

St Mary's News



w/c 30th September 2024

Message from the Headteacher

We had an incredible Art Week last week, filled with creativity and imagination. The pupils learned about a variety of artists and produced some fantastic artwork, some talented artists truly shone through. Thank you to Miss Emblin for arranging this event. We look forward to sharing the children's artwork with you in the coming weeks.



Over the past two weeks we have had a higher than normal incidence of staff absence due to autumn viruses – where staff are absent, we will always try to book a consistent cover teacher or use internal cover if available to protect provision.

Our reflections on the Season of Creation will come to a close on Friday 4th October. The children have enjoyed learning about caring for their world and we encourage you to continue having these discussions at home.

The children are all invited to wear an item of yellow to school this Friday in exchange for a donation to our prayer / sensory garden development. You can contribute via Scopay. Please note that it is also CAFOD Family Fast day on Friday 4th October – you can donate to CAFOD online or collect a donation envelope from St Mary's or St Anthony's Church.

Thank you for your continued support.

Value of the Week

Gospel Value: Democracy – we look forward to announcing our Year 6 House Captains before half term.

British Value: Justice – we should treat everyone equally and fairly.

Catholic Social Teaching: Care for Creation (Stewardship).

Important Dates

Friday 4th October	Cafod Family Fast Day/Feast of St Francis of Assisi - Wear something yellow/CAFOD monetary donation (see poster attached)
Monday 7th October	Open Book – Grandparents Day (see poster attached)
Wednesday 9th October	Maths Workshop
Friday 11th October	Harvest Mass (see poster attached)
Thursday 17th October	Open Evening for prospective parents
22nd and 24th October	Parent/Teacher Consultations
Wednesday 23rd October – 9:00	Open Tour of the School for prospective parents

Thursday 24th October – 11:00	Open Tour of the School for prospective parents
25th October - 1st November	Half Term Break
Monday 4th November	INSET Day

Announcements

Request for Donations

We are seeking donations for cushions, baskets, lego and good quality wooden toys to enhance our learning and play spaces. If you have any of these items in good condition that you no longer need, we would greatly appreciate your support. Your generosity will help us to create a warm and engaging environment for the children. Thank you in advance of your kindness!

Open Book – Grandparents

Welcome to all grandparents who are able to join us on Monday 7th October. The children look forward to sharing their artwork with you and some of their recent learning. (see poster attached)

Maths Workshop

On Wednesday 9th October our Maths Leader, Miss Lindsey, will be leading a parent information session on maths. If you would like to support your child’s learning in maths, boost your own confidence in maths and be more informed about our maths curriculum then please do join us. The time will be confirmed at a later date.

The Catholic Children's Society Plymouth

Please see the attached leaflet from the Catholic Children’s Society.

Festival of the Month

Festivals around the World

Festival of the month: **October – Círio de Nazaré – Brazil**

Cirio de Nazaré is an important Catholic festival in honour of Our Lady of Nazareth. Millions of people gather for a morning procession where a statue of Our Lady is placed in a golden, flower decorated carriage and pulled along by thousands of people.



Reminders

Uniform - Please ensure your children come to school in correct uniform. Please remember ankle boots are not allowed in school. Please check our policy on the website if you are unsure before buying uniform.

Bring a Coat - We still have children coming to school without a coat – as the weather cools please ensure they bring a coat this week for outdoor activities.

Walking to School - Walking is a great way to stay healthy and reduce traffic around school.

No Peanut Policy - Please remember, we are a peanut-free school to protect those with allergies.

Earrings - Please be reminded that earrings must be removed or taped over on PE days, school staff are not allowed to do this so your child should be competent. Thank you for your support.

Be Safe

In 2024, WhatsApp lowered the age rating in Europe from 16 to 13. This change received criticism from Children's Rights Advocates, who argued that the changes expose children to potential online harms. This change means that more primary school aged children are accessing WhatsApp than ever before. We have noticed that children at St Mary's are part of WhatsApp groups despite the age limit being 13 years old.

This presents a number of issues for our children:

- The pressure to conform to standards of attractiveness, that are the result of manipulated images, is huge and damaging to both boys and girls.
- Cyber bullying is so easy to hide online. There's no escape from it. There is no safe space for your child once it has started.
- Mediating between pupils who have posted hurtful comments, or pointedly removed one person from a chat group, takes staff time and whilst we try very hard to stop horrible messages being sent when the children are outside school, we can only do so much.

Please support your child by not allowing them access to WhatsApp!

It is incredibly important for parents to have open and honest conversations with their children about social media, so that they will talk to you if something bad happens. Please do not hesitate to ask us for help and support should you find that your child has had a bad experience online.

Be Here, be Ready

Please remember that regular attendance is key to your child's success. We kindly ask that you avoid booking holidays during term time to ensure they don't miss out on valuable learning.

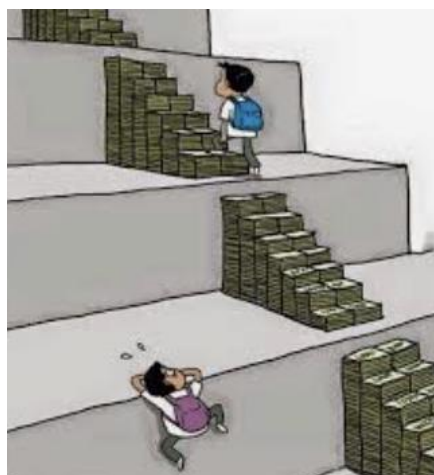
You may have recently received a letter regarding your child's attendance during the previous academic year; please be aware that this was intended to be supportive to make you aware of your child's percentage as the school year ended. We hope that this year, with the new regulations around holidays, that the school's overall attendance headline figures will improve and, more importantly, children will be in school and learning.

Our whole school attendance currently is 96.5% so we are just ahead of the Government's minimum attendance target of 96%.

Spotlight

Reading at Home Matters!

Please take time this week to listen to your child read and also to read to them a favourite story.



Five reasons to read more:

1. **Reading builds vocabulary and language:** it exposes children to new words, phrases and ways of expressing ideas.
2. **Reading enhances imagination and creativity:** through stories children can explore new worlds, characters, and situations, sparking their creativity and imagination.
3. **Reading improves concentration and focus:** regular reading helps develop the ability to focus for longer periods, which is important for learning and everyday tasks.
4. **Reading boosts academic success:** strong reading skills are important for all subjects, from maths word problems to understanding science concepts.

5. **Reading develops empathy and emotional intelligence:** reading stories helps children understand different perspectives and emotions encouraging empathy and social awareness.

If children enjoy reading, then it will become a life-long habit!

Mission Moments



Congratulations to our Mission Heroes this week; Martha and Magdalena in Year 6.

They regularly give up their time at break to interact and play with one of our youngest SEND pupils. They sing and play games, helping the child to develop social and interaction skills. This positive interaction is making such a big difference. This is why we are St Mary's Family!



#humiltyandkindnessto others

Final Word

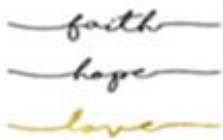
Why did the maths book look so sad?
Because it had too many problems!

Have a good week! 😊



St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher: Mrs Clare Tickel
Diocese of Plymouth



CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF TRUSTED CATHOLIC EDUCATION

Plymouth CAST operates Catholic schools within the Local Authorities of Cornwall, Plymouth, Devon, Torbay, Dorset, Poole & Bournemouth.