



ST MARY MAGDALEN'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Newsletter – Spring 1 | 6th January 2023

I hope you all had a happy and holy Christmas. It has been a joy to welcome the children back this week. Our Year 6 pupils finished the first week of the new year off beautifully as they led us in our Epiphany Mass. Thank you to the children and to Mrs Black, Mrs O’Gorman and Mrs Thomas for their help in preparation and Mr Bartrim for his musical talents. We were blessed that many parishoners, parents and governors were able to join us. Please do remember that you are always welcome to attend any of our Masses as we cherish this opportunity for us to come together as a faith community. We were particularly fortunate today to be able to enjoy this celebration with not only Father Adrian but also Father Peter who will be supporting the Parish and the school during Father Adrian’s absence. I am sure you will join with me in offering him the warmest of welcomes.

Dates for your diaries

Monday 9th January – Year 4 Museum of Richmond craft workshop

Friday 13th January – Year 3 class assembly after drop off

Sunday 15th January - First holy Communion Enrollment Mass

Friday 20th January - Year 2 class assembly after drop off

Friday 27th January - Year 1 class assembly after drop off

Monday 30th January – Individual Support Plan Meetings with parents all week

Monday 30th, Tuesday 31st January and Wednesday 1st February – Year 3 Safe Walking Training

Friday 3rd February – Reception class assembly after drop off

Tuesday 7th and Thursday 9th February – Parents’ Evenings

Tuesday 7th February – Swimming Gala

Monday 13th February – Friday 17th February – Half Term

New Year – New Gear!

Are you looking for a new challenge for the new year?

Do you want to want to be part of making some exciting changes to our school?

Are you interested in gaining new skills?

If the answer is yes then we have a great opportunity for you!

Our Governors and PTA are working together to form a “Time and Talents Teams” from our parents, staff and friends of the school. This initiative will help us to ensure we continue to deliver the best education possible for our children, in the best possible environment, despite the challenges all schools are facing.

If you would like to find out more please read the letter sent with this newsletter which provides more details and we would greatly appreciate it if you could complete the short questionnaire.

We look forward to working with you on this exciting new project!

admin@st-marymagdalens.richmond.sch.uk | 0208 876 6679 | <https://www.st-marymagdalens.richmond.sch.uk/>

The Year of Global Citizens – “Be the change you wish to see in the world.” Mahatma Gandhi

Attendance and Punctuality

Since the pandemic the average attendance has declined within the school. We have always aimed to have attendance of at least 97% because outstanding attendance results in outstanding outcomes for our children. Thank you to everyone who has worked so hard to ensure their children have good attendance and particularly to the many families who have improved attendance over the last few months it makes a huge difference.

We will continue to monitor attendance this term and we will also be looking at punctuality. Currently, the school gates open at 8.35am and we aim to start lessons at 8.40am. Whilst we understand that this is a short window it is important that children arrive promptly to school. Going forward, children who arrive via the office entrance will be marked as late. The reason for this is that lateness is incredibly disruptive to the children's learning and so we need to monitor this closely. If your child arrives 10 minutes late each day they are missing almost an hours learning a week which over a year means they are missing almost a week of school. It can also be embarrassing for children to arrive during lessons as they immediately feel at a disadvantage. Late arrivals also disrupt other children's learning. We appreciate your ongoing support.

Father Adrian

Today at Mass Father Adrian talked eloquently about the messages we can take from the Epiphany. He spoke about the great gift our children are to him and indeed they are to our whole community. With his tireless dedication to the parish and the school Father Adrian is himself one of the greatest gifts we as a community have to celebrate.

This Sunday, Father Adrian will say his last Mass at church before his leave of absence. I am sure that you will all join with me in wishing him well. I know that we will all be keeping him in our thoughts and prayers and looking forward to him returning to us as soon as possible.

Pupils of the Week

Reception Antarctica – Finn Warren

Year 1 Australia – Olive Carter-Smith

Year 2 Africa – Joe Lynch

Year 3 North America – Celina Gorny

Year 4 South America – James Dolan

Year 5 Europe – Samuel Hughes

Year 6 Asia – Bennie Smithson

Headteacher's Award for Exceptional Work

Sofia Tilio for fabulous writing about
Rainforests

Caio Franco Dorneles for an excellent
recount of his Christmas holiday

Luke Booth, Joe Lynch, Tilly Couch, Luke Te
Brake for wonderful writing about the Bible

I hope you have a wonderful weekend with your children,

Catherine Hughes, Headteacher

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Welcome to 2023 and we hope you all had a blessed and joyful Christmas!

Just before Christmas, St Mary Magdalen's was cited in the Sunday Times (11th December 2022) top 100 primary schools in the nation. We were one of only 2 primary schools in Richmond to make the list. Achievements such as these would not be possible without the hard work of our pupils, parents, staff and governors and without the support of such a strong community. We should all be very proud.

We are determined to continue to deliver the best education possible to the children at St Mary Magdalen's and to do that in the best possible environment. However, you will have seen the reports in the news about the pressure on the funding within schools and the increasing challenges faced as a result of the pandemic. At our school, we have been able to weather the storm thanks to our fantastic staff, the governors, our parents, the fundraising of the PTA, and the generosity of local businesses.

Never-the-less, as the cost-of-living crisis continues, we recognise we will need to do more for ourselves, and that fewer resources will be available from the government and the diocese. So, we are launching a new approach and looking to form a "Time and Talents Teams" in an effort to get ahead of these potential challenges. We would like to use the expertise, skill, time and talents of our parents, friends and contacts to improve our fundraising and reduce our outgoings. In particular, we are looking for people:

- Who can write bids for grant funding
- Who are qualified trades people such as electricians, heating engineers, plumbers, decorators, renewable energy experts etc
- Who can help with basic ongoing maintenance, such as painting or gardening on a one off or regular basis
- Who can engage with their employers where the school might be able to benefit from corporate social responsibility investment or paid volunteering days.

At the same time, we want to create opportunities for parents to widen their own skill sets by learning from others, be it the skills needed to write successful bids which may support other interests parents have, or more practical skills to help with DIY in the home. We are sure that these opportunities to work together towards common goals will help us to continue to build strong bonds strengthen the sense of community within our school.

We would appreciate you taking the time to answer the survey below so that we can begin to understand the skills that we can utilise within our wider community and plan how we can use them to help our school and our children. The link below takes you to a survey with 8 yes or no questions. It will take less than 2 minutes to complete so please click on the link and answer the questions.

<https://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/ikntA7L5>

We are excited about the opportunities that this will create for our pupils and our wider community and thank you in advance for your ongoing support.

Very best wishes,

Alison Young

Catherine Hughes

Anna Brown

Chair of the PTA

Head Teacher

Chair of Governors