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HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE

Welcome Back

I wish you all a happy and peaceful New Year. I hope you enjoyed a restful Christmas break and managed to celebrate with families and friends, despite the challenges of Covid.

A Polish Catholic Tradition-Trzech Kroli

It is always lovely to hear of the different celebrations and traditions that take place during the Christmas season so I asked Mrs Piechota, our year 1 teacher, to pass on a Polish tradition linked to the Epiphany. She informed us that a Polish Catholic tradition is to use blessed chalk to write the initials of the three wise men (Kaspar, Melchior, Balthasar) on the door of the family home on the Epiphany. This is to celebrate the beginning of the New Year. Parish Priests visit and bless homes of Catholic families, and have the opportunity to meet members of their Parish to celebrate the coming of Jesus and the New Year together.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome Miss Brophy, who joins us as a teacher in Reception class B. Miss Brophy has moved from Ireland and has settled in very well this week! She is looking forward to getting to know the children and their parents. Mrs Green is working from home, supporting Miss Brophy in her new role.

Have a restful weekend and keep safe.

Kind regards
Mr J Sims
Headteacher

WEEK BEGINNING 10TH JANUARY

Saturday 15th January

Deadline for new parents applying for a place in Reception, to start in September 2022.

FEAST OF THE EPIPHANY

Yesterday (6th January), we celebrated the feast of the Epiphany, also known as Twelfth Night, which marks the end of the Christmas season.

This feast day celebrates the visit of the wise men bringing their gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. The wise men were led to Bethlehem by a bright star (Star of Bethlehem) to see the newborn baby. These gifts were symbolic of the importance of Jesus' birth; gold representing his royal standing, frankincense his divine birth and myrrh his mortality.

The feast of the Epiphany is celebrated across the world with various traditions. Children at St Mary's celebrated with a virtual Mass with Fr John in Christchurch.

*Hope smiles from the
threshold of the year to come,
whispering "it will be
happier"*

Alfred Tennyson

APPLYING FOR A PLACE IN RECEPTION

If you are applying for your child to start Reception in September 2022 please be aware that the closing date for applications is **Saturday 15th January**. Everybody must apply online to their local authority **as well as** providing a Supplementary Form to St Mary's. Supporting documents must also be provided (baptism cert and a current proof of address).

It cannot be stressed enough the importance of submitting the correct forms. Failure to do so could prevent your child from joining St Mary's in September.

Mr Sims is planning to host a Zoom call for prospective parents next week, date to be confirmed. Details will be uploaded onto our website. Please contact the main office if you wish to join the meeting.

SCHOOL DINNERS

Dinner money for this half term (until Friday 11th February) is £75.11 (£12.95 per week) for all Junior children.

Payment can be made through Wisepay.

If you think that you are entitled to Pupil Premium Free School Meals, please speak to one of the office staff.

Family circumstances may have changed and this benefit may help your family. Help can be given towards school uniform, after school clubs and school trips.

Every enquiry will be treated in confidence.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

All after school clubs will restart week beginning Monday 10th January. Letters regarding all the clubs have been emailed to parents so please follow the instructions on the letters to register your child and make appropriate payments.

The new timetable can be viewed on the website.

https://www.stmaryrc.org.uk/docs/C_LUBS/After_School_Clubs_Timetab le-Spring_2022.pdf

The music tutors will be back on site from Monday 10th January so please ensure your children bring their instruments with them to school.

E-SAFETY

With lots of families welcoming new online devices into their households at this time of year, it is important to remember how to do this safely. There are many options for safety settings and filtering that are useful, especially for children's devices.

Help your family stay safe online with the information in the Vodafone Digital Parenting magazine. An online copy can be accessed using the link below:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/FA7569CC5A8/digital-parenting-by-vodafone-2021-edition/full-view.html>

Hard copies are available to collect from the main office. Please inform the office staff if you would like a copy or pop in the office to collect one.

Six Online Safety Messages

Click the link to ensure that you know how to keep your children safe online.

<https://www.net-aware.org.uk/news/six-online-safety-messages-from-net-awares-six-years/>

- Talk about Online Safety
- Agree some rules about how they spend their time online
- Look at the tools available to help
- Explore the online activities your child likes
- Look out for signs they might need more support. Know where to get further support

JOB VACANCY

The position of Business Manager at St Mary's has become available. Please look on the website for more details:

<https://www.stmaryrc.org.uk/School-Vacancies/>

Details of the role and the application pack can also be obtained from the main office. Please phone or email for information.

If you are interested, or you know someone who may be interested, please contact us for more information.

SCHOOL VALUES: FAITH, MERCY, TRUTH, RESPECT, RESILIENCE, LOVE