



# School Newsletter

With Christ we live, we love, we learn and we grow

10.12.21

Dear parents/ carers,

## COVID - update

Thankfully, the number of positive cases in school reduced to just four by Friday and most of those who have been off school have now returned. There have been no new cases over the last few days.

Thank you parents/ carers for your support in arranging tests when asked to. This has picked up positive cases that are asymptomatic and therefore has helped contain the spread of the virus in the building. Regular LFD testing is the best way of keeping positive cases down in school.

The Omicron variant is obviously going to be a cause for concern over the next few weeks; we will do everything we can in school to minimise the risk of transmission in school.

## Christmas Joy Toy Appeal – Toy Collection – Thank you



As part of The Christmas Joy Project, co-ordinated by Chorley Council, the Catholic Community in Chorley, was invited to donate new toys for distribution to families in Chorley.

On behalf of everyone at St Mary's, I would like to say a huge thank you to you for your very generous donations for this year's appeal. I took a car bootful of toys and games to the collection centre at St Laurence's Church. If you think that your family would benefit from the toy and game donation you can contact the school office in strictest confidence.

*Some of the bags of toys donated from schools across Chorley*

## **Living Waters Christmas Food Donation – Tins of Meat/ Selection Boxes – Tuesday 14 December**

Just a reminder about the tins of meat/selection box collection. If you would like to donate, you can drop off items in the car park on the morning of Tuesday 14 December and I will load straight into the car and take them up to Living Waters. Thank you very much.

## **Visit to Lowry Theatre – *The Stick Man***

We were delighted that we could go ahead with the visit to the Lowry Theatre last week to watch the performance of Julia Donaldson's, *The Stick Man*. For some children, this was their first such visit given limitations placed on us by COVID over the last couple of years. The children from Nursery to Year 2 enjoyed the afternoon from start to finish. They experienced the wonder of a live theatre performance, looked in awe at the 'skyscrapers' in Manchester and for some of them, the highlight was travelling on a double-decker bus!

As daft as it might sound, this visit took an extraordinary amount of preparation in order for it to go ahead. So, I would like to thank everyone involved, the PTFA, our staff, the Lowry Theatre and all of the volunteers. I would also like to thank the parents/carers in arranging all those LFD tests. It was definitely worth it.

## **Christmas Raffle**



Thank you to everyone involved in the Christmas raffle this year, thank you for the donations and thank you to you all again in your generosity in buying tickets. It has raised nearly £ 1000. Thanks to the PTFA, especially to Mrs Wilson and Mrs Rogerson, for their ingenuity and effort in making this work! Our house captains drew the numbers yesterday afternoon and the list of winning tickets is attached to this email. Good luck!

## **Book sale! Monday 13th December – A message from Miss Hesketh**

Our library elves have had a sort out and as such - we have lots of books for a sale in school to raise funds for the library. On Monday morning, each class will be taken to the school hall where children will be able to buy books of their choice. We are selling books in the following way - 50p for 2 books and £1 for 5 books. If you would like your child to take part, please send them in with the money (and a carrier bag to put their books in) on Monday morning. However, there is no obligation to take part. Thank you in anticipation of your support.

## **Journalist visit to Year 2**



Year 2 were visited by journalist and parent, Mr Coyle. He came in and spoke to the children giving them tips on effective reporting techniques to help them in their current English topic. He also showed them some of the recording equipment he uses in his work. The children were captivated and definitely inspired to get reporting. Thank you, Mr Coyle.



Mrs Nicklin spotted a newsworthy item herself, when she spotted another one of our parents, Mr Edwards, lifting up a drain cover outside the Y2 classroom, clearing a blocked drain. Thanks Mr Edwards.

## LATENESS

Teachers have been telling me that some children have been arriving regularly at the classroom door after 8.55am. This causes a delay to the morning's learning in class but we notice that it often puts the child on the back foot or gives them the sense that they are already playing catch-up; it can give them an unsettled start to the school day. Classroom doors are open from 8.45am. Please ensure that children arrive before 8.55am. We are required to record children arriving after 8.55am as being 'late after the registers have closed.' Thank you for your support.

## Governor Vacancies

If you or anyone you know would be interested in the role of Governor at St Mary's, even if you have expressed an interest before, please contact me at school for an informal chat and I also can put you in touch with the Chair of Governors, Kath Smith who may be able to answer some of your questions. It is a very strong and very experienced group who are committed in its support of the school and in wanting to drive it forward. Here are the thoughts of a couple of current governors on how they view the role. Last week Kath Smith and Kinga Grzeczynska shared their feelings about their role as governors at St Mary's. This week I have included the thoughts of governors, Andrew Jenner and Paul Rigby:

*I have found my experience of being a Governor at St Mary's over the last few years to be a privilege and a pleasure, though it does come with challenges as may be expected of a responsible voluntary position.*

*It's a privilege to see the behind the scenes work of the school, to experience the successes of the pupils and the dedication of the staff; but also the privilege of having insight of the school data and supportively challenging to help in improving the offer that St Mary's has to its pupils and community.*

*It is a pleasure to work in a collaborative and dedicated governing body, with others with a range of skills and experiences, but who all have the vision and desire to support the successes of the school in academics, arts, culture, sport, faith and community and to see every aspect strengthen in the future.*

- Andrew Jenner

*Being a school governor is a very rewarding experience: an important way of contributing to the local community; making a difference to the way school is run, and supporting children on their educational journey.*

*You also learn new skills, and develop those you already have, in areas such as teamwork, decision-making, problem-solving, influencing and networking*

*It can also be fun too: visiting the school and chatting with the children; seeing how they are progressing, and being amazed at what they can achieve. Attending concerts and school plays are particular highlights! – Paul Rigby*

Below is from the LCC web page on school governance:

<https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/become-a-school-governor/>

**Become a school governor**

School governors are volunteers who work together with the headteacher, the archdiocese and the local authority to improve education and other outcomes for all pupils.

You could become a school governor if you are aged 18 or over and:

- Want to make a positive difference to the education of local children
- Can get on with other people and work as part of a team
- Have some time to spare to attend meetings and to read necessary papers
- Are ready to learn and open to new ideas
- Are willing to put something into your local community
- You don't need any formal qualifications, you'll get full training and support to make sure you are fully equipped to carry out the role successfully.

### **What we expect from governors**

Effective governors do not need educational expertise but do need to be committed to their school, willing to ask questions and act as a critical friend. They also need to be able to work as an enthusiastic member of the governing body team.

You do not need specialist knowledge or training to become a governor. It is your lay and community experiences that the governing body requires. However you will become knowledgeable by being a governor and this can help you to participate more fully in your local community or even open up opportunities for you personally, for example involvement in a Parents Teachers and Friends Association (PTFA), voluntary work within school or an awareness of new employment opportunities.

Realistically, as a school governor, you will need to attend one full governing body meeting each term. You will also be asked to serve on at least one committee which will probably meet once or occasionally twice a term. So, that is about two or three meetings per term maximum.

You will need to get to know your school well (if you don't already) preferably by visiting when the school is in session and the pupils are in school. However this may not always be possible and some governors keep in touch with school life through after school events such as fundraising or charity events, Parents Teachers and Friends Association meetings, sports days, school parties and holidays.

### **Christmas Mass at St Mary's Church – from parish newsletter**

*CHRISTMAS EVE falls on the Friday and our CHRISTMAS NIGHT MASS IS AT 19.30. CHRISTMAS DAY MASS is at 10.00 on the Saturday morning. No Saturday evening Mass on 25th. Sunday 26th is the Feast of the Holy Family with Mass at 10.00 as usual.*

*PLEASE PICK UP A TICKET IF YOU WISH TO COME FOR THE CHRISTMAS EVE MASS. Tickets are available after weekday Masses and weekend Masses. We can seat 130 people within the Health and Safety requirements. Please wear a mask to all the Masses and make sure your family or visitors wear a face mask also. You can email Kinga Grzeczynska at the parish office at: [stmaryschorley@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:stmaryschorley@yahoo.co.uk) . Kinga asked me to ask people not to come to Church if they are displaying COVID symptoms, cold symptoms or even if they are generally feeling all unwell. Many parishioners are quite vulnerable due to their age.*

## **Chorley Schools Sports Partnership (CSSP) Christmas Sports Camp**

Please see attached a flyer for a Christmas holiday sports camp on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> December.

## **Chorley Number 1 Food Club – Chorley SVP**

Please see the poster attached to this newsletter from the Chorley SVP. The poster says - *Over 2 million tonnes of good food goes to landfill EACH YEAR... Join The Club! Help Divert That Food from Landfill! For £3 per week, you will receive up to £25 of food of your choice. Yes, you read that correctly.*

## **2022 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES – PRIMARY**

**Nursery Pupils/Primary School Admissions:** If your child is in their last year of pre-school/nursery you can now apply for their primary school place at: <https://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/apply-for-a-school-place/>

It's quick and easy to do and you will receive email confirmation of your application.

**VERY IMPORTANT: You must apply even if you already have siblings in school.** If you live in Lancashire, you can include out of area preferences on your online application.

***The closing date for primary applications for September 2022 is on 15 January 2022.***

**\*\*Please remember that admissions to St Mary's, or any Catholic primary schools, also require the completion of the separate supplementary information form (SIF).\*\***

## **Lancashire Cards for Kindness Campaign**

The Cards for Kindness Christmas campaign will once again be running across Lancashire, Blackpool, Blackburn with Darwen and South Cumbria from Wednesday 1 December. Voluntary, community and faith groups across the area are invited to take part.

This campaign aims to tackle loneliness in our care homes by encouraging people to send a festive card to a local home to brighten up someone's day.

Cards for Kindness is now in its fourth year and each Christmas, community groups across the area send in fantastic cards and gifts that they've made to help brighten someone's day.

The theme for this year's campaign is *'What Warms Your Heart This Winter'*

There're plenty of opportunities for people to use their creativity and last year's activities ranged from fantastically designed cards made by adult learning groups to friendship rocks designed by Cub Scouts. There is a serious side too as campaigns like this help to tackle loneliness, which has the same effect on people's health as smoking 15 cigarettes a day.

Opening the cards and discussing the messages also prompts conversations among residents and brings back memories, bringing many health benefits, particularly for people living with dementia.

To find out how Cards for Kindness works, visit: <https://www.healthierlsc.co.uk/CardsForKindness>. Cards for Kindness is run by The Lancashire and South Cumbria Health and Care Partnership and Lancashire County Council, in partnership with Blackburn with Darwen, Blackpool and South Cumbria councils.

We'd love to see and hear about your Cards for Kindness creations so we can use them on the media and in social media to help promote the scheme.

If you're happy to share photos, please send them to [CardsforKindness@lancashire.gov.uk](mailto:CardsforKindness@lancashire.gov.uk). Please send them by Wednesday 15 December stating you are happy for us to share your image.

### Use of your photos

In sending your photo you are confirming that you do not object to the photograph of you being published by Lancashire County Council on its internet and intranet pages, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram, or being shared with the media. In doing so you acknowledge that images shared on social media are open to comment by the general public and may be circulated by third parties. If you change your mind about using the images please email to let us know, though please be aware that LCC will have limited ability to remove photographs shared through social media channels. Please view [LCC's Privacy Notice](#) for further information.

### **School entrance**

At the start and end of the school day there are two entrances to the school in use: Walgarth Drive and Warton Place. The Warton Place entrance can also be accessed from Hornchurch Drive via the alleyway that runs parallel to the staff car park. **Please do not use the path in the staff car park entrance.** This may only be used during the school day when the other entrances are locked.

### **COVID symptoms – however mild**

If your child has:

- a high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back (you do not need to measure your temperature)
- a new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual)
- a loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal

they must not come into school, you should get a PCR test (test that is sent to a lab) to check if they have coronavirus and stay at home until you get their result, even if the symptoms are mild.

One of the recent changes for this term means that if your child is a 'close contact' of someone, e.g. a parent, who has tested positive for COVID, but has no symptoms themselves the child no longer needs to self-isolate, they may come to school. However, in this instance, we would also

ask that your child has a PCR test (but they can still come to school while awaiting result – if no symptoms).

 **Sickness/ Diarrhoea**

If your child is suffering from sickness and/ or diarrhoea, then the minimum absence must be 48 hours. This is to prevent the spread of any infection such as norovirus (winter vomiting bug).

 **Absence**

If your child is absent, please inform the office directly by calling in or by telephone. Please do not pass messages on via siblings or *Class Dojo* or indeed class teachers, thank you.

 **Medical absences**

If your child has an appointment with the doctor or dentist, please inform the office prior to the absence where possible. Thank you.



**Chorley, St Mary's Attendance League**  
**2020/2021**


10.12.21



CURRENT POSITION	CLASS	CURRENT %
1 <sup>st</sup>	YEAR 4	97.13
2 <sup>nd</sup>	YEAR 3	96.63
3 <sup>rd</sup>	RECEPTION	95.96
4 <sup>th</sup>	YEAR 2	95.85
5 <sup>th</sup>	YEAR 5	95.69
6 <sup>th</sup>	YEAR 1	95.54
7 <sup>th</sup>	YEAR 6	95.04

No classes had 100% attendance this week.

**STARS OF THE WEEK w/e 10.12.21**

	Class	Name	Star of the Week for ...
	YN	Ralphi	For superb listening and enthusaism during our trip to the theatre – a great role model to his friends 😊
	YR	Alice	For always doing the right thing and being a good role model to others
	Y1	Gabriella	Applying her phonics to her writing this week.
	Y2	Charles R	for showing dramatic flair in his Mog interview for English.
	Y3	Felix	Excellent answering of questions in class in all subjects (always eager!).
	Y4	William	For his knowledge and enthusiasm in history
	Y5	Leon	For his wonderful work whilst making our <i>Moving Toys</i> .
	Y6	Wil	Great work in mathematics on fractions all week

## Advert for Chorley Music Centre



### Chorley Music Centre

#### When and where is Chorley Music Centre?

Southlands High School (PR7 2NJ), community entrance.

#### What's on?

Following a difficult time with restrictions, we are delighted to be able to start rehearsals for our ensembles again from Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

Timetable:

4:00 – 4:30	Choir
4:30 – 5:00	String-a-lings
4:30 – 5:00	African drumming Club
5:30 – 6:00	Ukulele Ensemble
6:00 – 6:30	Wind Band

All ensembles are open to musicians of any ability and rehearsals for all will take place in the drama studio at Southlands.

We are offering a free trial period until Christmas 2021.

For more details, contact Gemma Hannaford (Head of Centre) on 07887 830991

We can't wait to see you there!



## Free School Meals – Are you missing out?

### Free School Meal Eligibility and Pupil Premium Funding

Because all children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 are entitled to a free school meal, many parents do not realise that they might be entitled to something called **free school meal eligibility**. And we understand why this might be the case because the system is confusing! At St Mary's, we have noticed a fall in the number of infant children whose parents have claimed eligibility since the introduction of free school meals for all infants –other schools have noticed the same.



**This free school meal eligibility** can be applied for in Reception, Year 1 and in Year 2 even though children are receiving a school meal anyway. And parents in Y3, 4, 5 and 6 can also apply.

### **Why bother applying if your child is receiving a free meal anyway?**

If you think you might be eligible it is very much worth applying for two reasons:

1. Your child will continue to receive free school meals on leaving the infants in Y3, Y4, Y5 and Y6 and beyond
2. The school receives additional money (pupil premium) for children eligible for free school meals (over £1 300 per pupil).

If you receive any of the benefits below, St Mary's School can access this extra funding, called pupil premium.

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under Part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on – paid for 4 weeks after you stop qualifying for Working Tax Credit
- Universal Credit

### **How can you find out if you are eligible?**

#### **Apply by phone – and you can find out in a matter of minutes!**

You can ring the local **Free School Meals and Pupil Premium team on 01772 531809**

It must be the person claiming the benefit that rings.

You will need to provide your:

- Name
- Date of birth
- National insurance number

They will confirm whether you are entitled over the telephone. **Apply by post** - Download the application form from <http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/children-education-families/schools/free-school-meals.aspx> and return it to your local area education office.

#### **South Area Education Office**

Level 1 Christ Church Precinct  
County Hall  
Preston  
PR1 8RJ

**Free milk** If you receive benefits, your child could also get free milk. Contact us to find out what arrangements we make for school milk.

Best wishes,

P Smyth 10.12.21