.15p.m which is half price at £4.00.

There is a range of extra-curricular clubs from dance, drama. Lego, multi- sports, art, singing to name a few that finish at 4.15p.m Monday to Friday, that are run by the sport's coaches Mr Headley and Mr Mitchell, school staff and the dance teacher Sophie.