



St. Peter's Roman Catholic Primary School



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Through Jesus we love, we learn and we grow together

19th December 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome to our 2023 Christmas newsletter. It brings me such joy to share with you some of the wonderful highlights of the Autumn term - and what a busy term it has been! The children have had so many opportunities to develop their skills and talents throughout the term, and as a result they have all shone brightly.

From the Reception/KS1 Nativity and whole-school carol service, to the Year 6 performance, children have worked so hard, rehearsing diligently and using their talents to convey the Christmas message of hope and joy. Our Pupil Chaplains have also taken the Christmas message out into the community, volunteering at the local Salvation Army Centre.

Throughout the term, we have maintained a strong emphasis on the Catholic Virtues and Values in school, focusing on temperance and prudence this term. As such, children are confidently able to articulate their understanding of these virtues, and know the importance of making good choices, and of having an awareness of how our choices affect others.

As always, we say a huge thank you to our fantastic Friends of School team who work tirelessly for the children and our families in so many ways, and made the Christmas Fair such a success. We extend our gratitude, too, to our parent readers who come in each week; we really appreciate the time you give to the children and the difference you make.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to the school community for making me feel so welcome and taking me into the St. Peter's family. I have enjoyed getting to know you all, and look forward to the opportunities that the New Year brings.

May I take this opportunity to wish you all a happy, holy and peaceful Christmas. We look forward to seeing the children return on Thursday 4th January.

Mrs Archer
Headteacher



ATTENDANCE

We would like to bring your attention to attendance and punctuality.

As a school, we expect a minimum of 95% attendance, to enable the children to make good progress both academically and socially. **Good attendance at school is not just beneficial it is essential.**

We review patterns of absence on a weekly basis. If your child is absent, we may ask you to supply a form of medical evidence (doctors note / medical card or copy of the prescription) for our attendance records. There are, of course, always exceptional circumstances, including long term illness and bereavement, and we will continue to take these into consideration on a case by case basis.

Lateness

Did you know that being 15 minutes late each day is the same as missing two weeks of school over the year? Lateness is just as serious as non-attendance. The start of the school day is an important time for children to develop their social skills with their peers, as well as preparing them for their learning. We start our school day at 8.40 am. Our school gate is opened from 8.30am and the whistle is blown at 8.40 am in order to settle children for teaching to begin at 8.50 am.

Again - we do understand that there are sometimes reasons as to why a child may be late but all children, where possible, need to arrive on time via the playground entrance. Lateness not only affects the individual child—is also has an impact on the other children in class.

Many thanks for your support with both attendance and punctuality.

Attendance Matters



Every Day Counts....

STAFFING

We have two members of staff who are leaving us at the end of this term. Mrs Watson is retiring. We say a huge thank you to her for her contribution to the school as a teaching assistant and colleague over many years. We also say a big thank you, and farewell to our SENDCO, Ms Caldwell. Both colleagues will be greatly missed and we wish them the very best in their future endeavours.

A message from Ms Caldwell:-

Goodbye St Peters! It has been an absolute privilege to get to know your children and some parents over the last 2 years. I have been offered a SENDCO position in the other school I work at in Totnes so it is time to move on. I may see you in the sea, off Plymouth Hoe or Devil's Point sometime!

Warm wishes to you all for Christmas and beyond, Alison Caldwell x

We look forward to a new member of staff starting with us in January. Mrs Bijacic is our new Teaching Assistant and we give her a warm St Peter's welcome.

CLASS UPDATES:

ROSEN

In RE lessons in Rosen Class, we have been learning about the long journey Mary and Joseph took to get to Bethlehem. We made maps of the journey, recreated the road to Bethlehem using our bricks and small world characters, prayed together about the things we are struggling with on our own journeys, and learnt all about donkeys and how to care for them.

We also made our own Bethlehem scene. We painted buildings around the edge and lit up the inside using fairy lights.

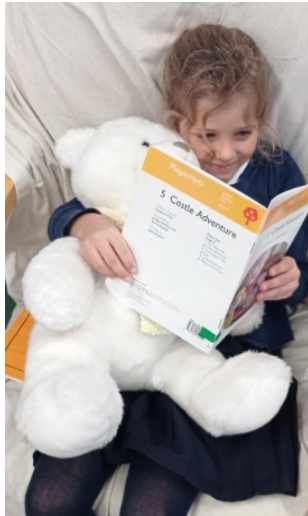
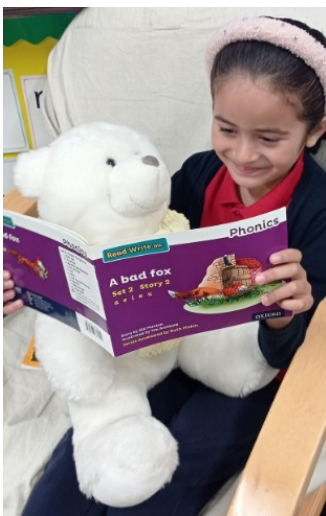


SEACOLE

Seacole Class have had a really busy term. Over the past few weeks, they have been preparing for the KS1 Nativity. Being the eldest children in KS1, the Year 2 children have had to learn all their words for the play as well as all of the song words, and put their acting skills into practice.

We have also had lots of visitors. We had a visit from the dentist who talked to the children about the correct ways to keep our teeth (and our mouth) clean and healthy. She even gave all the children new toothbrushes and a 2 minute timer as well as a story book. We also had a visit from the fire service who talked to the children about fire safety around the home. The children learnt so much! They all went home to check if they had enough smoke detectors, and had a number that parents could call if they wanted one for free.

With all this going on, the children in Seacole Class have also been enjoying gymnastics during our PE sessions, and learning about where we live in our Geography sessions.



RASHFORD

This term in Rashford class, we have been learning about keeping our bodies healthy. We set up an experiment to see how different liquids affect our teeth and what happens if we don't brush our teeth. We used an egg to represent the teeth and enamel. We soaked the egg in water, fizzy drinks, coffee and vinegar for three days. As predicted, nothing really happened to the egg in water suggesting it does not damage our teeth. The fizzy drink and coffee stained the egg. The shell dissolved in the egg which was soaked in vinegar. The vinegar represents the acids that are made by plaque bacteria, which cause tooth decay and cavities. Both eggshells and teeth can be weakened by acid, which is why good dental hygiene is so important.



THUNBERG:

The Autumn Term has been and gone in the blink of an eye for our new Thunbergers!

Tremendous efforts have been made fostering the new routines of 'Morning Work' as well as daily times tables practice. A significant highlight for the year 5 complement has to be our swimming instruction, which concluded a couple of weeks ago. Fantastic progress was made by all – swimmers and non-swimmers alike. While this has been happening, the year 4s have worked alongside their guest teachers of Miss Harding and Mrs Balfour, who have been significantly impressed by their times tables knowledge. Good job, folks!

A big highlight for this term must be our science work, where we've been exploring forces and famous scientists that have hypothesised said forces. One of these scientists was Galileo, who used the idea of push and pulls to create pendulums to measure time. We explored this by changing variables such as bigger/smaller pendulums, different pieces of string and longer/shorter pieces of string.



ORMROD:

This term, Ormrod Class has had a very exciting start to the year from moving classrooms, to welcoming Ameia back. Ormrod have been given the challenge of lots of responsibilities such as our house captains assisting in our Friday Assemblies and our prefects helping hugely across the school. Across this term all children have worked incredibly hard and should be very proud of their achievements.

In Autumn term one, we learnt about Rivers, focusing on the upper, middle and lower course, and finding the features of each section of the river. Additionally, we looked at a range of different rivers from across the world and compared rivers including the river Plym, Mississippi River and the Danube River. During the term, we also looked at a range of writing from fairy tales and creating our own to adventure stories.

In Autumn term two, Ormrod Class have focused on the British Heros, researching Lord Robert Baden Powell, using their problem-solving skills to improve hospital conditions in the 1800s, like Florence Nightingale, and creating motivational speeches about issues they care about just like William Wilberforce. We linked our topic to our reading and writing this term by reading the book Lightning Mary and reading all about the life of Mary Anning. From that, we have been able to create our own non-chronological reports and have also written a story based off true events.



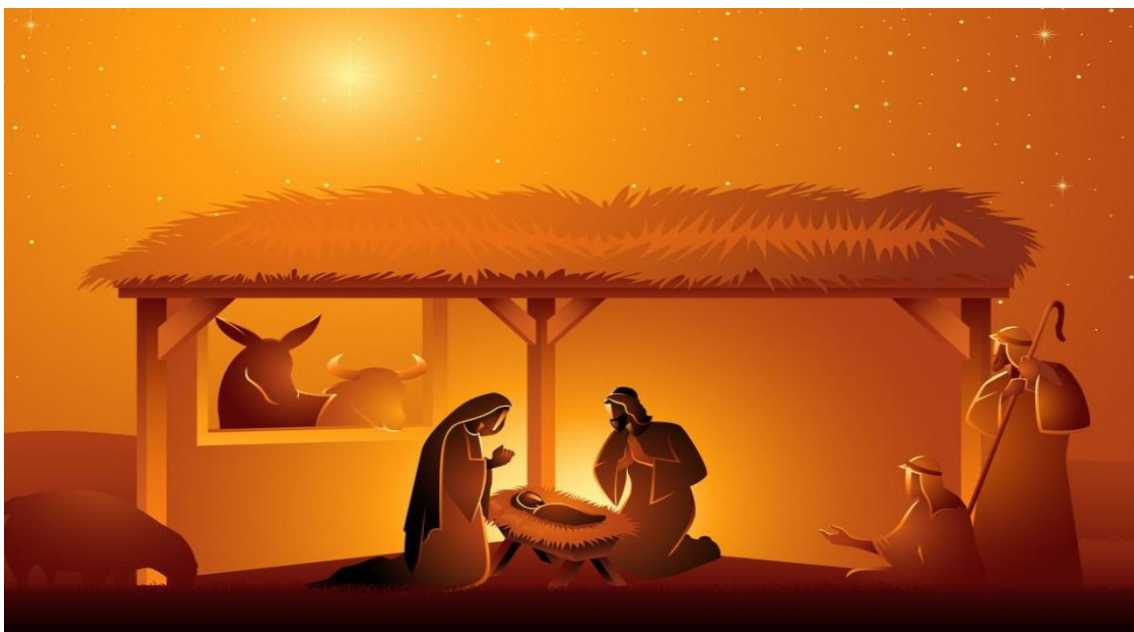
PUPIL CHAPLAINS:

The Pupil Chaplains visited the Salvation Army in Whiteigh to help sort toys for their Christmas appeal. Over 1,100 children in Plymouth will receive a gift bag this Christmas from donations to the Salvation Army. We are proud to have assisted with this.



NATIVITY:

Our Christmas nativities are always special but this year's was particularly so. The children performed brilliantly and were a joy to watch. Thank you to the staff for all of the preparation and to the children for their talents!



ADVENT COLLECTION

A big thank you for the donation of food for our Christmas Advent appeal. These items will be distributed in the local community by the Parish. We are very grateful for your support. Our contributions will make a difference to those in need.

CHRISTMAS MASSES AT ST PETER'S & ST THOMAS MORE

Sunday, December 24th (*Christmas Eve*)

6.00 p.m. Christmas Mass at St. Thomas More

6.00 p.m. Christmas Mass at St. Peter's
(Carols at 5.30 pm)

12.00 a.m. Midnight Mass at St. Peter's
(Carols at 11.30 pm)

Monday, December 25th (*Christmas Day*)

9.00 a.m. Mass at St. Peter's

10.30 a.m. Mass at St. Peter's

Tuesday, December 26th (*Feast of St. Stephen*)

Mass at St. Peter's at 11am

Wednesday, December 27th

Open Presbytery 11am-1pm. All welcome to join the clergy for drinks and snacks

Saturday/Sunday, December 30th/31st

Masses as usual

Monday, January 1st

Mass at St. Peter's at 11am



PARENT / CARER ADVICE AND SUPPORT

Advice and support is available from our SENDCO and PSA. We are currently recruiting for a new SENDCO, so if you would like to arrange a meeting with ref SEND please email Mrs Archer: admin@st-petersrc.plymouth.sch.uk or call the school office.

Miss Cork our Parent Support Advisor is also available daily by calling the school office, or by email: scork@st-petersrc.plymouth.sch.uk

COLD WEATHER

Please ensure your child has a warm, waterproof coat to wear each day with their name clearly marked.



Please check Class Dojo on a daily basis.



A lot of information is communicated through the app to ensure parents/carers are updated regularly.

Please ask your child's class teacher if you need any assistance with Dojo.

TERM DATES

Gate opens at 8.30 am / whistle 8.40 am / gate closes 8.50 am

SPRING TERM 2024

Wednesday 3 rd January	Staff Professional Development Day
Thursday 4 th January	School re-opens
12 th February – 16 th February	Half Term Holiday
Monday 19 th February	Staff Professional Development Day
Tuesday 20 th February	School re-opens
Thursday 28 th March	End of spring term
29 th March – 14 th April	Easter Holiday

SUMMER TERM 2024

Monday 15 th April	School re-opens
Monday 6 th May	School closed – Bank Holiday
27 th May – 31 st May	Half Term Holiday
Monday 3 rd June	Staff Professional Development Day
Tuesday 4 th June	School re-opens
Tuesday 23 rd July	End of School Year