



# ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS TRUST

C.E.O.: Miss L. O'Callaghan

[www.stmaryscatholicprimaryschoolstrust.co.uk](http://www.stmaryscatholicprimaryschoolstrust.co.uk)



## ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC JUNIOR SCHOOL

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Newsletter 21

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2024

Dear Parents,

Welcome back to school. I hope that all of you had a good rest together as families, and have marked the start of Lent together. This important season in the Church year has been the focus of our assembly and liturgy time this week.

### Swimming Gala

We are delighted to report that our Swim Squad excelled at the Croydon Finals, which were held at Trinity School on Wednesday evening. Because of the dedication of the children and the skilled preparation from Miss Aherne, our children have had the opportunity to succeed in a very competitive environment. The children won fourteen medals in total.

### Mobile telephones for children

Many of you will be aware that the Department for Education (DFE) have published guidance this month about the use of mobile phones by children, following consultation with education professionals. I am pleased to say that the guidelines issued are broadly similar to the routines that we have had in place for a number of years. Please remember that we *discourage* children using mobile phones on the journey to and from schools. Children who use phones in public are a target for thieves. I speak from personal experience: my fifteen-year-old son was assaulted and his phone taken three weeks ago.

Phones are not permitted for children in school: if parents are insistent that children carry them, phones must always be handed in on arrival. This has not changed. A useful way of remembering this is 'never used, seen or heard' whilst on the school site.

The following section of the DFE guidance is also of use to parents, as we have always asked you to support the school regarding our guidance:

*"Parents have an important role in supporting the school's policy on prohibiting the use of mobile phones and should be encouraged to reinforce and discuss the policy at home as appropriate, including the risks associated with mobile phone use and the benefits of a mobile phone-free environment.*

***Where parents need to contact their child during the school day, they should be directed to the school office, where staff should be aware of the school's policy on relaying messages and facilitating contact."***

I am aware that the last point has been ignored by parents recently, who wish to communicate with children quickly and use the child's phone as a convenience. Please only contact your child on site through the school office.

### Parent / Teacher interviews

Thank-you to the parents of children in classes 3A and 4D who completed their interviews with teachers on Tuesday evening. It was a pleasure to welcome you to school and to talk to some of you about the progress that your children are making.

### Football Club – Fridays

There are still plenty of spaces available for SSA After-school football practice on Fridays from 3.30 pm to 4.30pm for children of all year groups. This is live on ParentPay.

### **CSMA Music Festival**

Parents of children who are taking part in the music festival have been sent details of how to obtain tickets to watch the children. The Festival takes place on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> March. All tickets are on sale through the box office at Fairfield Halls and those wishing to purchase are encouraged to act quickly.

<https://www.fairfield.co.uk/events/csma-festivals-2024>

### **Assemblies and Liturgies**

Yesterday the children of Year 3 shared a beautiful Liturgy. The children helped everyone, children and adults, to understand the importance of the start of Lent and our commitment to prayer and charity. Many thanks to Mrs Desouza, Mrs Chappell, and the Year 3 team for their work in helping the children to prepare their liturgy.

Here are the dates for the forthcoming assemblies:

Thursday 29<sup>th</sup> February – Class 6P

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March – Class 6G

### **Achievement Certificates**

The achievement certificates this week are awarded to Sofia in 3A, Mia in 3E, Emily in 4D, Sofii in 4T, Ryan in 5B, Nathaniel in 5C, Harmony in 6G and Hanna in 6P. The Head of School's award goes to Racheal in 3E and the swimmers' award is for the finalists who took part this week. The Kindness Award this week goes to Suri in 5B.

Have a restful weekend.

Yours faithfully,

Andrew McDonald

Head of School

#### **Health Advice for parents**

##### **Coronavirus**

*The World Health Organisation now considers the covid pandemic to not be a global health emergency. For advice and support if you suspect someone has covid, please visit:*

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/covid-19/covid-19-symptoms-and-what-to-do/>

***When using a test, check that it is a recent one that is set up to detect new strains of the virus.***

##### **Group A Strep (streptococci)**

Scarlet fever is usually a mild illness, but it is highly infectious. Look out for symptoms in your child, which include a sore throat, headache, and fever, along with a fine, pinkish or red body rash with a sandpapery feel. On darker skin the rash can be more difficult to detect visually but will have a sandpapery feel. Children with these symptoms should not attend school.

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/living-safely-with-respiratory-infections-including-covid-19>