



NHS Test and Trace

During term time, where a pupil tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school should be contacted. During the holidays, parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

Attendance

As mentioned last week, you will be receiving a letter today with your child's attendance summary for the academic year to date. The accompanying letter also includes more information, which I hope that you will find useful, about attendance and how this is recorded by the school for the Local Authority.

School Information

Just a reminder to parents / carers that if there is a query about a school-related matter, please contact the school through the admin email address, telephone or check the school website. Please do not approach members of staff whom you may know in a different capacity out of school. This is to ensure that there is a clear protocol for communication between the school and its stakeholders. Staff know to redirect you, and any query you may raise, to the school via the means indicated above.

Christmas Dates

Our final day for this term is Friday 18th December - children are welcome to come in non-uniform (mufti) on this day. We return to school on Monday 4th January.

Our last posting date for cards and gifts is Tuesday 15th December to allow for a period of quarantine before they are distributed and taken home to other households.

Flu Immunisation

The School Nursing Team attended school yesterday to carry out the flu vaccinations. All children who were vaccinated brought home a certificate with their name on to confirm it had been done. If your child missed this opportunity, you can call 0300 247 0082 to arrange an appointment at a Community Clinic.

First Holy Communion

Unfortunately we had to stop our First Holy Communion preparation last year due to COVID-19. We are planning to start these sessions again after February half term, with the hope that First Holy Communion will take place in the summer term. As we only carried out a couple of sessions with the children last year before lockdown, we are inviting pupils in Year 2 or above, who would like to take their First Holy Communion, to join the group in the new year. There will be further information about the sessions next term.

Safeguarding

Child Sexual Abuse

The Lucy FaithFull Foundation is a charity which shares information and advice to prevent child sexual abuse and support those who have suffered abuse. They have set up a confidential Stop It Now helpline (0808 1000 900) which can be used if you have worries about child sexual abuse. The website also offers additional support: <https://www.stopitnow.org.uk/>

Cycling

St Mary's usually offers Bikeability sessions in Key Stage 2, which teach children how to cycle safely. We hope to offer these sessions again in the summer term but, in addition, Devon County Council have produced some resources to help children to learn how to cycle safely and are also offering free courses for adults and children. Further information can be found at: <https://www.traveldevon.info/cycle/safe-cycling/>.

Prayer Focus

This week there is a bumper edition of The Wednesday Word – go to www.wednesdayword.org and click on the schools' tab. The latest issue contains Sunday readings until Epiphany on 6th January. This week's word is "joy" as the third Sunday in Advent is known as "Gaudete Sunday". "Gaudete" means "rejoice" in Latin, reminding us that we are soon going to celebrate Jesus' birth at Christmas. On this Sunday, the pink candle is lit on the Advent Wreath as a symbol of this joy.

Our prayer this week is:

Dear Lord Jesus

Please help our family to experience the joy that you bring, and to share your joy with all those whom we meet.

Amen

Singing Lessons

In addition to the piano and drum lessons that are offered to pupils at St Mary's, we are now able to offer singing lessons to pupils. Miss Deasey already works with our Choristers and has offered lessons to all pupils. Lessons cost £10 per lesson (30 minutes). Please let the office know if you would like your child to try some singing lessons and we will pass your contact details to Miss Deasey.

Free School Meals

Just a reminder that, if your child is entitled to Free School Meals, to ensure that you receive the free school meals holiday vouchers for this Christmas period, you must apply by Friday 18th December. The easiest way to do this is via the Devon Citizens' Portal.

Save The Children

Thank you to everyone who came to school today wearing a Christmas jumper or 'mufti'. So far we have collected nearly £80. Please could any outstanding donations be sent into school on Monday so that we can send the money to Save the Children before Christmas.

Bibles for Children

Children in Years 2 to 6 will be bringing home a Bible today. These have been purchased through the charity, "Bibles for Children" who have heavily subsidised the cost of providing them to the school. In some schools, the Bibles are kept in school to aid the children's learning and are taken home when the children leave the school. However, at St Mary's, we have sufficient copies to support the children in their learning so they can bring the Bibles home to keep and use now.

RE Poster Competition

The RE Department at South Dartmoor has thanked our children for entering their recent competition. Although we did not have any winning entries from St Mary's, each of the children who entered, **Isaac, Grayson, Sebastian, Honey-rose and Ned**, have received certificates and medals.



Congratulations!



Building Learning Power - All Stars

Meldon – Fraser
Venford – Archie H
Avon – Theo S-G
Fernworthy – Winnie
Burrator – Taylor

Witness of the Week

Meldon – Archie V
Venford – Maria
Avon – Robun
Fernworthy – Dexter
Burrator – Leyton