



St Ursula's Catholic Primary School

HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER

9.2.23

#11

Dear Parents and Carers,

I'm sure you will agree that it was a welcomed return to our face to face parents' evenings this week. Although the phone consultations were well received during our Covid-19 restrictions, these didn't truly replicate the face to face meetings we had prior to the pandemic.

The meetings this week were a chance for teachers to see where their pupils are coming from and an opportunity to discuss attainment and learning attitudes. For parents, it was a chance to actually meet the teachers who have the daily responsibility for their children. Teaching isn't just about relationships with pupils, but also the relationship with parents and carers and that is why the return of these face to face meetings was so important. From the table on the right you will see that most of our parent and carers attended these meetings.

CLASS	Number of Appointments
St Martin's	25
St Catherine's	27
St Anne's	24
St Edmund's	21
St John's	25
St Jude's	23
St Paul's	21
St Philomena's	19
St Teresa's	21
St Thomas'	20
St Margaret's	24
St Matthew's	24

For those few who did not attend, I hope you will be able to make our future events. As stated previously, if you did not book an appointment or you missed your allocated time, teachers will be unable to arrange new appointments. On most days after 3:15pm, our teachers have marking and planning, professional development or professional meetings and so it is important that parents meet with them during the chosen dates. These dates are shared at the very start of the year to ensure parents and carers have time to make work and childcare arrangements. We have a Curriculum Celebration afternoon booked for Thursday 30th March.

Coffee Morning

Thank you to those who attended our Coffee Morning today, It was lovely to see both familiar and new faces! I was able to discuss the School's plan to bring back a Parent & Teacher Association and whilst talking with those who attended, I was able to find out what interest there is in forming a new PTA. Parents were enthusiastic about the prospect and shared ideas and activities they would like to get involved with e.g. fundraising, Summer fairs and after-school clubs etc. There were some great ideas!

If you were unable to attend the coffee morning but would like to be part of the PTA, please collect a PTA questionnaire from the school office.

After half term, a letter will go out to invite parents to a PTA meeting so please keep a look out for this letter in your inbox.

Mr Ashburn

Attendance

TOP FIVE

1	St Martin's	100%
2	St Paul's	98.89%
3	St Catherine's	98.85%
4	St Philomena's	98.33%
5	St Thomas'	98.28%

SPRING TERM DATES

- 10th Feb – School Inset – School Closed
- 13th Feb – 17th February – Half Term
- 22nd Feb—Ash Wednesday Mass
- 22nd Feb—New uniform shop
- 2nd March – Year 1 trip to Harold Hill Library
- 3rd March – Year 5 & 6 C.S.I Road Safety Workshop
- 17th March Science Dress-up Day
- 28th March—Easter Production
- 29th March—Yr1 & Yr2 Road Safety Workshop
- 30th March – End of Term reports sent out (KS1 & KS2)
- 30th March – Curriculum Celebration Afternoon (KS1 & KS2)
- 31st March – Whole School Mass & Easter Egg

Wednesday
22nd February



Good News
for Families

1 Enjoy reading this Sunday's Gospel

Jesus was led by the Spirit out into the wilderness. He fasted for forty days and forty nights, after which he was very hungry, and the tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, turn these stones into loaves." But Jesus replied with God's word saying, "Scripture says: 'Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" The tempter then took him to the top of the Temple. "If you are the Son of God," he said, "throw yourself down; for scripture says: 'He will put you in his angels' charge and they will come to save you.'" Jesus said to him, "Scripture also says: 'You must not put the Lord your God to the test.'" Next, the tempter showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendour. "I will give you all these," he said, "if you fall at my feet and worship me." Then Jesus replied, "Be off, Satan! For scripture says: 'You must worship the Lord your God, and serve him alone.'" Then the tempter left him, and angels appeared and looked after Jesus.



Taken from the Gospel of Sunday 26th February 2023. Matthew 4:1-11 (the 1st Sunday of Lent, Year A)

Which words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? What does the picture make you think about? Now enjoy exploring this Wednesday's word, which is **LENT**.

2 Wednesday's Word

LENT



"Lent is a 'powerful' season, a turning point that can foster change in each of us." *Pope Francis*

How many days did Jesus spend in the wilderness? In this Sunday's Gospel Jesus relied on God's word to resist temptation. Lent is a time for us to make an extra effort to listen carefully to God's word, to try and make a change for the better by turning away from things which are wrong for ourselves or others. Ask your child what the word 'Lent' means to them. You may want to tell your child something that you know about Lent. Each of you say if there is anything you would like to start or stop doing this Lent.

"Lent is a time for drawing near to Christ by listening to the word of God and celebrating the sacraments." *Pope Francis*

The Latin name for the season of Lent is 'Quadragesima' which means "forty days" or "fortieth day." This reminds us of Jesus' 40 days of fasting and prayer in the wilderness, where he grew stronger through resisting various temptations. How can we strengthen ourselves to resist temptations throughout Lent? Perhaps we can: set aside a few minutes each day to pray, asking God to help us; read God's word in the Bible or in *The Wednesday Word*; regularly say the 'Our Father' together, thinking carefully about each sentence; go to church together; fast from a meal or snack and give the money saved to charity.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

WEDNESDAY
WORDSEARCH

SMARTSEARCHERS FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER **ACROSS** OR **DOWN**

WILDERNESS
 FASTING

TEMPTER
 APPEARED

JESUS
 SPOKE

GOD'S
 WORD

SUPERSEARCHERS FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS** OR **DIAGONALLY**

R	E	T	P	M	E	T	S	A	F	F	G
N	G	O	D	S	I	E	N	G	T	A	V
W	N	L	J	W	F	M	H	K	A	S	L
S	I	H	E	K	O	P	S	P	S	T	S
N	T	H	S	S	T	P	E	P	I	D	
J	S	O	S	E	J	E	N	M	O	N	O
E	A	P	P	E	A	R	E	D	K	G	G
S	F	G	S	R	E	T	P	U	E	N	W
U	N	U	E	D	T	W	N	W	P	E	N
S	S	D	L	V	O	O	H	T	I	S	G
N	W	I	L	D	E	R	N	E	S	S	S
W	W	P	Y	W	O	D	R	O	W	B	S

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"Man does not _____ on _____ alone but on every _____ that comes from the _____ of God."

Cross out the letters **k n s** in the jumbled words to find 4 real words.

ASH WEDNESDAY MASS

On Wednesday 22nd February, we will be celebrating Mass and receiving ashes on our foreheads to mark the start of the Lenten Season. In preparation for this Mass and the beginning of Lent please read through the 'Wednesday word' on the left.

ST URSULA'S BLOG

The BLOG is a new addition to our school website where we will be sharing what is going on at St Ursula's.

We frequently share photos on Facebook but are aware that not everybody has access to this and so the BLOG has been set up to ensure we can share what we are doing with more of our community!

Each week photos will be uploaded with information about activities, trips, visits and the-learning that is taking place!

The BLOG can be found on the front page of our school website. Please click the link below:

<https://stursulascatholicprimary.co.uk/>

BREAKFAST CLUB

The Breakfast Club is open. To book a place for your child/ren please use our Schoolcomms booking system. If you require any help or guidance with this booking system, please contact the school office on 01708 345200.

10 WAYS GAMING CAN SUPPORT POSITIVE OUTCOMES in Children and Young People

Gaming, of course, is phenomenally popular with children and young people. In 2021, for instance, more than three-quarters of teenagers played online games, with almost 70% of primary school aged children doing likewise. If enjoyed in moderation and supported by a healthy routine (staying hydrated, good sleep habits, taking breaks and so on), gaming can actually benefit a person's mental health. As long as we stay alert for potential risks, games can be much more than what we see on the surface: they can be a way to socialise, an avenue for creativity and a route to solving problems. Check out our top ten tips on how gaming online can sometimes work to your child's advantage ...

THE FEEL-GOOD FACTOR

Gaming is so popular because at the base level, it's enjoyable for the player. Succeeding in any game or contest releases dopamine in our brains: the 'feel-good' chemical that makes us happy or excited. Those emotions can be incredibly beneficial for mental wellbeing – as long as young players don't become reliant solely on playing video games to make themselves feel happy.

ACHIEVEMENT & PRIDE

A sense of achievement is incredibly important to all of us and can be particularly valuable to someone who's feeling unhappy or distracted. It's easy to get caught up in our thoughts, which can sometimes take a negative turn. So even achieving something small – like finishing a difficult level in a Mario or Sonic game – can feel like conquering Everest and give us renewed optimism.

SOCIAL SALVATION

Gaming can be an incredibly social activity. When playing online with trusted friends, what usually start out as chats specifically about the game can often develop into conversations about school and life. Even if they've had a bad day, simply knowing that a friend is there, on the other end of their headset, can provide young gamers with a sense of security and some welcome laughs.

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

In many online games, teamwork is crucial to winning. Often, people who are struggling with their mood tend to feel like they fail or let others down a lot. Working as a team with trusted friends or family in a game can reinforce a young person's self-importance: striving for a common goal and succeeding together can remind them that they're an integral part of something bigger.

REAL-WORLD RELATABILITY

Because many major releases are shooting or action games, when some people hear "gaming" they think of guns, explosions and violence. What's less recognised is how many titles explore relatable issues such as overcoming anxiety or coping with grief. These games allow young players to understand their emotions more deeply and realise they aren't alone in how they might be feeling.

A DIGITAL COMFORT

Video games can provide a reliable constant. No matter what happens in school or between friends, playing a favourite game is something that youngsters can look forward to all day and can help them de-stress. Let's not forget, games are fun – and, when approached safely, an interactive activity in which the player has a degree of control over what happens next can feel immensely reassuring.

PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE

It can be difficult for young people to handle the feeling that nothing is going right or that their problems are insurmountable. Gaming can help alleviate that by presenting challenges to be overcome, either solo or alongside trusted friends. Defeating a powerful monster or solving a tricky puzzle reminds young gamers that even the most daunting obstacles can be faced and conquered.

THE GREAT ESCAPISM

A certain amount of escapism is fabulous – allowing us to temporarily park some stress while exploring a world other than our own. For children, gaming can be like reading a novel or watching a film: a moment in the day when the fantastical becomes real, firing their imagination and immersing them in a story. Who wouldn't want to venture to the stars? Or battle monsters to save the planet?

TRIED & TRUSTED

There can be reassurance in repeating tasks. It often promotes a controlled outcome, which is ideal when life feels overwhelming or out of control. Replicating an experience, such as playing the same level of a game over and over to perfection, gives the player a sense of control and familiarity: it's like listening to a favourite song that always makes you feel happy or confident.

ENCOURAGING CREATIVITY

Inventiveness is a huge part of many modern games: in Minecraft and Roblox, for example, players regularly dream up amazing structures or new ways to play. Using our imagination to create something (whether digitally or physically) is massively beneficial for the brain; that's why Lego is sometimes used in the medical sector as both a stress reliever and a brain injury rehabilitation tool.

Meet Our Expert

Daniel Lipscombe is a writer who specialises in technology, video gaming, virtual reality and Web3. Author of 15 guidebooks for children on games such as Fortnite, Apex Legends, Valorant, Roblox and Minecraft, his work has also been published in the likes of PC Gamer, Kotaku, Pocket Gamer and VG247.



NOS National Online Safety®
#WakeUpWednesday