



St. Mary of the Angels Catholic Primary School

Following Jesus in all we think, do and say

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14th September 2021

Dear Parents/Carers

Newsletter: 14th September 2021

It was an absolute joy to welcome pupils back to school last Wednesday. Not only was the sun shining but it was Our Lady's birthday so all in all a wonderful day to start the new academic year. We welcomed our new Reception pupils to the school last week and this week we are busy welcoming our new Nursery children and their parents.

Growing Together

Our whole school theme for the first week and a half of the new school year is Growing Together and focuses on how we can all work together to support transition and change as children return to school. The teachers have linked all activities to quality texts which focus on a child's desire to impact on the natural world around them as follows:

- Foundation Stage: *Errol's Garden* by Gillian Hibbs (Child's Play): Errol tells us of his desire for a real garden. He is good at growing things but is running out of space in his tower block flat. Then, one day, he realises that the block has a roof which would make the perfect place for a garden. He involves his neighbours who bring their range of skills to creating it.
- Key Stage 1: *The Secret Sky Garden* by Linda Sarah and Fiona Lumbers (Simon and Schuster): Funni loves hearing the planes and watching the sights from the abandoned airport car park, but she feels that something is missing. Over the course of the book, she transforms the abandoned area into a beautiful garden and with it, discovers a new friend.
- Key Stage 2: *The Promise* by Nicola Davies and Laura Carlin (Walker Books): A girl who is hardened by the harsh urban environment that surrounds her is transformed into a guerrilla gardener by unexpected events. The burgeoning wildlife opens up people's hearts and minds and the girl moves on to multiply the magic.



We look forward to sharing some of the children's ideas and work on our class pages later this week.

Welcome Meetings

The first of our 'Welcome' meetings was held today in the hall when we welcomed our Reception parents and carers in to the school hall to meet with Miss Keane and Miss Cunniffe. The dates for the remaining meetings are as follows:

Welcome to Year 2	Wednesday 15 th September 9am
Welcome to Year 6/Secondary Transfer	Wednesday 15 th September 2.30pm
Welcome to Year 3	Thursday 16 th September 9am
Welcome to Year 5	Thursday 16 th September 3pm
Welcome to Year 1	Friday 17 th September 9am
Welcome to Year 4	Friday 17 th September 3pm
Welcome to Nursery	Tuesday 21 st September 9am

It is very important that you attend these meetings and the presentations shared will be uploaded to the Class Pages section of the website after the meetings.



Learning Means the World

Teachers will be sharing information about our new **Learning Means the World** curriculum during the welcome meetings. **Learning Means the World** has been developed in partnership with Dimensions Curriculum and equips pupils to

build knowledge, skills, attitudes and values, through well-planned and resourced cross-curricular theme units which fully cover the National Curriculum. The themes put important world issues like conservation, conflict, culture and communication at the heart of learning and pupils follow four learning pathways:

EXPLORERS	Nursery & Reception	3 – 5 years	(Foundation Stage)
PATHFINDERS	Year 1 and Year 2	5 – 7 years	(Key Stage 1)
ADVENTURERS	Year 3 & Year 4	7 – 9 years	(Lower key Stage 2)
NAVIGATORS	Year 5 and Year 6	9 – 11 years	(Upper Key Stage 2)

More information will be shared in curriculum newsletters and via the school website in the weeks ahead as we embark on our exciting Learning Means the World journey from the week beginning Monday 20th September.

Covid-19

The start of the new school year feels very different due to the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions and controls. The major changes are:

- Mixing and ‘bubbles’: schools are no longer required to keep children in consistent groups or ‘bubbles’.
- Face coverings are no longer advised for staff and visitors either in classrooms or in communal areas
- Close contacts will now be identified via NHS Test and Trace and education settings will no longer be expected to undertake contact tracing i.e. close bubbles. However, if there is a substantial increase in the number of positive cases in our school or if central government offers the area an enhanced response package, we may be advised to temporarily reintroduce some control measures.

Children are not required to self-isolate if they live in the same household as someone with COVID-19, or are a close contact of someone with COVID-19. Instead, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace, informed they have been in close contact with a positive case and advised to take a [PCR test](#). We would encourage all individuals to take a PCR test if advised to do so.

The removal of ‘bubbles’ will have the biggest impact on the school day as classes are able to mix at lunchtimes and playtimes and we can resume our weekly Foundation Stage/Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 assemblies and hymn practices in the hall. Whole school certificate assemblies on Fridays will continue to be held virtually for now but we look forward to welcoming parents and carers in for class assemblies and prayer service in November, all being well. We are also delighted to be able to invite parents and carers in to school for our Welcome to Year Group meetings.

The control measures that remain in place are as follows:

- Ensuring good hygiene for everyone (regular handwashing, ‘Catch it! Bin it! Kill it!’)
- Maintaining appropriate cleaning regimes
- Keeping occupied spaces well ventilated
- Following public health advice on testing, self-isolation and managing confirmed cases of COVID-19

Schools are also required to have an Outbreak Management Plan and you can access our school’s plan by clicking [here](#). The school’s Covid-19 Risk Assessment has been updated in light of the lifting of restrictions and can be accessed [here](#). Both documents along with other guidance can be found in the [Covid-19 Updates](#) section of the school website.

Music

We are delighted to welcome Miss Pluta to the staff team as our new music teacher. Ms Pluta comes to us via the Tri-Borough Music Hub and will be with us every Monday leading hymn practices and teaching whole class music lessons. The first hymn practices in over a year and a half took place on Monday morning and it was a pleasure to see and hear the children singing their songs of praise together.

We have offered small group instrumental tuition for many years and are delighted to once again be able to offer face to face violin and cello lessons to pupils in Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 6). Instruments will be provided and we will prioritise pupils who are not currently learning an instrument outside of school. Lessons are charged at £4 per lesson/£40 per term (10 lessons) which must be paid in advance. More news to follow later this week.

School Street

Thank you for complying with the new drop off and pick up arrangements which always take a little getting used to at the start of the school year. We are delighted that the temporary ‘School Street’ created by the use of the yellow barriers will remain in place until the end of October. However, from November 1st a new School Street

under an Experimental Traffic Order (ETO) will be installed on Shrewsbury Road between Talbot Road and St Stephen's Gardens (south). This new Experimental School Street will see the removal of temporary barriers and the erecting of signage, along with the painting of explanatory lines on the road surface during the October half term. These will inform drivers that access to this section of Shrewsbury Road is restricted between 8.30 and 9.30am and 3.00 – 4.00pm with fines in place for those who enter the road during these times. We have shared our concern that the safety of the pupils is paramount and that this will be compromised if drivers ignore the signage. The council will be seeking your views in the coming months to make the scheme fit for purpose for the school and the local community and we will let you know when the consultation opens so that you can share any concerns you may have.

Free School Meals

Through the government's Free School Meals initiative, all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 receive free school meals automatically. For children in other year groups, a parent/carer must apply. Westminster council's new system aims to simplify the application process and speed up the eligibility checks. For more information, please click [here](#) or go to www.westminster.gov.uk/free-school-meals. You will have to set up a My Westminster account but you will be advised how to do this when your first enter the website. Please make your application via the Westminster website even if your home address is in a different borough.

If you receive benefits and your child is in Reception or Years 1 or 2 we strongly encourage you to still apply for Free School Meals through the council's system as our school will receive more funding – over £1,000 per eligible pupil – which will be used to enrich the curriculum and support teaching and learning.

Ten Ten Catholic Worship Newsletter

Please click [here](#) for September's Ten Ten newsletter.

Forest School

We are delighted to share with you that St. Mary of the Angels is now a Forest School in partnership with Sayers Croft Urban Nature Space at Paddington Recreation Ground. Over the course of the academic year each Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 class will have six half day visits to the Urban Nature Space to take part in Forest School.

Forest School focuses on child led learning, giving participants ownership over the area during their visits. Children are valued and encouraged, have lots of fun, learn new skills and enjoy a positive experience in the park, engaging with nature as well as increasing their independence and self-esteem, which can transfer into other areas of life. Each session will have a theme, although child-led learning is an essential aspect of Forest School so themes may go off on a tangent! Circle times are an important part of the sessions, taking time to share experiences and ideas, develop communication skills as well as creating a sense of community.

Forest School provides a safe environment for children to:-

- Engage with nature
- Learn new skills
- Have fun
- Become more independent
- Learn in the way they find works best
- Be encouraged in a positive learning environment
- Enhance their self-esteem

The dates/times for each class are as follows and your child's class teacher will be writing to you with more information and to seek consent prior to the first visit.

Y1/2 Goldfinches	12.11.21	13.12.21	14.01.22	31.03.22	26.05.22	15.07.22	9.30-11.30am
Y2 Kingfishers	12.11.21	13.12.21	14.01.22	31.03.22	26.05.22	15.07.22	1-3pm
Y3/4 Swifts	05.11.21	06.12.21	07.02.22	28.03.22	23.05.22	11.07.22	9.30-11.30am
Y4 Kestrels	05.11.21	06.12.21	07.02.22	28.03.22	23.05.22	11.07.22	1-3pm
Y5 Herons	17.09.21	10.12.21	07.01.22	25.02.22	22.04.22	10.06.22	9.30-11.30am
Y5/6 Swans	17.09.21	10.12.21	07.01.22	25.02.22	22.04.22	10.06.22	1-3pm

We will be organising some equally exciting adventures in nature for our pupils in Foundation Stage for later on in the academic year which we look forward to sharing with you very soon.

Our School prayer

Loving Father

*Bless our school and fill our hearts
with love, friendship and forgiveness.
Help every child to grow and
achieve the best that they can
When we find things difficult give us the
courage to carry on.
We thank you for all of our friends
and classmates.
Bless our families, our community and
all who help us in our school.
Help us to follow in your footsteps.*

Amen

Kind regards

Mrs Wilson
Headteacher

Mrs Hough
Deputy Headteacher (Acting)