



School Newsletter

With Christ, we live, love, learn and grow

29.01.21

Dear parents/ carers,

We heard earlier this week from the Prime Minister that it is highly likely that school will not reopen fully until **8th March** at the earliest. That is four more weeks of remote learning at least, two before the half-term break and two after.

If that is the case, we are four weeks in, and at the halfway point (hopefully) of this period of restricted attendance. Therefore, I just want to take the opportunity to repeat what I have been saying all along – thank you to all of you (children, parents/ carers, teaching assistants, teachers and all the staff) for your hard work and perseverance. You are doing a fantastic job – give yourselves credit. The engagement from the children has been excellent.

February half-term break

School will close as usual over February half-term (Mon 15 Feb to Fri 19 Feb) and will not remain open to vulnerable children and the children of critical workers during that week.

Parents' Evening

The booking system is now open for the spring term parents' evenings in the last week of this half term. Your child's teacher will give you an update on your child's progress in their learning and you can update your child's teacher on how well they are managing in the current circumstances. You should have received a separate communication from Mrs Wilson about this. If you have not received this information, please contact the school office.

Mental health and wellbeing

If you have concerns about your child's mental health or wellbeing during this period, please do not hesitate to contact us at school. Please contact me or your child's class teacher, or any trusted adult within school.

Here are a couple of websites you may find useful in the meantime:

A comprehensive guide from the Government/ Public Health England

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-guidance-on-supporting-children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing/guidance-for-parents-and-carers-on-supporting->

[children-and-young-peoples-mental-health-and-wellbeing-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak](#)

NSPCC

<https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/news/2020/april/supporting-children-young-people-mental-health>

Message from our Chair of Governors, Kath Smith

Our Chair of Governors, Kath Smith thought the following might be of interest to some of our parents:

Although I'm not vegan, I am trying to limit my meat intake and have been experimenting with more plant based meals. This is a great recipe for Jackfruit 'pulled pork.' I ended up making it with banana blossom as this was the substitute I received in my online shopping order! I had no idea what it was but it's basically similar to jackfruit and like jackfruit, it can be used to replace meat or fish in some meals as it soaks up the flavours of spices and marinades really well.

<https://www.bosh.tv/recipes/pulled-jackfruit-pork-sandwich>

I know we are being encouraged to exercise or walk in nature as this is so beneficial for us on many levels. However, after working all day, we don't always want to go out when it's cold and dark at the end of the day. This is a short meditation that can be done from the comfort of your warm home/desk– it includes nature sounds and a lovely visual of a stream which helps to relax and sooth.


<https://youtu.be/ugTaLEBu6q8>

Parish News – Sacramental Class

Another of our Governors, Kinga Gray-Grzeczynska has been maintaining the Sacramental programme with the Y4s even when most of school is closed to pupils. She has been delivering the programme over Zoom and the class have enjoyed the sessions and participated very well. We thank her for her determination in ensuring the programme is still running in the most challenging of circumstances.

If you take a look at this week's parish newsletter, Kinga has included some 'funnies' at the end which might give you a giggle.

Stars of the week - w/e 29.01.21



Class	Name	Star of the Week for ...
YN	Theo	Improving his independence skills
YR	Thomas I	Amazing independence in all his learning this week.
Y1	Arthur	His excellent engagement with remote learning – great reading, great writing!
Y2	Joseph	Showing great passion and enthusiasm about his work on the environment.
Y3	Jack	Always presenting his remote learning work so beautifully.
Y4	Niall	His hard work in all his online learning. Well done!
Y5	Harry	His enthusiasm in his online learning and working hard to edit his adventure story.
Y6	Diana	A wonderful retelling of Macbeth.

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.

With open events not possible in person, we have decided to publish a video which offers an insight into the training course and our offer to Associate Teachers. We will put this all over our social media platforms and advertise on Facebook shortly.

Yarrow Teaching School
Alliance
Open Event:
Tuesday 1st December 7pm



This Autumn, with face to face open evenings not possible, the Yarrow Teaching School Alliance invite you to a zoom open event. Have questions about our Initial Teacher Training Course answered, meet the team and see an Alliance school. email a.hitchen@st-georges.lancs.sch.uk to RSVP and receive log in details

<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. **P Smyth 29.0.1.21**