



School Newsletter

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

04.09.20

Dear parents/ carers,

We made it to the end of the first week and so far good. Your children have been fantastic. They have adapted to the new routines and procedures seamlessly – hand-washing, staggered breaks, lunches in classrooms, one-way systems in school and so on. I think we can sometimes forget or underestimate how resilient and adaptable children can be.

It has been great to see the school full, with children enjoying their learning in their new classrooms with their new teachers. It is also great to see how pleased they are to be with one another once again.

Thank you parents, too, for your role in making the first week go so well and for all your words of support. The one-way system for drop-off and pick up was difficult to get used to at first, but I think we are all getting the hang of it as time goes on. By way of reminder can I ask you this:

- Only one adult per family on site when dropping off and picking up
- Please arrive as near as possible to designated times
- Please do not congregate in groups
- Keep to the one-way system
- Avoid parking on kerbs near school, narrowing footpath space for pedestrians

Also, my apologies to all the children with birthdays wanting to share treats with their classmates, we can't allow children to bring sweets to share. It is because of the principle of limiting chance of virus transmission by avoiding, as much as possible, the transfer of items between home and school and vice versa. Sorry!

Apologies for nagging tone, spelling out all the things we cannot do, but my concern is that we could get one positive case in one year group. This could mean that that particular year group would miss two weeks of school through self-isolation. And nobody wants that. Especially since this is the first time many of the children have been in school since March. Now this might happen anyway, through nobody's fault, but if between us we can take every step to minimise that risk then all the better.

Lessons learned

As I said in a previous communication, we would be learning as we go along. In our risk assessment, we said that parents with children in classes with different drop off/ pick up times could drop off at latest time and pick up at the earliest.

Unfortunately, this seems to create more problems than it solves and is actually quite disruptive. Therefore, I would like to do this in reverse. From Monday, parents/ carers with children in classes with different drop off/ pick up times can **drop off at the earliest time and pick up at the latest time**. I hope you find that easier.

Other health and safety

Please do not send nuts or nut-based snacks in with your child. We want to protect a number of our children with nut allergies. Thank you.

Annual Data Collection Sheets

As we are trying to avoid sending items between home and school, we will not be sending out the annual data collection update sheet. Therefore, we are asking you to inform us as soon as possible of any change of address, contact details e.g. mobile no.s/ email addresses and medical information since last September. Thank you.

Daily Mile Track

At long last, it is here! Over the summer we had our daily mile track installed. Over the next few days and weeks your children will have the opportunity to exercise on it. It's a great addition to our facilities. It's a shame we cannot have an official opening at the moment under current restrictions but we will aim to do that when those restrictions are lifted.

From Mrs Nicklin - PSHE consultation feedback

Thank you to the large amount of parents and carers who responded to our PSHE and Statutory HRE consultation that took place in July 2020. We had lots of great feedback and some excellent suggestions that we will ensure we listen to and implement including:

- Including self-esteem teaching in EYFS
- Providing parents with advance warning of upcoming PSHE units – these will be identified on the parents newsletters at the start of each half term, so then you are not blindsided by any questions from your children
- As always, we will keep close and open communication between school and you as parents
- Lots of work surrounding worries and wellbeing using quality assured resources
- All lessons will be taught in an appropriate manner for the group with established ground rules. Older children will be made aware of the age appropriate nature of certain sessions and the responsibility that comes with this new found knowledge
- All lessons will take place in line with Catholic teaching and principles

Thank you again for your continued support and feedback, Mrs Nicklin

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.

STARS OF THE WEEK w/e 04.09.2020

	Class	Name	Star of the Week for ...
	YN	Whole class	For settling into nursery really well!
	YR	Whole class	For settling in really well with lots of smiles 😊
	Y1	Emily R	For settling into Y1 really well & producing lovely work.
	Y2	Riley	For an incredible start to Year 2 – behaviour, attitude, learning! Everything! Keep it up!
	Y3	Hettie	For being helpful around our classroom and in the cloakroom.
	Y4	Elsie	For being a great addition to our class and school and for working hard.
	Y5	Archie	For an enthusiastic start to Year 5.
	Y6	Florence	A great start to Y6, great contributions to lessons.

Best wishes,

P Smyth
04.09.2020