



# School Newsletter

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

18.09.20

**Dear parents/ carers,**

It has been another busy week in school. The children have quickly settled to the rhythms and routines of school. The COVID-secure control measures continue to work well and the children have been brilliant in adhering to them.

One of the control measures in place is that if a child or adult has one or more COVID symptoms (high temperature, new continuous cough, loss of sense of smell and/ or taste), then they and their household members should self-isolate for 14 days or until the symptomatic person is given a negative test result.

This is quite a challenge, because as you will know well, we have lots of coughs, colds and temperatures in school throughout the year but especially in the autumn and winter terms. We know that 99.9% of these cases will prove to be negative, but these are the steps we are required to take. One day this week, we had 28 absences and a number of children sent home with 'COVID symptoms.' All tests have come back negative so far.

I would like to thank parents/ carers for your patience. I acknowledge the disruption it causes you when we ask you to take your child home and ask you to apply for a COVID test – particularly when we know that is becoming an increasingly difficult task. Unfortunately, I think this is going to be the case for the foreseeable future.

On a brighter note, Mr Hodge, who is self-isolating but well, has been teaching Y3 from his home via Zoom for the last couple of days with Mrs McGeown supervising the class. They have done a fantastic job between them and performed an impressive double act. The most amazing thing, however, is that the Y3 children do not think that this is anything out of the ordinary!

## **Messages from the school office**

### **Parentpay Accounts**

All children/families new to school (and some existing ones!) have now been sent letters to activate your Parentpay account.

It is important that you activate your account as soon as possible so that you can see any outstanding payments that are due. We ask that you monitor your account on a regular basis to ensure that debts do not accumulate and also let us know if there are any discrepancies recorded.

### **Toast**

For all parents who have ordered toast for their child - this item is now on Parentpay and should be paid by the end of the month.

### **Outstanding debts**

Please can we also remind parents to check their accounts for any other outstanding monies, (eg. lunches, uniform, last year's toast monies and some extended day bills from the last academic year are still outstanding).

The office will be contacting all parents with monies still outstanding after 1st October.

### **2021 SCHOOL ADMISSIONS PROCEDURES – PRIMARY AND SECONDARY**

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 2020 is 15 January 2021.

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

Secondary school admissions: If your child is in Year 6 you can now apply for their secondary 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 secondary applications for September 2020 is 31 October 2020.

### **School Photographs**

We had Tempest photographers in during the week to take individual photographs outdoors. Luckily, the weather was perfect. Mrs Wilson asked me to tell you we are currently awaiting proofs. She also asked, if possible, when the time comes to pay, that you make payments online directly to Tempest.

The Reception Class also had a group photo taken, which I think will appear in the Chorley Guardian over the next few weeks.

### **Phonics Meeting**

Our Early Years Team gave a presentation to parents of children in Nursery and Reception on Wednesday evening regarding the teaching and learning of phonics. Phonics is the systematic way we teach children how to decode letters and combinations of letters into sounds and words – the building blocks of reading. At St Mary's we use the **Read, Write, Inc.** scheme to deliver this. Thanks to our staff and to all the parents who were able to attend.

### **Sacramental Programme 2019/2020**

Sadly, the children in Y5 were unable to receive their First Holy Communion in the summer term. However, Father Marsden and Kinga Gray-Grzeczynska have arranged for them to receive their First Holy Communion in groups of five at Church during weekend Masses. These will take place over the course of three weekends at the end of this month and the beginning of next. I think we all accept it is not the ideal scenario, however, will look into having some sort of celebration in school within their bubble and arrange for a group photograph in school to mark the occasion. More details will follow on this.

### **Sacramental Programme 2020/ 2021 – Zoom Meeting Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 6pm**

St Mary's Lead Catechist, Kinga Gray-Grzeczynska, will lead a meeting on Zoom on Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 6pm to introduce the Sacramental Programme for our Y4 class this year. A letter was sent to our Y4 parents with the meeting ID and password. If parents did not receive these, they can contact the school office and request them.

## **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.


## House Captains, Vice Captains and Sports Leaders

Well done and thank you to all the Y6s who put themselves up for election for the posts of House Captain, Vice-Captain or Sports Leader this week. They gave their presentations live in Y6 and also via video to the other KS2 classes.

It takes a lot of hard work to put a persuasive speech together to convince your house members to vote for you. I think it also takes a lot of courage; firstly, to stand up and give a speech or presentation on which you will be judged and secondly, to risk not being elected. So, there will be a number of disappointed Y6s; that said it will make them stronger in the long run and hopefully will not discourage them from taking similar risks in the future. Congratulations to the following children on their appointments:

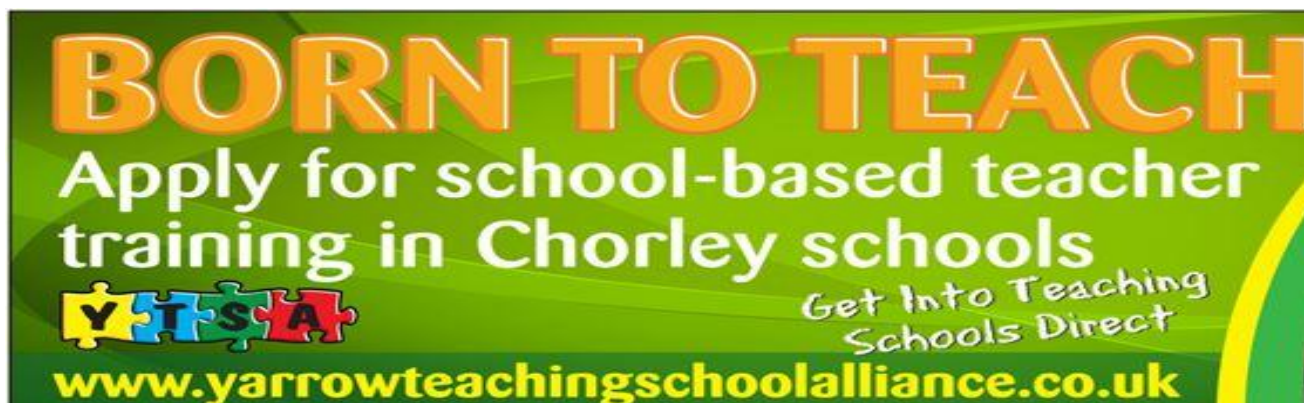
	House Captain	House Vice-Captain	Sports Leader
Hoghton	Diana	Lucia	James
Samlesbury	Florence	Aaron	Niamh
Rufford	Grace B	Harriet	Emily
Worden	Joe J	Daisy	Mason

## STARS OF THE WEEK w/e 18.09.2020

	Class	Name	Star of the Week for ...
	YN	Teddy	Trying really hard and putting his hand up
	YR	CiCi	Amazing home learning and trying ever so hard for her mummy. What a superstar!
	Y1	Lucy	For brilliant independent writing.
	Y2	Harrison	Being such a hard worker.
	Y3	The whole class!	Coping brilliantly with the Zoom class set up.
	Y4	Jayden	Always trying hard in mathematics and showing great perseverance when facing a challenge.
	Y5	Archie B	Always putting excellent effort into all his work, especially in our multiplication work in maths.
	Y6	Zach	Great work blending action, dialogue and description within a sentence.

Best wishes,

P Smyth  
18.09.2020



<http://www.yarrowteachingschoolalliance.co.uk>

@YarrowTSA

St Mary's is part of the Yarrow Teaching School Alliance. If you have a degree and interested in becoming a primary school teacher, visit the website above.