

St Mary's News



Monday 11th March 2024

Message from the Headteacher

We started this school year with a themed arts week in September focusing on Pope Francis' letter '**Laudato Si**' which encourages us all to take action to protect our planet.



The focus for Book week was carefully chosen to link to this important message and it was incredible to see the variety of costumes on **World Book Day** linking to our focus story: '**The Planet in a Pickle Jar**' by Marton Stanev. During our Book Day Assembly we looked at the items each child wanted to preserve for our future world; the things they really value. Of course, there were lots of animal costumes and some football teams, but also costumes representing art, music, theatre, real books, rainforests, trees, flowers and plants, the ocean and sea life, peace and love. Thank you for supporting this dress up theme – its message to the children was important.



On **International Women's Day** we reflected on the incredible woman that have inspired us. Needless to say most children mentioned their mums, some even said their teachers! I hope all of our mothers, carers and grandmothers enjoyed Mother's Day yesterday and hope you all take the opportunity to visit your children in class this afternoon at 2.30pm for our Mother Figures Open Book Event.

Important Dates

21 st March	Spring Concert at Church – 18:30 - 20:00	KS2 and parents/carers
22 nd March	Year 3 Liturgy in School – 9:00	Parents/Carers of children in Year 3
28 th March	Maundy Thursday Mass – 9:00 at Church	Year 1 – 6
28 th March	Break up for Easter holidays 15:15	All Years
1 st April – 12 th April	EASTER BREAK – 15:15 close	

SUMMER TERM 1st half		
15 th April	Children return to school	All Years
19 th Apr	Whole School Easter Mass at Church - 8:50	All Years + Parents/Carers

Spring Concert

Come along to our Spring Concert on Thursday 21st March led by Mrs Wilson. The evening will be hosted by Mr Thomas and Fr John. The concert celebrates how important music is to the life of our school and it showcases performances from our orchestra, recorders, individual musicians and our choir. The staff have also prepared a little number for you!



Announcements

PTA

St Mary's have a new PTA committee which was voted in at the AGM on Wednesday 6th March. Thank you to the parents who put themselves forward for election and have shown such commitment and passion for supporting our school. The next step is to harness the wider support of our school community and organise events to benefit the community and raise funds to enhance our school.



Mrs Ryder – PTA Chair Mrs Zengarini – PTA Secretary Mrs Morris – PTA Treasurer

Book Fayre

All children should have a book voucher that they can use in a book shop or at our scholastic book fayre which will be in school from Tuesday 12th March. The government recently said that 1 in 5 children do not own a book, that is why the book vouchers are so important as they can be exchanged for a book free from participating book shops like Waterstones. Do come along after school to our book fayre and have a browse at the books. The vouchers can also be used towards the cost of more expensive books.

Free Books

Over this book fortnight we have tubs of free books outside Year 2 classrooms for children to help themselves to. Many of these are good quality books which are suitable for children who are not yet ready to read chapter books. Help yourself. We will donate the remaining books to local charities next week.

Reminders

Health and Attendance

We have a large team of first aiders at St Mary's School who are trained to care for your child who may be unwell or may have injured themselves at school. Our aim at all times will be to endeavour to avoid sending children home and to encourage them to stay at school in education, unless of course they are too unwell or injured and are unable to cope at school. If your child requires pain relief and is well enough to attend school, where possible, please ensure this has been issued prior to attending school. For more information see [Is My Child Too Ill for school](#)

A reminder that if your child has diarrhoea or vomiting they must remain off school 48 hours after the last episode of diarrhoea or vomiting.

Please ensure your child brings in a clear refillable water bottle to school on a daily basis. Poor hydration adversely affects mental performance and learning ability and may cause tiredness, headaches, reduced alertness and inability to concentrate.

If your child suffers from allergies i.e. hayfever, please ensure your child has their medication before attending school. Where possible, please use a longer lasting antihistamine such as Piriteze, where doses can be carried outside of school hours.

Year 2 SATS Information Meeting

Come along and find out about the Year 2 assessments which will take place in May and June this year. Mrs Hemsil will give a short information session for parents on Monday 11th March at 3.30pm. All Year 2 parents are welcome to pop into Class 2H after pick up.

Lent Activities

All parents are invited to a short Parent Prayer Time in the hall on Tuesday at 2.55pm-3.10pm. All are welcome.

Food Bank

The children are keen to do extra this season and alms giving is an important part of Lent. If you are able to send in any food items (non-perishable) then please do and we will deliver it to the local food bank. This activity helps the children to fill our Lenten tubes



Be Here, be Ready

Attendance Monitoring

Our attendance is monitored very closely following government guidelines and although we recognise how important it is for families to have time together and have affordable holidays, we are not able to authorise holiday absence. As soon as a child's attendance falls below 90% parents should expect a standard attendance letter which will contain the official line on absence including the possibility of legal action. It should be noted that schools do not gain anything from issuing penalty notices as the money goes to the council, not to the school. Our attendance team recognise that receiving an attendance letter can be upsetting, and we are training our team to look closely at the reasons for the absences and to consider each case individually. In response to some concerns raised by parents about high absences due to sickness, we reassure you that we would not penalty notice for genuine sickness absence and would ensure that together with the parents we set up an action plan to improve attendance involving support if needed.

During our **100% attendance week** last week we had 380 out of 402 pupils with 100% attendance. Well done to Seals class and 1B who got close to 100% attendance for the whole class. Thank you for your support. Helping you to have healthy children who maximise their learning opportunities matters. Thank you.

Spotlight

Year 4 Team

This week we are focusing on our Year 4 team and finding out what their favourite children's authors are and why. Maybe you could try out some of the books they recommend for yourself.

Miss Howard: My Favourite children's author when I first started reading was Enid Blyton especially the Secret Seven stories and the Island of Adventure. When I started teaching in Foundation I really enjoyed reading Hairy McLary by Lynley Dodd and all the Elmer Books by David McKee. Artemis Fowl, a series of books by Eoin Colfer made me laugh and then the Harry Potter Books by J.K. Rowling exploded onto the reading scene. I had to wait a whole year for each new book and then I would demolish them in two days. The detail and adventure with the right amount of danger and humor made the stories gripping. The children's book that has touched my heart the most is I am David by Anne Holm, the integrity of the boy David throughout his experiences is so powerful.

Mrs Lovell: My favourite is Charles Dickens, in particular a book about David Copperfield as the recount of his life reflects how resilient he was in overcoming challenges and learning from any mistakes that he made. This allowed him to grow as a person. I try and learn from his reliance.

Mrs Roe: My favourite Children's author would be Chris Riddell. He is an illustrator and author and my favourite book that he has written is 'Goth Girl and the ghost of a mouse'. It is full of adventure and the humor is wonderful. During the story the main character - Ada Goth - together with her ghostly mouse friend unravels a mystery and a devastating plot by the butler Maltravers. Chris Riddell wrote a series of Goth Girl books all of which are a joy to read.

Mrs Hinvies: My favourite children's author is Simon Seabag Montefiore and his wife Santa Montefiore. He has written the Royal Rabbits of London, a series of four books that are wonderfully illustrated which describe the adventures of Shylo and his rabbit friends. Escape from the Tower, The Great Diamond Chase and The Hunt for the Golden Carrot are the other books in the series. Great for children to imagine the rabbits and what antics they get up to in London.

Mission Moments

Our Mission Hero this week is Evanna in Year 6.

Each week our Mini Vinnies lead prayers at our Wednesday Prayer Praise Assembly and on Wednesday 6th March Evanna thoughtfully and sensitively shared her thoughts and memories about Reyes, a



former pupil who passed away 5 years ago. This was a wonderful tribute to Reyes and it is incredible to see how much respect and love the children had - what a wonderful way to mark Reyes' anniversary. You will note that the spring flowers planted for Reyes are in bloom around his memorial plaque at the front of the school. Thank you Evanna for your confidence and compassion. **#compassionandcourage**



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Clare Tickel

Diocese of Plymouth



