



St Mary's Catholic First School
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Head Teacher: Mrs Paula Fearn



9th October 2020

Dear Parents

We have had a good week at St Mary's, we had a lovely CAFOD Harvest virtual Assembly yesterday and many thanks for the generous donations of food. The donated food will be going to the Dorchester Community Church food bank, they will be collecting it from St Mary's on Tuesday.

Today Year 1, 2 & 3 are each having a virtual session about fire safety led by the Dorset & Wiltshire Fire and Rescue Service. These are great sessions which are informative and enjoyable for the children.

Next week Year 2, 3 & 4 will be having a virtual Author Talk with children's author Teresa Heapy, which is very exciting.

We understand that families may be feeling anxious at the moment, especially with local middle schools having to send some children home because of some Covid cases. At St Mary's, we are continuing to follow our risk assessment to do our best to keep our children and staff safe. If there are any changes, we will let you know, please do keep an eye on our Facebook page.

To keep you informed of what your children are doing at St Mary's, we have our weekly class Blogs on the website and we will also be putting some short videos on our Facebook page from each class teacher over the coming week, Miss Simmonds, our Year 3 teacher will be on our Facebook page today.

We are exploring having a St Mary's hooded top, to help us with this, we will send out a very short online questionnaire next week to gather interest from parents as to whether they would like to purchase one of these once they are produced. The idea would be that children could wear these in school during the winter to keep extra warm whilst we keep the classrooms well ventilated. In the future, they would then become an option as part of our PE kit.



Thank you for all the responses for the Meet the Teacher sessions, the deadline for responses is next Wednesday if you haven't already completed the questionnaire.

Google Classroom, IXL & other home learning platforms

For information, we have some new home learning platforms, to clarify, the following years are using the following platforms:

Reception – Tapestry & IXL

Year 1-4 – Google Classroom, IXL, Purple Mash & Education City

Reception Class - to confirm, for any home learning and activities, these will be put onto Tapestry and Mrs Sparke will let you know if there is also exercises on IXL to complete.

Year 1-4 – to confirm for home learning, the best approach is to always log into Google Classroom first, where your child's class teacher will give details of the home learning for that week. It might be a request to do a picture, take a photo, etc. and no other site is used. Other times it will say, please go onto IXL to complete (or Purple Mash or Education City).

The children will also be informed of the home learning in class by their teacher. If you notice any issues with the learning sites, please contact the school office, as this is a new learning experience for all of us.

Christmas Cards

Your children will have brought home recently or today a picture that can be made into Christmas Cards, wrapping paper, etc. We take part in this activity as a small fundraiser for St Mary's and as a nice thing for the children to do. If you would like to order any printed cards, paper, etc., from your child's picture, please return the picture along with details filled in on the reverse regarding your order and payment by either cheque or cash.

Please can be ask that these orders with payment are returned to St Mary's by next Friday 16th October – many thanks.

Eco Club news – Bike it Bear & mascot competition

The eco club and eco committee were busy last year. We made bug hotels to encourage insect wildlife in our school grounds and helped to design new signs for our compost and waste bins.

The eco committee came up with some great new initiatives. One was introducing 'Bike it Bear' to encourage St Mary's children to bike or scoot to school.

This year, we will start 'Bike it Bear' again, but instead of taking the bear home, we will publish the name of the child whose bike has been chosen each week. Once a week, the Bike it Bear tag will be put on a bike or scooter that is at St Mary's and whichever child finds the bear tag on their bike, can drop this back at the school office and their name will then appear in the school newsletter that week.

The committee also had the idea of introducing the image of an eco-friendly class bug to remind us to follow the eco code in our classrooms. The children in each class chose a bug. We decided to run a competition back in February and of course had to put everything on hold. So, picking up where we left off, we would like the children to design a colourful picture of their chosen class bug. The winner from each year group will have their design produced to be used as their class eco bug mascot!

So, get creative over the two week half term break and send in your design when you return to school. The closing date for the competition is Friday 6th November. Good luck!

School Nurses Team

If you would like any advice from the School Nurses Team, please contact them using the following email address dhc.snadmin.westdorset@nhs.net

Nasal Flu Vaccination

We have the date of Monday 16th November for the pupils at St Mary's, Reception through to Year 4 to receive their nasal flu vaccination. Once we have further information, we will let you know.

I hope you have a good weekend.

Yours sincerely

P. Fearn

Mrs Paula Fearn
Head Teacher