



St. Mary Magdalen's R.C.V.A  
Primary School

Autumn.2 2020 – NEWSLETTER (Nov – Dec)

It is difficult to believe that it will soon be the lead up to Christmas and that the children are now well on their way through this academic school year. Despite the challenges we all face, relating to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, our school community continues to face these challenges with optimism and courage. I am immensely proud of all of our pupils and staff who have worked so hard this term in ensuring that our school operates as normally as possible.

Can I also thank parents for their ongoing patience and cooperation as we continue to follow government guidance and adhere to our school COVID-19 risk assessments in order to keep our school community as safe as possible. I appreciate how frustrating it can be, as a parent, when the education of our pupils is disrupted due to the need to self-isolate. This is a frustration I also share as headteacher. Hopefully, by continuing to work together we can minimise any future disruption caused by the coronavirus and celebrate the season of Advent in the best way possible.

With darker days now, once again, beginning to creep up on us it certainly feels like winter is on its way once again! Hopefully school events planned for this half term, will raise spirits and brighten things up a little!

**Christ at the Centre - 'Statements to Live By'**

As a Catholic school we are centred on Christ and Catholic beliefs and principles. Here at St. Mary Magdalen's we care and support each other, love our neighbour as ourselves, recognise that we are all special and unique and that we all have an important part to play in ensuring we are a thriving school community. We recognise that Jesus is with us in all that we do, both in celebrating our successes and supporting us during our challenges.

This half term, we will be focusing on the Sunday Gospel readings, preparing for Advent and exploring our half termly 'Statements to Live By' - Ethos Statements.

**Ethos Statements for November**

- I can work, play, rest and pray each day.
- Simple things can make us happy.
- I try to love others as I love myself.

**Ethos Statements for December**

- I try to follow our school and classroom rules.
- I know I belong in a community that includes my school.
- I know we are happiest when we are united.



### School Parking - Keep Our Children safe!

Ensuring our children's safety, when crossing the road outside of school, is paramount, especially now as the darker days are fast approaching. Can I remind parents to park **considerately and safely** when dropping off or picking up. Please don't -

- **Park on restricted road markings** (£70 parking penalties can be issued by Durham County Council traffic enforcement officers)
- **Park in the bus stop area** (pupils and residents need to access public transport safely)
- **Block access to drive ways of local residents.**
- **Park your car on the pavement** - this restricts pedestrian access.

Can I also ask that you remind your children about road safety and the need to wear bright/reflective items when near roads or riding their bikes. This is especially important during the winter months when day light is limited.

### School Contact Details/Pick Up Information - Important Note to Parents.

As part of our safeguarding measures, could you please ensure that you have informed the school office of current contact details and school pick up arrangements. You can do this by completing our online forms which can be accessed through the links below. Thank you to those parents who have already done this.

<https://forms.gle/oVNniE5myxyx9cui8> - Parent contact details form

<https://forms.gle/J3FFdoxtewqW5sZT8> - Pupil collection after school form

### **Upcoming Events or Advents!**

As we enter the season of Advent this year, take time to think about those who reside in poverty. Pray for them and ask Jesus for his blessings of love and comfort.

*"We think sometimes that poverty is only being hungry, naked and homeless. The poverty of being unwanted, unloved and uncared for is the greatest poverty. We must start in our own homes to remedy this kind of poverty." Saint Mother Theresa of Calcutta*



### Christmas / Advent Celebrations

Unfortunately, because of social distancing and the need to limit social gatherings, we are unable to run our usual Christmas/Advent productions and Christmas fayre this year. However, we will be carrying out a number of seasonal celebrations which will be shared with parents via our school Twitter and website. Please look out for these at the end of the school term.



### Class Christmas Parties

Afternoon class parties for Reception, KS1 and KS2 will take place on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> Dec. The children should arrive to school dressed for their class party (Both Key Stage 1 & Key Stage 2 children). Further information will be provided the week prior to class parties.





## Important Dates for your diary!!!

### November Dates

- 11<sup>th</sup> - Remembrance Day.
- 13<sup>th</sup> - Children in Need 2020
- 17<sup>th</sup> - Year 4 First Confession (in school - afternoon)
- 16<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> - Assessment Week.
- 16<sup>th</sup>- 20<sup>th</sup> - Anti Bullying Week
- wb 16<sup>th</sup> - EYFS Parent Evening (phone calls)
- wb 23<sup>rd</sup> - KS1 Parent Evening (phone calls)
- wb 30<sup>th</sup> - KS2 Parent Evening (phone calls)

### December Dates

- 6<sup>th</sup> - Parent Evening.1 (3:30 - 7:00 pm)
- 11<sup>th</sup> - Final day to hand in shoe boxes (women's refuge.)
- 7<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> - Design and Technology Week.
- 12<sup>th</sup> - Year 4 First Communion @ 10am in church.
- wb 14<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Performances - CD's available for purchase
- 16<sup>th</sup> - Christmas Lunch (children to wear a Christmas jumper)
- 17<sup>th</sup> - Class Christmas parties.
- 22<sup>nd</sup> - School closes for Christmas @ 1pm (There will be no afterschool club this day).

### Parents Evenings Autumn 2020

Due to current COVID-19 restrictions and the need to limit people coming into school, our planned parent evening appointments will take place this half term via a 10minute telephone conversation with your child's class teacher. This will be an opportunity for you to receive an update on how your child has settled into their new class and on their academic progress this term.

A letter will be sent home together with an allocated phone call appointment time.

### SEND Reviews

Our school SEND reviews will take place with parents this half term. Pupil support plans and targets for the spring term will be finalised and reviewed with parents in December 2020.

Reviews will take place virtually and further information regarding these appointments will be sent to parents in due course.



**Children in Need 2020**  
**Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November**

To support Children in Need this year the school council would like your assistance in helping to raise money for a great cause. This year Children in Need is on **Friday 13<sup>th</sup> November**. The School Council has chosen several ways in which we would like to participate in this throughout the day. These are:

- Wear yellow - we would like children to wear anything yellow and donate £1.
- A sponsored silence - Please sponsor us to be silent for one hour. This will include children and staff.
- 'Copper collection' - we would like to fill as many Pudsey Bears as possible with 1p and 2p coins.
- In class, we will be taking part in Joe Wicks 'Ultimate Feel Good Friday!'

### Anti-Bullying Week

Anti-bullying week is the week commencing Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November. The children are asked to wear odd socks to help us show awareness of bullying and how we can prevent this. Over the rest of the week, the children will complete different tasks in class, including:

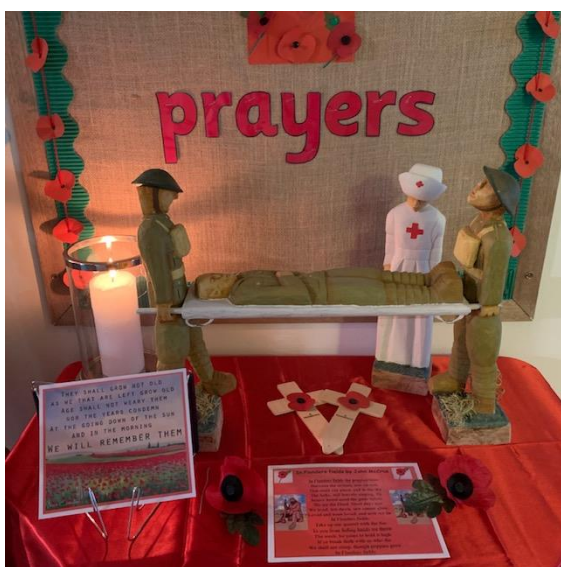
- Creating an anti-bullying poster
- Designing an anti-bullying superhero for our school

When all superhero designs are complete, the school council members will choose a winning design to be our school anti-bullying mascot. The winning design will be displayed on our anti-bullying display. We will also be giving small prizes for the best posters (one from each class). These posters will also be displayed around the school.



Hopefully most dates have been finalised but there may be further events that arise during the run up to Christmas. Should this happen you will receive letters and a school App regarding specific times and events. You can also keep up to date with events on our school website - check out the school calendar, school App or Twitter page!

# School News!



## Remembrance Day

On the 11<sup>th</sup> November the children will be remembering and praying for all those who have died as a result of war and conflict. They will also remember family members who are sadly no longer with us. There will be a one-minute silence in school.

## Shoe Boxes - women's Refuge

We will again be collecting Christmas shoe boxes for our local women's refuge this year. Shoe boxes can be donated for either an adult (mother) or a child. Can I ask that items included are in good condition as these will be a present on Christmas morning. If you would like to contribute to this good cause please send your shoe boxes into school no later than **Friday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2020**. Further information will be sent out via Parent Pay.



**E-Safety:** We continue to provide our children with opportunities to stay safe on line. We regularly remind our children of many e-safety issues including risks posed by social media.

For further information about staying safe online please visit our school website.

## Welcome to Father Marc Lyden-Smith



Following the retirement of Father McCullagh in September 2020, we welcome our new Parish Priest, Father Marc Lyden-Smith. We wish him the very best and pray that his time at St Mary Magdalen's is very happy and rewarding. If you need to contact Father Marc, please contact St Mary Magdalen's R.C. church on 01915812368.

## Charity Success!



A big well done to Emily for her fabulous charity work in raising money for Cancer Research. All her hard work will help to support such a fabulous cause. We are all very proud of you Emily!



## Online/Home Learning

We may face an autumn term that is disrupted by COVID-19. If your child is required to isolate for a period of time or is unable to attend school then please access our online learning resources by clicking on the 'Pupil Online Learning' link on our school website. Your child will then be able to access a range of school resources, including the weekly learning grids and Microsoft Teams. All daily activities will follow the learning themes that your child's class teacher will be covering in school so this will hopefully minimise any gaps in learning content.

Further information regarding online/home learning can be accessed through our school website.