



ST MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

'Providing a Christ centred setting whereby everyone can live out the messages of Jesus with love, understanding and care'
St Nicholas Owen Catholic Multi Academy Company and St Mary's are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff, volunteers and visitors to share this commitment



Designated Child Protection Officers: Ms O' Beirne, Mrs Addis and Mrs Broomfield.
Child Protection policy available at www.st-mary-bh.dudley.sch.uk

October 2015

October is the month of the Rosary.

As our school is named after our lady, this is a very important time for us. Thank you to everyone who came to join the classes as they prayed the rosary in the Marian Garden. You should also have seen the rosary that your child has been given by school to bring home and share with their families.



SNOMAC



On 1st October we marked the first anniversary of the St Nicholas Owen Multi Academy Company. We have started to forge good working relationships with our other academy schools, ensuring that the quality of catholic education is enhanced. The academy is planning an Anniversary Mass early in 2016.

Harvest Festival

Thank you for all those who contributed to our Harvest Festival this year. We received a wonderful number of donations for our harvest display. Year six led the assembly and we were also entertained by two songs from the choir. The food which was donated went on sale after the assembly and the remainder was donated to a local food bank through the SVP Project. The children came to school in bright colours in return for a donation to CAFOD's 'Brighten Up This Harvest' campaign. The total amount of money raised was £200.66



PTA



Over the past twelve months the PTA have spent money that they have raised on a magician at Christmas two visits from the ice-cream van during the summer. They have also given £4,000.00 to the school to go towards IT equipment; £500.00 to pre-school; they have bought new training jackets for the football team and new kit for the netball team.

The current PTA committee is being disbanded and a new committee known as The Friends of St Mary's is being formed. As a final gift for the children the PTA have arranged for the Animal Lady to come into school for a day and for the ice cream van to visit school once again. The PTA would like to wish the new 'Friends' Committee good luck for the future. We would like to thanks everyone who has been involved in the PTA for their hard work over the last few years.

The Friends of St Mary's - your school's Parent/Teacher Association

Our committee is made up of a cross section of the school community, parents, carers and teaching staff and we are all volunteers. As the parent/carer of a child/children at St Mary's you are automatically a member of The Friends of St Mary's. Don't worry there is no charge for membership, all we ask is that you are able to support us in our endeavours - this could be in a number of ways:

- 1) Suggesting ideas for a fund raising activity;
- 2) Sparing a couple of hours to help us set up or run a stall at the Summer / Christmas Fairs;
- 3) Becoming a Committee Member.

The Friends of St Mary's would very much welcome you should you wish to be involved. For more information on The Friends of St Mary's please contact the Chair of The Friends of St Mary's, Bridget Mauldrige bmauldrige@st-mary-bh.dudley.sch.uk.

Attendance and Punctuality



Our target for attendance is currently 97.4% for all pupils. We also place importance on the punctuality of all children as this makes a good start to the day.

The entrance gates will be open from 8:40 am to allow the children to arrive in their classrooms by 8:50 am.

As part of our commitment to improving attendance and punctuality, we have decided to give rewards to families who have shown the same commitment to improving or maintaining levels of attendance. Starting this term, we will be monitoring children who have excellent attendance or have shown a marked improvement on their attendance last year.

Our overall attendance for September was 97.14%, so we have almost met our target. The top three classes for September are:

1st:	Year 3	98.47%
2nd:	Year 5	97.97%
3rd:	Reception	97.39%



School Building Fund



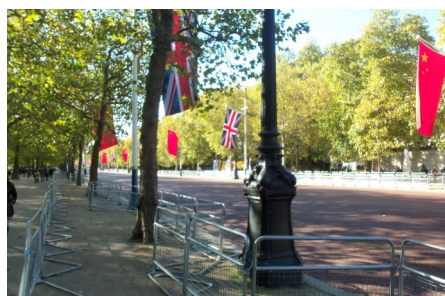
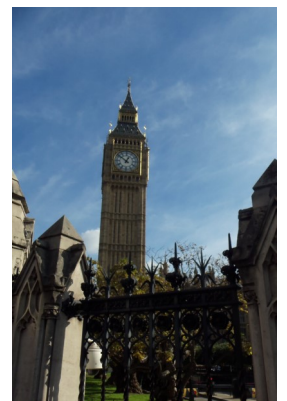
In Catholic schools there is a legal liability to pay 10% of the cost of external buildings and maintenance work. To ensure that we are able to meet this legal liability, (which will ensure that our schools are properly maintained and necessary building work is undertaken), we invite parents to make a voluntary contribution of £5 per child per half-term or where more than one child attends St Mary's School, £7.50 per half-term, (there are six half-terms in the school year). This equates to 58p per child per week.

Collections are made via envelopes, which are issued, one envelope per half term period. These are attached to this newsletter. All monies raised are used exclusively for St. Mary's School. The money does not go into a large fund for the Archdiocese, so St. Mary's benefits directly from the monies which are raised. For each £1.00 we raise for the School Building Fund, the Government will give us £9.00 for St. Mary's. Therefore, every £1.00 that is donated has tremendous buying power to improve our school for your children and, as you can see, no donation is too small. If you are worried that you may not be able to afford the contributions to the fund, please give what you can.

Houses of Parliament Workshop

I was delighted to be able to secure places to take six children to a workshop at The Houses of Parliament on Tuesday 20th October. We had a very early start to the day, but managed to have a fascinating tour of the House of Commons and the House of Lords. We also took part in a workshop on the meaning of democracy.

When we left the Houses of Parliament we walked along Whitehall past Downing Street and Horseguards. We then walked along the Mall to Buckingham Palace. Our visit coincided with the President of China's state visit and The Mall was lined with British and Chinese flags. Thankfully the weather was perfect. Photos of the visit will shortly be available to view on the school website. Thank you to Father Cecil for praying for us.



Weight Watchers

A new Weight Watchers Club began on Tuesday 8th September at St Mary's. Classes run from 6:30-7:30pm. For more information please speak to Mrs Paula Flatman.



MacMillan Coffee Morning



On Friday 25th September we held a MacMillan Coffee Morning in school to help raise money for cancer support. This was organised by Year 5 and the PTA. The event was very well supported with many family members coming along to buy the cakes that children throughout the school had brought in and to have a cup of tea or coffee made by the PTA. Children also brought in a donation so that they could wear home clothes for the day. We raised over £480 which is a fantastic total. Thank you to everyone who got involved. Please look at our website for some photographs from the morning.

Anti Bullying Ambassadors

The Anti-Bullying Ambassadors have started work on making sure that bullying doesn't happen at St Mary's. They have worked together to come up with a definition of what they think bullying is:



What is Bullying?

Bullying is when one person or group hurts someone, makes them feel upset, sad, scared or unsafe. This is usually done on purpose and happens more than once. It can involve unequal power. It can take many forms such as verbal, indirect and physical. This can happen face-to-face or on the internet. It can happen in school or outside of school.

If several people are showing bullying behaviour to one person then that is not equal power. If someone is saying unkind things to one person and they are saying unkind things back then that is equal power. The Ambassadors will soon be compiling a list of Anti-bullying rules and advice. They will also be planning activities for Anti Bullying Week which is in November.

Secondary Schools Transfer

It is time for Year Six pupils and their families to express their preference for Secondary School places for next September. The closing date for applications is 31st October. Please make sure that your application is completed on time as failing to do so may reduce your chances of getting a place at your chosen school.

Do you remember?

This photograph of St Mary's catholic school was taken in the 1940s when the school was in Brierley Hill High Street. Mr Jones wondered whether any of the current St Mary's community recognise any of their family members. We do have a larger version of the photograph in school if anyone would like a closer look.



Operation Christmas Child



Following on from Year 1's class assembly about operation Christmas Child, I would like to remind parents that shoe boxes can be brought into school between 3rd and 18th November. If you would like some ideas for what to include in your box or how to pack it, you can look at the Samaritan's Purse website:

www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/occ

Parents' Evening and Parents' Questionnaires.

It was lovely to see so many parents at this year's first Parents' Consultation Evening. Thank you to everyone who completed a Parents' Questionnaire. We have had some very positive feedback so far. If you took one away with you, please return it to school by Wednesday 4th November so that we can analyse the results.

Cross Country Event at Hagley

Well done to all of the Key Stage 2 children who represented St Mary's this morning at the Hagley RC High School Cross Country Event. The course at Hagley is a challenging one and we are very proud of all of our runners. We do not have the final results as we go to print, but we will let you know how they got on in our next newsletter.



Guy Fawkes Night



As the half term break is so close to the 5th November, I am sure that many of you will be enjoying bonfires and fireworks. If you are in any doubt about safety, then we would always recommend attending a local organised display such as the one being held at Himley on Saturday 7th November. Whatever you decide to do, we hope that you have a happy and safe Bonfire Night.

Thanksgiving Mass

You will see on the diary that there will be a Thanksgiving Mass at St Mary's Church on Sunday 29th November. This will be for Year Six and the choir. More details will follow after the Half Term holiday.

Are your contact details up to date?

Could you please ensure that if there are any changes to your address, phone numbers or email addresses that this information is given to Mrs Hambridge in the school office so that we have the correct details on file for you should we need to contact you in an emergency. Thank you.

I hope that everyone has a well deserved half term break next week. The school will be closed on Monday 2nd November for one of our staff INSET days. I look forward to seeing the children back in school on Tuesday 3rd November.

Ms O' Beirne - Principal



Mass and Class Assemblies for the Autumn Term

Tuesday 10th November	9:15am	Mass	Year 3	Remembrance
Friday 13th November	2:25pm	Class Assembly	Year 4	Children in Need
Friday 20th November	2:25pm	Anti-Bullying Assembly—	Parents welcome	
Tuesday 24th November	9:15am	Mass	School Council	
Sunday 29th November	11.00	Thanksgiving Mass at St Mary's Church		
Tuesday 15th December	9:15am	Mass	Year 6	Christmas
Friday 18th December	9:15am	Carol service and Baby Jesus blessing with Fr Cecil		

Autumn Term Important Dates

Friday 23rd October	Children break up for half term
Monday 2nd November	INSET day for staff. School closed to children
Friday 13th November	Children in Need (More details to follow)
Monday 23rd November	Confirmation at St Mary's Church 7pm
Friday 27th November	PTA Christmas Fair
Tuesday 1st December	EYFS Production pm
Wednesday 2nd December	EYFS Production am
Thursday 10th December	Key Stage 1 Production
Thursday 17th December	Christmas lunch
Friday 18th December	Children break up for Christmas
Monday 4th January 2016	INSET day for staff. School closed to children
Tuesday 5th January	Children return to school



This list of dates may be subject to changes or additions. If this is the case we will let you know as soon as possible.