St Mary’s Catholic Primary School

Newsletter Number 5

**Small Things with Great Love**

Thank you to all parents who continue to support our on going small projects for this half term.

We made a shoe box wall in the school hall last week and had a total of 58 boxes. Thank you very much. The boxes were collected last Thursday and will be making their way to Romania to be shared with children for Christmas.

Our school poppy display is beautiful. Our focus for the week had been on being peace makers out of respect for those who fought for our freedom today. Our service on Friday, lead by Year 5 pupils and marked by a one minute silence, was very thoughtful. Throughout the week we talked about how we can all work positively to make a difference.

On Sunday St Mary’s took part in the Axminster Remembrance Service at The Minster. As we heard the names and ages of those from Axminster who fought and lost their lives in World war 1 it was a very real connection to those people. Fletcher in year 6 placed our school wreath with those of other schools, charities and companies from Axminster.

On Thursday this week Kestrel Class will gather at The Minster to place individual crosses in the rose garden. Each cross will symbolise a life lost.

**Daffodils for Mrs Harris**

Last week we all planted our daffodil bulbs in four large planters. Robin, Woodpecker, Owl and Kestrel class each have a planter. Year 5 Eagle Class planted their bulbs in the Kestrel class planter. Our year six pupils, as leaders of our school, placed their bulbs in each of the other four planters to remind them of the responsibility they hold in our school.

The planters will remain in our school playground until Spring and then we plan to move them to our memorial garden in our school grounds. The garden will be our memorial to Mrs Harris.

**Respect Week**

Continuing our small things with great love we are working this week on respect and responsibility. These are two of our school values. Our Monday assembly was lead by Year 4 pupils who sang ‘This is me’ from The Greatest Showman.

We looked today at the difference between needs and wants and what we all need to be safe and happy.

Our whole school will focus on ways to show respect to others.

As part of the week Kestrel Class will look at democracy and parliament and our younger pupils in Robin and Woodpecker Class will look at the NSPCC Pants rule.

If you would like any information about the Pants rule follow the link below

https://www.nspcc.org.uk/preventing-abuse/keeping-children-safe/underwear-rule/

**Children in Need and wear something bright**

This Friday children can come into school out of uniform and we hope will wear something bright. In return children are asked to each bring in £1 for this important charity that makes a huge difference to the lives of children and families in the UK.

\*\*Woodpeckers class should come into school wearing PE kit for Taekwondo and bring their bright clothes in a bag to change into afterwards \*\*

**Winter Uniform**

Thank you to all parents who have ensured that pupils are wearing our winter uniform. Robin Class will wear the summer top all year.

Please could you ensure that all items of clothing are clearly marked with your child’s name so that any missing items can be quickly identified and returned. Already this half term we have a box full of items in our reception area.

Sports Kit

Coats for playtimes

**Electronic Daily Registers**

We are now using electronic registers in school. As a result we will not do a school meals register in the same way. To support us please can you ensure that you continue to order a meal via Parent Pay or send your child in with a packed lunch. In the event of parent error no child will ever be left without food but we are working to ensure that systems are streamlined and duplication is eliminated.

Thank you in advance for your continued support.

**Permission slips and communications**

Please could you ensure that any consent forms, permission slips and related forms are returned promptly to the school office or class teacher. Please check the letters page on the school website if you think you are missing a letter.

**Attendance – absence request forms**

These have been updated by Devon County Council. They do not make it clear what is considered to be an authorised absence. As I have explained previously, we follow Devon and National guidelines, in order to achieve a consistent response to all absence requests.

Attendance really does matter and the national guidelines protect the most vulnerable children and families in the school system. Having a policy that does not give authorised absence, except for very exceptional direct family wedding and funerals, allows schools to closely monitor attendance and to step in with support when attendance changes.

At St Mary’s we notify parents at the end of the first time if absence is below 95 %, even when we know the reasons for the absence. When pupil attendance falls below 90 % we will always contact families to ensure that together we are doing all that is possible to show improvements in attendance.

We are very grateful to all families who work with us to arrive at school on time each day and to maintain high levels of attendance. If you ever have any concerns about your child’s attendance then please contact the office to speak with myself or our pastoral support worker, Mrs Clist.

Thanking you. Mrs Mannix

**PARKING –** please be reminded that the car park is not to be used by parents at any time in the school day, including the 2 spaces in front of the school sign. Whilst we appreciate that this is not the most ideal situation then we ask that all parents respect this.

A reminder that for the safety of all the car park should also not be a short cut into the school.

Having trialled a parking chain the parish have decided for safety reasons to add restricted parking to the seven parish car parking spaces. Please be aware that these will be in place soon. Any parent who is currently still making use of the parking area is asked to take the time to seek alternative parking.

**School Christmas Dinner**

This will take place on Thursday 20th December. Unfortunately we cannot change the menu options on ParentPay therefore if you choose the 1st option your child will have turkey and all the trimmings if you choose the second option your child will have a vegetarian option. Dessert will be jelly and ice cream. Orders **must** be placed by Thursday 6th December.

**Future Diary Dates**

25th November first Sunday in Advent

Mole Avon Owl Class and the Choir singing carols – Tuesday 27th November 5.45pm

Lantern parade Axminster – Saturday 1st December – Year 4 and 5 have made beautiful lanterns and will be part of the evening procession

Last Taekwondo club, parents invited – Tuesday 4th December 3.45pm

KS1 Nativity for parents – Tuesday 11th December 6pm

KS1 Nativity for parents – Wednesday 12th December 2pm

School Christmas Lunch Thursday 20th December – please order via Parent Pay

End of term Friday 21st December 3.30p.m.

First day back for pupils Tuesday 8th January 2019

Last day of summer term – 24th July 2019

**PTFA events**

Bags to School – 21st November 9 am

Friday 30th November - Jolly Jar - Bring in a decorated jar filled with sweets, toys, stationary, toiletries etc. There will be a prize per class for the best decorated jar.

Saturday 1st December 10 am to 12.30 Christmas Fayre

Friday 14th December Children’s Christmas Shopping Day 9 am to 1pm

**Please note that the PTFA need at least 15 volunteers to run these events, otherwise they will need to cancel. Please let any of the PTFA committee know if you can spare a few hours.**

St Mary’s Catholic Primary School

Living, loving and learning with God

