

May News Update 2021

St Mary's Catholic Primary School Axminster



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Axminster

are proud to have achieved
The Unicef Rights Respecting
Silver Award



St Mary's is a listening school with a desire to ensure that every child has a voice. Two years ago we completed the Unicef Rights Respecting Award Bronze award action plan and began the journey to Silver.

The assessment process last week resulted in a feedback report. It was really lovely to hear what our children told the assessor. They described having a strong sense of their rights and the rights of all children. In addition they said that they were now able to solve their worries and problems with greater skill and know when to ask others for help.

The children also described the way that Covid had brought to life ways that other children across the world, who should have the same rights, are affected by not being able to go to school, not being able to play with friends and not being able to wash their hands or have access doctors and hospitals. This has made our children want to make a difference for other children. It has made them value the opportunities that they have.

We are proud to have achieved the Silver Award because it has captured all of the work we do to help every child feel safe and to encourage justice in all areas of school life.

Mrs Bray has coordinated our journey from Bronze to Silver Award and was delighted to have such positive feedback. We are going to take a deep breath and then we will make a plan to achieve Gold.

St Mary's
Summer Challenge
Run to Tokyo
for
Bristol Children's
Hospital



The children have made an excellent start to our summer challenge.
It is very noticeable how much faster our younger children are becoming each day on the running track.

Every one is running with such focus and energy.

Together the children have already completed 1090 of the miles.

Our Year 6 ambassadors can be seen below encouraging Owl Class.



Our Year 6

Challenge Ambassadors



Social distancing

encouragement for Owl Class as they run the mile for Poppy.

We plan to send out sponsor forms next half term using the sponsored bounce as a focus for fund raising for this cause which has become important to all of us knowing the difference it has made to Poppy and her family.

Poppy Update

After some health worries just before Easter and a return to Bristol, Poppy is now at home.

Parent Communication Platform

It has been important to us to have one place to contact parents with information so it is great that we are able to send you information this week about ways to register for our communication platform called Schoolzine. This will allow admin and staff to share all news and information in one place.

The registration link will be arriving this week so please keep an eye on your emails.

Parent Information Meetings

Communications have begun to be sent to parents and carers about the forthcoming parent information events. We have started with Year 6 and Foundation Class and will be in touch with all other parents and carers shortly.

We have continued to work in a very focussed way to ensure that whilst wellbeing and care is at the centre of everything we do we are providing a well balanced curriculum that gives the children the skills needed for now and for the future.

Covid and Moving Forwards

This week the Government have taken a major step in relaxing restrictions. From a school perspective we have taken some small steps.

We have had our first school trip this week. This was a free trip offered to Year 3 pupils by Magdalen Farm. Having mixed age classes we were thankful when Magdalen agreed to let us take all of Owl Class. Magdalen staff have worked closely with us over the years. To make this trip happen we have added many layers of Covid adaptations added into their risk assessments. The only thing they couldn't organise has been the wild and unpredictable weather we have had this week!

Robin Class and Woodpecker Class have day trips planned and Kestrel and Eagle have residential trips planned. We are hopeful that these will all be allowed going forwards.

Next half term we will be looking to continue to make small step changes. Currently we have had no new specific guidance from the Government but will update you when we can.

Planning Consent and expansion

Many of you will have seen that we have had the expansion plans agreed. This is subject to the new housing expansions. Despite this we will not be expanding for next year so will remain as a five class school with mixed age classes.

During lockdown we have not been accepting new pupils. We have become a very popular school and have waiting lists. We do have a place in the current Foundation Class so if you know of a family who would like to join us then please ask them to contact Mrs Newcombe in the office for more information.

Improvements across the school

We keep diverting small amounts of funding to improving areas of school; some shelving, a wall painted. We have had very little resource to make significant changes to the physical aspects of school as we chose to have the maximum staffing possible. So we have been very grateful to the Central trust who have supported us this year with Chrome Books across the school and new interactive whiteboards in Eagle and Woodpecker Class. Robin Class are also having a new interactive whiteboard fitted next half term.

Over the summer holidays our top hard court is being resurfaced as this has become damaged. Over the winter moss caused the surface to become slippery so we are delighted that this will be resolved going forwards.

During the summer holidays we will also have a new floor surface in Robin Class and carpet in Owl Class and Eagle class. Kestrel Class will have new shelving and storage added to improve the working space and resources that can be available to the children.

Open ended play resources

The children in Eagle Class have been working with us to reflect on ways to improve the range of play resources at lunchtime. We have had a real focus

over the last two terms during lunch and play on extending the PE resources and focussing children to use these to self challenge and to create new games. Now we are looking at how we can provide more creative resources. We began by introducing tyres, beams, containers, wooden planks..... allowing children to explore and create. This is very much a work in progress. Year 6 are currently working with us on this as part of their legacy to our school and we will pass the work on to the school council next year to ensure that all children's points of view are included.

Parent, Friends and Teachers Association (PTFA)

This group has always worked so hard and has made such a difference to our school life. Not just with the amazing fund raising but also by hosting a range of community events for our children and families. These all add so much to our school life. Those of year who have experienced the many positives of the PTFA will know why we have been missing them this year.

So that the PTFA can begin to plan events for September they need new recruits. If you can give any time at all please contact admin in the first instance. Any support is really appreciated. The group really needs this help to be able to move forward so please do consider giving as much time as you can.

The PTFA have not been able to raise any funds this year apart from the Easter egg event. Last year they agreed to support the construction of a large outdoor shed which we hope to use to add resources to extend play opportunities as well as for the PTFA to have a base for their stay and play events. This would take a large part of their current income. As is tradition they have purchased the Year 6 hoodies and will also make a contribution to the cost of the coach for the Year 6 and Robin Class trips this year. After this they will be at their reserve limit so are keen to start planning events for September. All of our parents are really supportive of all events which we appreciate very much. If you have ideas and time to give (however small) to the PTFA planning group please let us know.

Let's Go Zero Award

Before lockdown we had began to make in-roads on our recycling and reusing. The children were leading this and had lots of ideas and energy. This had been

halted a little over the last year. We plan to kick start this going forwards and have registered for the Let's Go Zero Award.

<https://letsgozero.org/school-toolbox/>

Pentecost Celebrations next week.

Pentecost marks the 50th day after Easter. It is a great celebration in the church. Fire is the symbol of Pentecost because of the power, courage and confidence given to the disciples, the close friends of Jesus at a time when they felt uncertain. It is a time of new energy and joy. Perfect for stepping out of Covid restrictions.

Pentecost is celebrated in the church on Sunday 23rd May so on Friday we will adding some extra colour around school with some rainbow bunting and some colourful flowers. On Monday we will have some extra playtimes and the children will be offered some plain biscuits (a great treat in school !). They will also have some new play resources during the week. On Friday, the last day of this half term, teachers will plan an in class treat with the children.

We continue to be extremely grateful all parents and families at St Mary's.

Thank you for your continued support.

School closes on Friday 28th May and will re open on Tuesday 2nd June

