



# St Ursula's Catholic Primary School

## HEADTEACHER'S NEWSLETTER

#9

10.11.23

Dear Parents Carers,

This week has been a week of 'Remembrance' with assemblies from our Year 1 and Year 6 pupils, reminding us of the importance of November 11th, Remembrance Day. We were reminded of the significance of wearing a poppy and our pupils shared a song from Vera Lynn and the hymn — Peace, Perfect Peace (is the gift of Christ our Lord). Our Pupil Chaplains sold poppies during the week to raise money for the Poppy Appeal. By supporting the Poppy Appeal we are showing that we care about the lives of our Armed Forces community and our donations will help the vital work supporting serving and ex-serving men and women, and their families. Next Wednesday (15th November) our pupils will be attending a remembrance Mass at St Dominic's.

The parents and carers who attended the Year 6 assembly may have noticed the new additions to our school Hall. On Monday, we had new window film installed on our KS2 Hall windows. Each window represents one of the 7 Sacraments and there is also the inclusion of our St Ursula's prayer. In addition to supporting our pupils with understanding their faith, this development has helped create a more calming and prayerful environment in the school hall. This will support our community when we join together for collective worship. This took months of planning and we are pleased with the final result!



### LAUDATE DEUM

Last week you may have read the article on Laudato Si', the letter written by Pope Francis in 2015 that was addressed to every person on the planet, asking us all to protect the earth. On 4th October 2023, The Season of Creation closed and Pope Francis published a new Encyclical Letter, Laudate Deum. This letter has been called a follow up to Laudato Si'. In this letter Pope Francis states:

*"Eight years have passed since I published the Encyclical Letter Laudato Si', when I wanted to share with all of you, my brothers and sisters of our suffering planet, my heartfelt concerns about the care of our common home. Yet, with the passage of time, I have realized that our responses have not been adequate, while the world in which we live is collapsing and may be nearing the breaking point."*

On Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> November, I met with the Eco- School Council to create a plan of action that would address the key messages from Pope Francis' published Encyclical Letter, Laudate Deum. The Eco-School council have agreed on the following 5 action points:

**Action 1:** Raise awareness that time is running out and action must be taken urgently.

**Action 2:** Contacting politicians who have the power to make change.

**Action 3:** To use prayer to inspire our community to take action.

**Action 4:** Supporting those affected by climate change.

**Action 5:** Engaging parents and carers so that they make a change.

You can find more information here: [CLICK HERE](#)



### Attendance TOP THREE

1	St Margaret's	100%
1	St Teresa's	100%
1	St Matthew's	100%
2	St John's	99.58%
3	St Helen's & St Philomena's	99.17%

### ODD SOCKS DAY MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER

St Ursula's Catholic Primary School will be celebrating 'Odd Socks Day'. Odd Socks Day marks the start of Anti-Bullying Week and the aim of the day is to help raise awareness of bullying.

All you have to do, to take part, is wear odd socks with your school uniform, it couldn't be simpler! There is no pressure to wear the latest fashion or to buy expensive costumes.

We will not be asking for any donations for this event - the most important thing is the message of Odd Socks Day.

Odd Socks Day is designed to be fun! It's an opportunity to encourage our pupils to express themselves and celebrate their individuality and what makes them all unique! We want our pupils to know that they are valued and cared for as unique persons, made in the image and likeness of God.

### CHILDREN'S RIGHTS'

**This week children looked at their rights that were closely linked to Remembrance Week. When thinking of wars we consider the impact that conflict has on the young children around our world.**

**Articles: 38 & 39** – Governments must do all they can to protect children affected by war. Governments must support children who have been injured during a war in their country.



# CELEBRATING OUR SCHOOL VALUES

The core values of our school focus on high expectations for all learners, developing skills for life, encouraging good self-esteem and developing a set of core moral values based upon the teachings of Jesus Christ. These values are core to every part of our lives and are reflected in the way that we treat each other, the way that we look for every day opportunities to help those in need and in the example that we demonstrate to all those we meet.

At St Ursula's we have our School Value trophies that are given out during our weekly Achievement Assembly.



## THIS WEEK'S WINNERS – CONGRATULATIONS!

There is an award for each of our 5 values:

*Faith*

*Respect*

*Kindness*

*Honesty*

*Resilience*

These trophies are awarded to different pupils from Reception to Year 6, who have lived out our Gospel Values. These trophies are taken back to class and displayed on our classroom prayer tables.

### EYFS & KS1

Faith: Katherine (Year 2)

Respect: Grace (Reception)

Kindness: Annabel (Year 1)

Honesty: Laiyah (Year 2)

Resilience: Anthony (Reception)

### KS2

Faith: Charliyah (Year 3)

Respect: Kaia (Year 4)

Kindness: Praise (Year 5)

Honesty: Sophie C (Year 6)

Resilience: Simisola (Year 3)

*“There is a great need in our days for people who know how to make a courageous testimony of the moral values taught by the Gospel.” Pope Francis*

# Our Faith in Action in the Community

Our 'Faith in Action' pupils visited the Harold Hill Foodbank to find out more about the work of the organisation and to also give a helping hand by sorting the food into categories and then checking the dates. Some of our pupils even filled the bags ready for customers using a shopping list. They said they'd like to do it every week! It is wonderful to see our pupils actively contributing to our local community!





# Question time with our Pupil Chaplains

Hello, we are four of the chosen Pupil Chaplains (Jesse, Blessing, Sienna & Daniel) who have had the pleasure of interviewing Bernadette Horton who is from the Brentwood Diocese. During this time, we asked Mrs Horton eight questions, which she answered with genuine and heartfelt answers. We would be delighted to share them with you.

Q1. If you had to choose one of our school values that means the most to you, what would you choose and why? (Faith, Respect, Kindness, Honesty, Resilience)

*Kindness because we should treat others how we would like to be treated.*

Q2. We have been focusing on how we gather for prayer and are looking for some ideas. What's your favourite way of gathering for prayer?

*It depends on what prayer it is, however, we should make sure everybody knows that it is a special time. We should also set the scene by playing calm, relaxing music, putting our minds to God and our work aside.*

Q3. What's your favourite type of prayer and why?

*My favourite prayer is the Divine Liturgy because it praises God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, Mother Mary and her spouse. I pray it three times a day, morning, lunchtime and evening.*

Q4. What did you enjoy the most about working in a Catholic School?

*I enjoyed working together and spreading the love of God through sharing prayer, going to Mass. I like spreading the word of God through my words and actions.*

Q5. We are always looking for charities to support. Do you have any suggestions? Could you tell us more about the organisation?

*I recommend local charities where you can make a difference that are about the Catholic Church but personally, I like the Guide Dogs charity because it supports blind people like my piano teacher.*

Q6. What is your favourite Bible story and why?

*My favourite Bible story is when Jesus turns water into wine because it marks the beginning of His ministry.*

Q7. Our eco school councillors have asked us to ask you this question. Pope Francis published a new letter, Laudate Deum. He says that time is running out and we need to do more to support our planet. What choices do you make to support planet earth?

*I care about recycling and I try to buy food with sustainable packaging to help our environment, however, I am guilty of eating chocolate and sweets.*

It was a pleasure speaking to such an important member of our Diocese.

The Pupil Chaplains.



*“Whenever people **listen** to one another humbly and openly, their shared values and aspirations become all the more apparent. Diversity is no longer seen as a threat, but as a source of enrichment.” Pope Francis*



# What Parents & Carers Need to Know about SHARING PHOTOS ONLINE

School is often a time chock-full of milestones for your child, and you may well be eager to share their accomplishments with the world. In today's digital age, sharing images of such precious moments on social media is commonplace, and – while that's a lovely thing to do – it does come with some risks attached. Our guide can help parents and carers to consider the potential dangers and make informed choices about safely sharing photos of their children online.

## WHAT ARE THE RISKS?

### INVASIONS OF PRIVACY

Even with the right settings in place, absolutely nothing online is 100% private. Anyone who can view your photos could take screenshots and potentially share them elsewhere. Privacy settings are still important, though, so it's always wise to ensure your social media accounts have them set up; just bear in mind that you can't completely control what happens to anything once it's gone online.

### REVEALING PERSONAL DETAILS

Small details in photos can often reveal personal information. Backgrounds can give clues to where you live, for example, while school logos on uniforms, sports kits, or bags could help someone identify which school your child attends. With interactive maps and reverse image searches commonplace online, information like this could easily be misused by an individual with malicious intentions.

### MISUSE OF IMAGES

Once something's been shared online, it's almost impossible to get it deleted. Photos can show up in search engine results and be downloaded, manipulated, and shared without consent. There's the potential for someone's images to be used for advertising purposes (which in many cases, isn't illegal) or even more inappropriate reasons, such as cyber-bullying or serious forms of exploitation.

### ONLINE GROOMING

Pictures that convey details about your child's interests, activities, or daily routines could arm an online predator with the kind of information they can deploy to gain a child's trust. They might use this knowledge to pretend to be the same age as the child or to have a shared hobby. Essentially, the more a predator knows about a young person, the easier it is for them to invent some 'common ground'.

### PRESSURE TO PLEASE

When their parents or carers share notable moments and accomplishments in a child's life on social media, some children may begin to feel an expectation to *always* meet certain standards, to achieve things, or to behave in ways that are "worth sharing". Knowing that other people (even friends and family) can see these posts on social media might also add to the pressure they're feeling internally.

### IMPACT ON DIGITAL FOOTPRINT

Every photo of a child posted online contributes to their digital footprint. Young people's lives have never been so closely and publicly documented as they are now, and this permanent online presence could affect a child's future opportunities or the choices they make as they grow up – in addition to influencing how they see themselves and, consequently, their emotional wellbeing.

## Advice for Parents & Carers

### REVIEW SETTINGS REGULARLY

Make sure your social media's secure in terms of who can view your content or see your location (only family and trusted friends, for example). Privacy settings aren't totally foolproof, but they do make it tougher for strangers to access your pics. Reviewing your settings regularly is also a good starting point for conversations with your child about managing their own social accounts when they're older.

### CONSIDER OTHER CHILDREN

When taking a group photo, make sure you get parents' or carers' permission to share it on social media. There may be an important safeguarding reason for them not wanting their child's photo posted publicly online, or it might simply not tally with their personal beliefs or cultural background. A quick conversation in advance, just to make sure, is usually hugely appreciated.

### CHECK YOUR PHOTOS

Photos of your child shouldn't provide any clues to where they live or go to school: even a house number, street name, or car number plate could be a giveaway. Cover up or blur out school logos, too. If you *really* want to share a particular pic, you could post a watermarked or low-res version, which can help to discourage misuse as those images are less appealing to download or reproduce.

### THINK AHEAD

Try to consider the longer-term implications of what you post. Would you be happy with that photo being online in 10 years' time? Would your child still be OK with the image when they're older? Once your child is mature enough, you could ask for their consent before posting: it respects their privacy, fosters trust and understanding, and helps them to start thinking about their own online life.

## Meet Our Expert

Gabriella Russo is a safeguarding consultant with more than 30 years' experience working with children, families, and adults in education, local authority, and mental health settings, both in the UK and internationally. She has developed online safety training for local authorities and foster care agencies across Britain and is the online safety expert for FosterWiki.

