

St Mary's Catholic Primary School
Living, loving and learning with God
May 2022

We hope that having a bank holiday so soon after the Easter holiday has been a bonus.

Last week we hit the ground running. We had progress reviews before Easter so we have had a real focus on continuing to plan for on-going learning from day 1 this term. What we have been most enjoying is the high level of engagement of children in their learning.

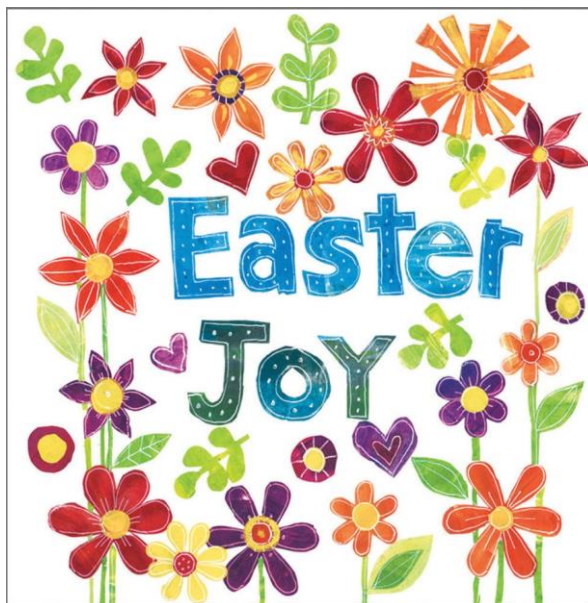
Throughout this year we have been using our school learning values consistently to promote ways for children to be successful as learners: having a go, being curious, showing resilience and aiming high are used across our school. Our Friday stars are chosen based on these attitudes. This is really focussing all of us and lifting our learning.

We are working to ensure that children experience learning that is meaningful and engaging. We are working with each year group, and looking at each individual child to ensure that we are working to offer provision that allows each of them to flourish.

There is a really happy and purposeful sense across the school.

Happy Eastertide

The "Happy Easter" banner in the playground was intentionally added ready for our return to school. In the church year we are now in the season of Eastertide: 50 days from Easter to Pentecost. Eastertide is a season of joy. So we consider that we are still living and celebrating Easter.



In school we are doing all we can to remind children of the positives: the sunshine, being able to play on the field.

In this we have so far steered away from the issue of war. We have talked together about how we deal with the Ukraine situation and continue to have an instinct that not raising this is sensible. It does mean that we have not held any activities to raise funds. Going forwards we are looking at ways that we can share with you some possible ways to support the challenges in Ukraine so that you can take action should you wish to.

Covid Regulations

Basically there are no longer any Covid restrictions in schools. School staff and pupils are not required to test. If for any reason a child is unwell and parents judge that they are too unwell to come to school then they stay at home until they are well.

We appreciate that some of our families with adults working in other professional groups may still be required to test and that for all of us this new phase is something we need to adjust to. Thankfully it does seem as though Covid has gone very quiet in our school so we sincerely hope that it continues like this and we really can properly move forwards.

National formal assessments.

For the last two school years national tests were suspended. This year the following national tests will be accessed by children at St Mary's:

Year 1 phonics

Year 2 reading, writing and maths SATS

Year 4 times tables tests

Year 6 reading, maths and spelling, punctuation and grammar tests.

Year 1, 2 and 4 will take these as part of their normal class learning. They will not feel like a test in any formal sense.

Year 6 will have timetabled formal testing during the week beginning Monday 9th May. Year 6 parents have had direct communication on this from the office.

Testing at St Mary's is seen within the normal range of activities that children experience in order to show their learning. Children are supported to develop the skills to approach testing positively. Children continue to look at their own learning and seek ways to develop this without comparing with others. At all times we work to support, recognise and celebrate success and to identify ways to move learning on. Through this we find that children are generally positive and supportive of each other and develop confidence in their own learning.

Wrist watch devices

We have had a small number of children arriving in school with wrist watches that have additional functions including be able to receive and sent texts as well as take

photographs. To safeguard all children we cannot currently allow children to wear these in school. Going forwards as these become more common there will no doubt be reviews at national level.

For now, we would ask that children do not wear these in school and if they are seen to be wearing them they would keep the device in the office during the school day. This is consistent with our policy on mobile phones.

Jewellery

A reminder that children should not wear jewellery in school.

Parking

A reminder that the car park in front of school is not for use at any time.

Holiday in term time

We are unable to authorise any absence in term time unless it is to attend a wedding or funeral of a close family member. This is in line with national and Devon guidelines to support school attendance.

Queens Platinum Celebrations at St Mary's

On Friday 27th May we will have a range of celebrations to mark this special occasion in the national calendar. In the school day each class group will have access to an inflatable obstacle course and a smaller single inflatable.

We are inviting families to stay and play straight after school until 5.00pm. There will be no cost to stay. There will be a BBQ with burgers, drinks and cakes for sale.

We hope that you will come and share in this event with us.