

St Ambrose Barlow

Catholic Primary School

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Tuesday 3rd March 2020

Headteacher Newsletter

Dear Parents

Welcome back to the second part of the half term. I hope you all had a wonderful break. At the beginning of this half term I felt it prudent to re-issue some of the dates of upcoming events which were established already, add a few more for good measure, and celebrate some of the achievements of the year so far.

Lego Team

As you will all know, our Lego Mindstorms team were crowned regional champions in the North West First Lego League earlier in the year. Over half term they travelled down to the national finals in Bristol and competed against the very best from across the whole of the UK. This is an astounding feat in itself and we could not be prouder of each and every one of them. For those of you who follow school on twitter you will know exactly how things went blow by blow, and I know many followed the live feed, on YouTube, of the awards ceremony (have your nerves recovered yet?). We did not come away with a trophy on this occasion, but it is important to recognise the incredible attitude and efforts of the children who competed. Their composure, attitude, diligence and resilience could not have been more impressive. They competed against children as old as 16, the majority of which came from private grammar schools and at each and every stage they impressed and achieved. I think this says it all. As a school family we could not be prouder of these children and how much they have achieved, and I know everyone will add their voices to this in congratulating them.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank several groups of people without whom it would not have been possible to have represented as we did in Bristol. I would like to thank Mrs Mulraney and Mr Alexander for their time, effort, passion and love in working with the Legoteers. I would like to thank Mr Howard for stepping in to support the children in Bristol; Mrs Mitchell for her promotional work with the local radio station; our wonderful office staff for their organisation, and the families of the team who made such huge efforts to ensure the children could take part and supported them every step of the way. Finally, I would like to thank the PTA and every single family who supported, fund raised and gave to this team to enable them to experience this amazing opportunity.

Thank you all.

Sporting News

More exciting news on the competition front. Our girls' football squad become the North West regional champions of the Manchester United Premier League Primary Stars competition, and will be travelling to London to compete in the National Finals in Watford. The girls will be the female representatives for Manchester United and will be competing against other Premier League clubs. Their performances have been outstanding so far, and they have acted as true ambassadors for the school. We wish them all luck, and I will keep you all posted on their progress.

Outdoor Provision

You will all have noticed that the outdoor equipment, including the beloved pirate ship, has been removed from the grounds. As you will be aware, shortly after taking on the role of Interim Headteacher, I found myself in the unfortunate position of having to stop the use of the equipment as it was assessed as no longer being safe or fit for purpose. We have now had the equipment removed and the ground is being repurposed. School and the PTA are working together to look at how we can use the outdoor space and design provision which will benefit all of the children across school. In addition, the PTA have been working closely with school in developing the woodland area at the side of the school field. This is currently being repurposed as our base for Forest Schools.

PTA

Our incredible PTA have worked tirelessly to develop funding for provision within school. Their hard work and dedication has been put to excellent use by helping to fund the upgrading of computing across the entire school. This project includes: the purchasing of new iPads and tablets to be used across all classes; mobile devices for use in the Infant classes; development of coding provision; and the upgrading of our computer suite. These are huge developments for school and mean that each and every child in our care will benefit from the most up to date IT provision and will be able to progress their knowledge and skills for their future lives. A massive thank you to each and every person who has helped, organised, and supported the events and initiatives.

Safeguarding

It has been brought to my attention that several of the children across school are using the app TikTok. Although this is not strictly a school matter, I felt it prudent to add some additional information for families and highlight some of the issues we have been informed of.

In several of the reported incidents it has been found that children are using their names, whilst in school uniform, and are using wholly inappropriate language in their video posts. The use of these apps whilst in school uniform makes the children more vulnerable, and I would strongly urge parents to monitor the children's use of apps to ensure they are being safe whilst online. I have attached an information sheet regarding the app which I hope parents will find useful.

Staffing

I am sure all our families will be pleased to hear that Mrs McCann will be returning to school in the summer term after her maternity leave. Mrs McCann visited school before the break with their new addition, and I am happy to report everyone is happy and healthy. It was a joy to have both 'mini McCanns' visit with mum.

Public Health Update

I know that many families will be concerned regarding the recent news of the coronavirus. School will be sending out updated information regarding the situation as and when it becomes available.

The most recent DfE update is as follows:

Department for Education Coronavirus helpline

We have launched a new helpline to answer questions about COVID-19 related to education. Staff, parents and young people can contact the helpline as follows:

Phone: **0800 046 8687**

Email: DfE.coronavirushelpline@education.gov.uk

Opening hours: 8am to 6pm (Monday to Friday)

No school should close in response to a suspected (or confirmed) COVID-19 case unless directed to do so by Public Health England.

Personal hygiene is the most important way we can tackle COVID-19. Please help us in sharing simple and effective hand hygiene messages.

Where to find the latest information

Updates on COVID-19:

<https://www.gov.uk/coronavirus>

Travel advice for those travelling and living overseas:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/travel-advice-novel-coronavirus>

Diary Dates:

2nd, 3rd, 4th & 5th March – **Year 6 Bikeability** – Year 6 pupils will be training to develop their road safety awareness and cycling skills.

5th March – **World Book Day** – children can dress up as their favourite book character on this day and bring along the book in which it appears for discussion in class. There will also be a 'Pre-loved' Children's Book Sale at the end of the day with proceeds going to PTA projects.

11th March – **Year 6 Class Celebration** – Our Year 6 Class Collective Worship will begin at 9:10am and all Year 6 families are welcome.

11th March – **ASTA Sports Weekend Parent Meeting** – This information evening will take place at St George's Central school for the families of the representing pupils.

12th March – **Y5 & Y6 Good Shepherd Event** – our annual fundraising for Nugent Care begins with Our Y5/6 joint event.

12th March – **First Holy Communion Meeting** – Session 3 of the programme will take place on this evening, beginning at 6pm in the parish hall.

16th, 17th & 18th March – **Book Fair** – This will take place in the school hall and will run each evening after school for the three days.

17th March - **Y4 Low Bank Ground Information Meeting** – This meeting will deliver information pertaining to the Year 4 residential trip to the Lake District in May. The meeting will begin at 3:30pm in the Year 4 classroom and all parents are encouraged to attend.

19th March – **Y3 & Y4 Good Shepherd Event** – Nugent Care fundraising continued with our Y3/4 event.

19th March – **First Holy Communion Meeting** – Session 4 of the programme will take place on this evening, beginning at 6pm in the parish hall.

25th March – **Infants Good Shepherd Event** – Nugent Care fundraising continued with our Infant classes' event. As it usual, this event is for the pupils within school time, however parent helpers are always welcome.

27th March – **PTA Easter Egg Bingo** – this will be a wonderful opportunity for the families of the school to come together at the church hall to have fun together and raise a few pounds.

1st April – **Y2 Class Celebration** – Our Year 2 Class Collective Worship will begin at 9:10am and all Year 2 families are welcome.

2nd April - **Dementia Friendly Parent Workshop** – We are becoming a 'Dementia Friendly School' with an awarded programme being delivered to Year 6 pupils. This parent workshop will be delivered to parents beginning at 9am in the school hall and lasting for approximately 1 hour. All families are welcome.

2nd April – **First Holy Communion Meeting** – Session 5 of the programme will take place on this evening, beginning at 6pm in the parish hall.

3rd April – **Last Day of Term** – Enjoy the break!

20th April – **Summer Term begins** – Welcome back!

23rd April – **First Holy Communion Meeting** – Session 6 of the programme will take place on this evening, beginning at 6pm in the parish hall.

28th April – **Parents' Evening Session 1** – This is the first of two evenings and is an opportunity to meet with your child's teacher, one to one, discuss any issues and get an update on their progress. Appointments should be made via ParentMail.

30th April – **Parents’ Evening Session 2** - This is the second of two evenings and is an opportunity to meet with your child’s teacher, one to one, discuss any issues and get an update on their progress. Appointments should be made via ParentMail.

2nd May – **First Holy Communion Weekend 1** – This is the first of two weekend dates arranged for the celebration of the children receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion for the first time.

4th, 5th & 6th May – **Year 4 Residential Trip** – The annual residential trip to Low Bank Ground outdoor pursuits activity centre at the foot of Lake Coniston in the Lake District.

6th May – **Year 5 Class Celebration** – Our Year 5 Class Collective Worship will begin at 9:10am and all Year 5 families are welcome.

8th May – **Bank Holiday** – School is closed on this date.

11th May – **Key Stage Two SATs Week** – Annual designated week set by the DfE for the administration of standardised tests.

14th May – **Reception Class Celebration** – Our Reception Class Collective Worship will begin at 9:10am and all Reception families are welcome.

16th May – **First Holy Communion Weekend 2** - This is the Second of two weekend dates arranged for the celebration of the children receiving the sacrament of Holy Communion for the first time.

18th May – **Key Stage One SATs Week** - Annual designated period set by the DfE for the administration of standardised tests.

21st May – **Ascension Day** – Classes will be celebrating mass on this day at Church.

22nd May – **Last Day of Half Term** – Enjoy the break!

2nd June – **First Day of Half Term** – Welcome back!

8th June – **Phonics Screening & Multiplication Tables Check Period** - Annual designated period set by the DfE for the administration of standardised tests, with the addition of the new Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check.

9th June – **School Photographs** – This morning is set aside for the groups/team photographs and the class photographs for Reception and Year 6.

12th June – **Year 6 Faith Assembly** – A faith based assembly lead by the children in Year 6 where all Year 6 families are invited to join in the celebration of faith with the rest of the school.

13th June – **Summer Fair** – This incredible event is organised by the PTA and is host to a wide range of attractions and stalls. It is a wonderful opportunity to gather as a school community with family and friends in support of the school and to enjoy the fair together.

15th June – **Sports Day (KS2)** – Annual sports events for KS2 children. All KS2 families welcome to come along and cheer on the children.

17th May – **Year 4 Class Celebration** – Our Year 4 Class Collective Worship will begin at 9:10am and all Year 4 families are welcome.

17th June – **Sports Day (KS1)** - Annual sports events for our Infant classes. All Infant families welcome to come along and cheer on the children.

29th June – **John Burland Visit** – Music concert delivered to the whole school by the international performer John Burland.

1st & 2nd July – **Year 5 Residential Trip** – Annual trip to our nation's capital, London. During this cultural trip the children will experience the sights and sounds of London, enjoy dinner in a city centre restaurant, and attend a west end theatre production. All this before visiting the Warner Bros. Studios, exploring the Harry Potter tour and learning about sound and animation in.

3rd July – **Reception Faith Assembly** - A faith based assembly lead by the children in Reception where all Reception families are invited to join in the celebration of faith with the rest of the school.

3rd July – **PTA Discos** – Infant Disco followed by the Junior Disco. A mix of funk, soul, big beat, indie and dance tunes or Baby Shark and the songs from Frozen on repeat!

7th, 8th & 9th July– **Junior Production** - TBC

13th July – **End of Year Reports** – Full breakdown of all subjects with results and commentary from your child's teacher.

15th July – **Leavers' Mass** – This is a beautiful celebration of the Year 6 children's time at St Ambrose Barlow where we gather as a school family. All Year 6 families welcome for this wonderful occasion (Bring tissues).

16th July – **Last Day of the Year**

As always this is a very busy half term, packed full of clubs and events. The children will be very busy with exciting lessons and preparing for the coming of Easter throughout the period of Lent. Class newsletters will have arrived in ParentMail inboxes so please do look out for any additional details or dates from the classes.

I hope you all have a fantastic half term, and on behalf of the whole school team, thank you for your continued support.

Many thanks & God bless.

Mr Doherty

Headteacher