

<p style="text-align: center;">ST. MARY'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWSLETTER – SEPTEMBER 2008</p>

Dear Parents/Guardians,

I would first like to extend a warm welcome to all the new children and families who have joined us this September, both in our Reception Class and throughout the school. All the children seem to have settled in very well and we look forward to a happy and successful future together. A warm welcome back to all those who were with us already, I hope you had a happy and restful summer despite the weather! Please find attached to this letter a date sheet for the next two terms.

PTFA Autumn Fair

You will all be aware that it is our Autumn Fair this Friday, 19th September from 2.30 pm until 4.30 pm. We hope that you will be able to come along and enjoy the afternoon with us, helping to raise some funds for the PTFA whose next big project is to provide an outside shelter/canopy which will give shade to the children and can be used as an outside classroom. Please do try to be here for 2.30 pm so that you can take your child around the many stalls and attractions. KS1 children (Classes R, 1 and 2) will be performing a song!

Whole School Meals

A reminder that the school meals have increased in price to £1.95 per day with effect from 1st September. When sending in dinner money, whether cash or cheque, please send it in an envelope clearly marked with your child's name and class and the days on which your child is having school dinners. Please also write your child's name on the back of any cheques which should be made payable to 'Whole School Meals'.

Cycling to School

We have a school policy that children should not cycle to school unaccompanied until they have taken part in the KentRider Safer Cycling Scheme in Class 6 and even then, we will require written consent from parents/guardians. Please ensure that your children are accompanied if they wish to bring their bikes to school – the road outside the school is extremely busy at the start and end of the school day. Thank you for your co-operation in this matter.

Parking/Collection of Children from School

Please use the church car park if possible when collecting or dropping of your children. If you need to park on the road please use the side closest to the school and do not stop too close to or on the yellow zigzags – it is very difficult for our road crossing patrol lady to see what is coming if there are vehicles too close to her. Also, please, do not drive up onto the pavement – this is extremely dangerous when there are a lot of children and parents around. Please do not drive onto the school grounds unless a special arrangement has been made to do so. Thank you.

Uniform/Equipment

A reminder that children should have the correct uniform, including proper school shoes (no trainers please unless agreed for medical reasons), PE kit etc. Earrings should be removed before coming to school (if they have been recently pierced, please cover with micropore tape before school) and long hair should be tied up every day. All the children should have a water bottle with them each day - these can be purchased from the office for a pound.

Change of Staff Development Day

Please note that the Staff Development Day planned for Tuesday, 6th January has been changed and there will now be one on 1st June 2009. The children will therefore return to school in January on Tuesday 6th and not Wednesday, 7th.

Father Anand and Father Whelan

Our two Parish Priests will both be leaving the area at the beginning of October, Father Anand is returning home and Father Whelan is retiring. We are having a school Mass at St. John's Church on Friday, 26th September at 10 am so that we can say goodbye to both Priests and present them with a small token of our appreciation. If you would like to contribute to this please send any donations into the school office. Thank you and we hope you will be able to join us on 26th.

After School Clubs

The children will be bringing home letters about our various after school clubs, including Dance, Football, Rounders, Chess and Choir. The letters will give you all the details of when the Clubs are starting, which night of the week they are on and which classes they are available to.

Creative Curriculum

We have an exciting year ahead as we embark on a change to our curriculum. The emphasis will be on developing the children's skills and attitudes whilst covering important curriculum content in a more interesting and cross-curricular way. This will be done through six whole school themes, one per term:-

Term 1	-	Who Are We?
Term 2	-	How Do We Use That?
Term 3	-	What's the Story?
Term 4	-	What Happened When?
Term 5	-	Where in the World?
Term 6	-	How Can We Look After Our Planet?

I know that teachers have already written to you about the topic for this term and many of you have been in to see your child's new classroom. We will keep you informed as things develop but please do not hesitate to come and see us if you have any questions or need anything clarifying.

We thank you for your support with your child's learning. It makes such a difference to the children in terms of their progress. This is particularly important in developing reading skills, daily reading with your child will help them to become confident and develop a lifelong love of books.

Yours sincerely,

Annie Keane
Headteacher