



WEEKLY NEWSLETTER

Autumn Term 2020 Issue 11

Friday 11th December 2020

Dates for your diary

Monday 14th – Friday 18th December – Gratitude Week

Wednesday 16th December – Nativity online

Wednesday 16th December – Christmas Movie Afternoon

Thursday 17th December – Christmas Carol Concert online

Friday 18th December MUFTI - It's beginning to look a lot like Christmas – Christmas Fancy Dress

Friday 18th December – Last day of term

Monday 22nd December – Friday 1st

January Christmas Holidays

Monday 4th January – Start of Spring Term

Friday 15th January – Deadline for Primary School Admissions

Tuesday 9th February – Parents' Evening

Tuesday 9th February – Safer Internet Day

Wednesday 10th February – Holy Communion Meeting – details circulated via the Parish

Thursday 11th February – Parents' Evening

Monday 15th – 19th February – Half Term

Reminder - Change to May INSET day

Just a reminder that there has been a slight change to our term dates for this year. Our May INSET day will now be on **FRIDAY 28TH MAY** (the Friday before the half term) rather than Friday 21st of May. I hope that this will actually be more convenient for families and that this is sufficient notice for it not to be disruptive.

Dear Parents,

Many of you will have heard the announcement that schools have been permitted to alter their existing calendars in order to close on Friday the 18th December.

After much consideration, we have chosen to keep the school open on the 18th. There are several reasons for this decision. Firstly, closure on Friday will not remove the possibility of pupils and staff having to isolate over the Christmas period. Typically, the window for the transmission of COVID19 is 2-3 days prior to people becoming symptomatic. It is then usually 2-3 days to get a test and receive a result. Based on these timescales, the school might contact you at any time up until Christmas Eve to inform you that your child has been in close contact with a positive case and that they will need to isolate. The only difference closing on the 18th would make is that the theoretical endpoint for being exposed within school would be the 23rd rather than the 24th. However, all of this is conditional on there being no delays with testing or receiving results.

Secondly, closing on Friday 18th provides families with too little notice, especially coupled with all the restrictions related to COVID19 and Christmas. A change at this late stage will put unnecessary pressure on parents at such a busy time of year.

Thirdly, closing on Friday 18th would mean having to use one of the INSET days later in the year which we have already identified for staff training that cannot be conducted on Friday.

Finally, as rates within Richmond are currently relatively low and falling, and as the school has not recently had a positive case, the risk remains relatively minimal as long as we all continue to be vigilant and follow the rules and procedures which have been put in place.



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Reporting Results During Christmas

Over the Christmas period, the phones in the school office will not be being checked daily. It is therefore vital that if you need to report a positive result prior to Christmas on the absence email we set up at the start of the year:

absence@st-marymagdalens.richmond.sch.uk

This email will be checked daily up until Christmas Day to enable us to contact any staff or pupils who might need to isolate. Any messages regarding positive cases and isolation will be sent to you via SCOPay.

If your child shows symptoms after Christmas and has a test, you do not need to inform the school but we always want to support our families, so rest assured that you can contact via this email if you need support.

Remaining Vigilant

I am so grateful for your help and support in keeping our pupils safe, happy and in school this half term. As we all eagerly anticipate Christmas and particularly the opportunity to see our loved ones, I would ask that you remain vigilant and continue to follow all the measures that have been put in place.

It is harder than ever at this time of year to avoid contact with others and to socially distance but please do try to follow this guidance throughout next week as nobody in our community wants to be in isolation over the Christmas period..

Gratitude Week

Just a reminder that we will be reflecting on all that we are grateful for in school next week. If you would like to say thank you to someone in our community, then you can add to our community kudoboard on the link below:

<https://www.kudoboard.com/boards/1cMay7Vi>

Christmas Performances

It has been wonderful to watch our children perform in the Nativity and Carol Concert this week. They have sung, danced and performed with such enthusiasm and they are very excited to be able to share what they have done with you at home.

Like all great art, making the last few finishing touches does take time and I hope you will forgive us if they are not quite ready by Wednesday or Thursday.

However, rest assured that they will be ready for you to enjoy well before Christmas and the children have promised that they will teach all willing parents the words and actions.

Christmas Fair

The children had a wonderful time today guessing the sweets in the jar, naming the teddy, estimating presents in our giant stocking and trying to locate a missing Rudolph. Thank you to all the parents who helped prepare the activities and prizes and remember you can still participate in our Virtual Christmas Fair online. You can enter your child by paying for the games online and the PTA will pick winners and distribute prizes next week.

<https://patchworkit.com/35735/Gr>

Elf on the Shelf

I know from the children that some naughty elves have been up to mischief in their homes. They have reliably informed me that because they have quarantined since their arrival from Lapland, it is perfectly safe for them to be out and about.

It has got me thinking about where St Mary Magdalen's very own mischievous visitor has got to and I have asked all the children to keep their eyes peeled next week.

Christmas Gifts

In this increasingly digital age, you might well be buying your child some sort of device this Christmas. Peter Cowley, an



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advisor for Achieving for Children, has some excellent advice on how you can set up devices to ensure your children stay safe online. A pdf with some helpful information has been sent with this newsletter.

Food Bank Donations

Donations for our local food bank continue to roll in. Next week, each class will make up and decorate a hamper for a family in our parish. We will then take all the remaining donations to the food bank.

If you have any non-perishable Christmas treats you would like to donate, the boxes remain in the main playground and outside reception. Thank you all for your incredible generosity.

SPARK! Book Awards

We are very excited to announce that we will be taking part in the 'Spark Book Awards' with 79 other schools in the Richmond and Kingston Boroughs.


<https://sparkbookaward.co.uk/>

The awards will start in January and finish in May. Each class will receive copies of books that have made it onto the shortlist (to announced in January) and we will read,

read, read until May, when we then vote for our favourites and attend a virtual awards ceremony. The competition hopes to encourage reading for pleasure and will include videos and activities from authors about the books we are reading.

Although the shortlist won't be announced until January, Spark! are releasing a longlist of titles which are all competing to be on the final list; making them a great choice for a Christmas present or two!. To find out which books are in the running, visit your child's Google Classroom, where there is a message about the awards and a link to the books in your child's age group. Happy reading!






Well done to the children listed below who were Diving Deep this week:

Seahorses – Theia De Serra
 Turtles – Juliet Millard
 Starfish – Tadhg Munday
 Angel Fish – Sofia Tilio
 Seals – Nicholas Cohalan
 Dolphins – Xaviera Druissi
 Manta Rays – Laura Mosiadz
 Blue Whales – Sophia Norton
 Orcas – Natalia Staszewska

Certificates will be given out in Monday's Assembly



Headteacher's Awards for Exceptional Work

All the children in our school are stars but those listed below shone a little brighter over the last week:

Year 1 – Turtles – Antonio Izcara Jimenez, Ava Terry, Cara Weldon, Cecily Hubbard, Clementine Roberstson, Elena Ogura, Evie Addington, Linda Kwambi, Lucie Adamson, Nico Acari,

Year 2D – Starfish – Danny Harrington, Kairo Nguyen, Tadhg Munday

Year 2T – Angel Fish – Amelia Wilkes, Evie Couch, Jack Gallagher, Louis Parletti, Magda Wood, Rose Maza, Sophia Tilo

Year 3 - Seals – Ellie Tusiime, Grayson Oliver-Harrocks, Jack Rafferty, Luca Braga, Nicholas Cohalan, Simeon Daltry

Year 6 – Orcas - Joshua Myburgh

I hope you have a wonderful weekend with your children.

Mrs Hughes, Headteacher