

Merry Christmas Everyone and Happy and Blessed New Year

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Newsletter

20th December 2023

We have had a very busy, but incredibly wonderful end to what has been a long Autumn Term. I wanted to take this opportunity share with you some of things we have been doing, learning, introducing, and experiencing over the first term of the school year but the last term of 2023!!! Can you believe how quickly another year has flown by?!!!



The children have taken part in some truly magical and memorable experiences including the Key Stage One and Two performances were so enchanting. Your monetary contributions meant that we raised nearly £200 that will be used for good causes. We had so much wonderful feedback was just lovely to hear. We were glad that the acting, reading, and singing made you feel so Christmassy. It was touching to see so many of you with tears in your eyes as you watched your children perform. They were so chuffed with themselves. We think they all did a fantastic job, and we were proud of everyone's hard work and dedication in putting it together. Well done St Mary's Family.

The children have had a great time in choir this term. They have been very enthusiastic and have sounded beautiful. It has been wonderful to see some of the quieter children singing solos in front of each other, and others taking the lead when they have split



into two- and three-part songs. This last half term, they have been busy practising their Christmas songs ready for their visit to the Madeley rest rooms to perform, which went superbly well. The children were magnificent. They sang their little hearts out, and smiled all the way through, spreading Christmas cheer throughout the whole performance. There was

hardly a dry eye in the house, everyone there was so complimentary about the children's singing and their exemplary behaviour. The children sang Ding Dong Merrily on High, Joy to the World, Silent Night, Away in a Manger, Christmas is a time to love and many more. The children were so excited and proud, and they represented themselves, their families, and our school so well. Well done everyone...keep singing! They are hoping to sing in St Mary's church for our Christmas service.

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The whole school went to church to celebrate Advent and our Darkness into Light Day. The children read the gospel, shared thank you prayers and bidding prayers. Most of the children included thanked God for their families and for their teachers. They read



with confidence and pride. The parishioners were all very complimentary as all the children's behaviour walking to and from school, and the reverence they displayed in church was exceptional. To look around and watch whilst the older children cared for the younger ones and how they lined-up down the aisle for their blessing from Father, was simply breathtaking. It was a proud and touching moment for all of us.

We were very excited to launch Digital Leaders at St Mary's. Children in years 4/5/6 had the opportunity to apply for the role and be interviewed. They have then begun undertaking several different roles from assisting teachers in lessons, to learning how to create algorithms to program physical computing kit (Bee-Bots) to learning to block code and program crumble controllers and sparkles. We are looking forward to continuing to develop the role of Digital Leaders over the course of next term and plan for them to visit workplaces that use computing at the heart of their business.

This term we were very excited to begin whole class instrumental tuition at St Marys. Years 5 and 6 have received a weekly lesson on the ukelele from Telford and Wrekin Music service. During these lessons, they have learned to play four chords: C, A minor, G and F. They have learned the correct fingering technique and a variety of strumming patterns and have applied this knowledge to accompany a range of pop songs and compose their own pieces. Years 3 and 4 will be the next classes to receive whole class instrumental tuition, which will be starting in January.



We have been awarded the green flag for our Eco-Schools work. We are incredibly proud that we can now officially call ourselves an Eco-Friendly school. This is a huge achievement for us at St Mary's and comes as a result of a lot of time, effort, enthusiasm, and engagement not only from our ever-growing Eco-Committee but also

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from the school. We are excited to continue our work on helping the environment and making sure our impact on the environment is a positive one. I am delighted to say that for the first time, staff, children, and our families, took part in Cut Your Carbon month and we look forward to finding out how much impact our efforts have made in the new year.



Our oldest children have enjoyed an exciting term with many learning opportunities linked to their topic of World War 1. They had a wonderful interactive, time-travelling workshop at the beginning of our topic which really helped to bring the rest of the term alive. They linked their writing to different aspects of our World War 1 learning and

to bring their learning to an exciting conclusion, they visited RAF Cosford. They had the opportunity to dress in various outfits, see planes, helicopters, missiles and sit in the cockpit of an aeroplane that had seen active duty during the Falklands conflict.

Our lower juniors have had a fantastic time studying The Victorians. As part of this study, they visited the Black Country Living Museum where they had the opportunity to experience a mining show, re-live the lives of two Victorian children, and sit through a lesson in the Victorian classroom. Everyone had to be immaculately behaved but the adults ended up getting in trouble with the Victorian schoolmistress and were given a telling-off ;-)! They have also been learning about how fireworks are made. They have written brilliant non-chronological reports as well as designing their own styles of fireworks! This has been accompanied by their reading of *The Firework Maker's Daughter* by Philip Pullman which they have thoroughly enjoyed.



Children in the lower juniors have been immersed into their topic work this term having many opportunities to link their learning to the Romans. They have been writing all about Roman soldiers and weapons, and mapping out the territory and land gained during the Roman Empire to creating. Most impressively, they have been recording their own podcasts!! They have

particularly enjoyed making Roman shields and re-enacting battle formations and marches outside, imagining how they should protect their centurion and how they can avoid incoming arrows!! They also had lots of fun outside digging up and creating their very own Roman road on the field, allowing them to have a hands-on experience to see what it would have been like for a Roman soldier all those hundreds of years ago. Their Roman adventure was punctuated by their brilliant trip to Chester where they were taught how to dress as Roman, eat like a Roman and enjoy leisure activities as a Roman!

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Their homework contributions have been amazing, ranging from the making of the colosseum, Roman shields, and chariots!! Wow, wow, wow. So much to be proud of.

Children in Key Stage one have thoroughly enjoyed a fabulous term with so many exciting opportunities being had. The children have had a wonderful time exploring outside in both science and outdoor learning lessons and Year 2 particularly enjoyed learning about habitats on their visit to Kingswood Trust. From habitat trails to hibernating bees - they experienced nature on their doorstep and were all astounded at just how much they could find. They also had the opportunity to use maps, climb trees and take part in orienteering. So much fun was had by all the children. We have been reading more to the children this term, and the Year 2's have engaged incredibly well with the texts shared in reading, particularly *Fantastic Mr Fox* by Roald Dahl, which has become a real favourite and is requested repeatedly for independent reading. It is such a joy to see the children delighting in a shared love of a story (could possibly be a good gift from Santa).

Reception have had a brilliant first term at school. They have settled in beautifully and have shown great engagement and enjoyment in their learning. We have all enjoyed getting to know them and what a joy they are!! This half-term they have enjoyed two visits from the author Hannah Adjepong, who talked to them about her life in Ghana and about some of the stories that she has written. They have really enjoyed learning about their class poet, Nick Sharratt, who has quickly become a favourite author of theirs! They have also learned a great selection of poems which they are able to recite brilliantly and with great enthusiasm! During their real-life superheroes topic, they had a visit from Zoe the dental nurse who taught everyone about how to look after their teeth. They also had a very exciting visit from PCSO Linda and PC Chris from the police. They talked to the children about their jobs, what they wear and the special equipment they use. They even got to sit in the police car and press the button that makes the lights flash!



This Christmas reminds us of what a close-knit family we have here at St Mary's and all that we must be appreciative of. Thank you to all parents and carers for your keenness to work closely with school staff to enable their child to achieve. Staff have appreciated all your kind words and gestures of thanks and appreciation this year. Thank you for all your commitment to your child's good attendance, reading practise, homework, and educational trips. The children talk happily and enthusiastically about their learning and the experiences they have had. Big thanks to all the children - they provide us and each other with so very much joy and happiness. They are such a credit to you.

Wishing you a blessed and joyous Christmas season! May God bless you all and keep you and your families safe and well.

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Church Diary

DIARY

24th Fourth Sunday of Advent
Masses 5pm and 10.00am
At St. Mary's

CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES

Christmas Eve (Sunday Evening 24th)

5.00pm Children's Mass -St. Mary's
7.30pm Carols - St. Mary's
8.00pm Vigil Mass -St. Mary's

Christmas Day (Monday 25th)

9.00am Morning Mass - St. Mary's
11.00am Morning Mass - St. Mary's



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In need of support...

Pick up the phone... you're not alone

We'll be open
throughout the
festive period

- Call Samaritans for free – **116 123**
- For anyone struggling to cope **Text SHOUT – 85258**
- For young people under the age of 35 or concerns
a young person is thinking of suicide Call Papyrus
Hopeline247– **0800 068 4141** or **Text 07860 039967**
- For more support and advice visit
<http://bit.ly/3SSbK9M>

Scan me
You're not alone



Christmas

See you all on
the 9th January
2024