**St Mary’s Catholic Primary School Newsletter**

**A season of Giving, Feeling Safe and Empowered to Live Life to the Full**

**Spring Dance: The Selfish Giant (Oscar Wilde)**

Teachers were impressed with every child’s engagement and learning with last week’s daily dance lessons with the story of The Selfish Giant as the theme. Every Class deepened their understanding of the story by exploring it through dance. The showcase events on Friday for parents gave us a glimpse of the quality of movement that the children had achieved. The story captures how one person (the giant) has everything but chooses to keep it to himself. His heart and attitude are changed in a moment, when he comes across a child, who helps him to learn the joy of sharing.

Photos and videos will be uploaded to the school website.

**Update on Giving**

We continue to help our children feel positive about what they do have and to encourage and empower them to want to include and reach out to any child in need; be it in school by bringing a smile, contributing as a leader, helping to positively solve a problem, or working to make a difference to the lives of other children in the UK or abroad they continue to show that giving is very natural to them and brings them a sense of value and happiness.

**Genes for Jeans**

Over two weeks we had several assemblies to raise awareness and to remind the children that those children who are affected by genetic disorders had important messages. Here’s what they had to say;

*“We may look a bit different to you, we may not be able to do all the things you can do but inside we are just the same as you. Please if you do meet one of us, or have one of us in your school, please don’t make fun of us, or be unkind and include us. We are just like you. We want to belong”.*

Thank you to all parents who supported the Jeans for Genes Event by organising for their child to be out of uniform and for helping us to raise £156.16

**Shoe Box Appeal**

Owl Class arranged themselves to collect individual items for boxes and together they collected an amazing 18 boxes. Well done and thanks to Owl Class for having the idea and for working so positively. In total we received 53 boxes which is a new record. Thank you again for your generosity and care for such a worthwhile event.

**Bags 4 School** is a way to recycle and reuse unwanted clothing items. The small mountain outside our school entrance continues to grow. The bags will be taken away this Wednesday.

**CAFOD Zero to Hero Workshops Friday 8th November**

Bea, our visiting Cafod leader, will be working with Owl, Kestrel and Eagle Class to build on their knowledge of ways to take action to help our planet. Last half term we had thought that we would be introducing this as part of our ‘ Common Home’ Project but we quickly realised children are very aware of the issues around climate change and we quickly changed our focus to ways to help them feel positive and to take action. Bea will lead Eagle Class in this week’s celebration assembly to share their learning.

**Children in Need**

This is a charity that has an incredible impact on the lives of children in the UK and one that our children are always aware of and value. The website is a great place to share uplifting stories of change and support : <https://www.bbcchildreninneed.co.uk/changing-lives/>

A development of Children in Need has been the BBC Rickshaw Challenge, an annual event in its ninth year and lead by the One Show presenter Matt Baker, is now an established part of Children in Need. The young people taking part are a genuine inspiration. Follow their journey from Friday 8th November via the One Show.

This year Kestrel Class are leading a project to arrange a bring and buy of toys and books. All funds will go to Children in Need. Please have a sort out of toys and books. All items appreciated. The sale will be on Friday 15th November in the school hall from 2.30 – 4.00 Parents welcome from 3.00pm.

 **Our right to be safe and our responsibility to be a peacemaker**

At St Mary’s we encourage every child to make the right choice. We train them not to make a wrong choice back again. We teach them to work together to solve problems. Every child is taught to say **STOP** if they are faced with anything that makes them feel unsafe or unhappy. Further they have named people in school and at home who they know to TELL if they do not feel safe or happy with the actions of another.

In the next week we will be reviewing this with all pupils and ensuring that they do all have safe people to talk to about what is going well and if they do have a worry. We hope that for each child this will be limited to the ongoing every day challenge of typical friendship and relationship issues. However, by empowering them with the tools to be assertive in their relationships, we are working to equip them with a tool for life; this is a protective skill that applies to any relationship challenge at any age or stage. Our children are special and loved. They should know this and be empowered to live life with the self-esteem to be who they want to be.

Please take some time to talk to your child in the next week to ensure that this is a positive and important right.

R**emembrance Events : *For those brave who gave their lives so we can live ours to the full***

***Poppies and related items will be on sale this week with funds going to the Royal British Legion to fund on going work to support the Armed Services Community - suggested donations 50p - £1.50. Please see attached details of items available.***

This week in school children will be making poppies and thinking about why we remember those who fought to bring us peace. Our children do know that in parts of the world children still live with the challenges of war and we encourage them to appreciate the peace we enjoy. We also use this time to look again at each child’s responsibility to be a peacemaker.

On Monday 11th November at 9.00 am we will hold a Remembrance Service in school and then for 11.00 am Eagle Class will take part in the Axminster Remembrance Service at the Minster. All are welcome to join us for either or both of these services. Eagles will lead these services for us. Eagle Class will take a cross from our which will be left at the Minster Memorial and will leave smaller crosses, one for each of the local people who have lost their lives in war. You may wish to visit the memorial with your children over the next week.

**A reminder that details of individual class teaching and updates of photos and videos are updated on our school website.**

**Homelessness Awareness Eagle Class**

Following their trip to London and questions about the homeless people that some children noticed we are holding an awareness event on Thursday 28th November from 3.30 to 6.15pm. Eagle Class children attending after school clubs that day will be expected to do so and will join the rest of the class once their activities have finished.

**East Devon Cross Country Finals**

Well done to all children who participated in the East Devon Cross Country finals last Friday. Congratulations to the year 5/6 boys team who came third in their category!

**Other Dates for your diary**

**Owl Class Swimming – starts Wednesday 6th November**

**Robin Class Gymnastics Festival – Wednesday 13th November**

**Owl Class Multiskills Event – Wednesday 13th November**

**Owl Class Forest Farm Visit – Friday 15th November**

**Individual School Photos – Tuesday 19th November**

**Eagle Class Indoor Athletics – Wednesday 20th November**

**Flu Vaccinations – Friday 22nd November**

**Christmas Bingo (after school) – Friday 22nd November NON SCHOOL UNIFORM**

**Year 6 PE Academy Workshop – Thursday 28th November**

**Christmas Fayre – Saturday 30th November – details to follow**

**Nativity service – Monday 9th December 2.30pm, Tuesday 10th December 2.30pm & 6.00pm**

**Woodpecker Team Challenge – Tuesday 10th December**

**PTFA Christmas Shopping Day – Friday 13th December – an opportunity for children to buy Christmas items as family gifts**

**KS2 Advent Service – Monday 16th December 9am**

**KS2 Carol Service – Wednesday 18th December 9am**

**Last day of term – Friday 20th December**

**First Day Back – Monday 6th January 2020**

