



St Dominic's Catholic Primary School

*We Learn and Love in Faith
This term we celebrate...Generosity*

Let's Celebrate Harvest!

Dear Parents

The Curriculum: The term is marching on and the children are very much enjoying their topic 'Up, Up and Away'. There has been lots of active learning taking place. Children have been developing their investigative skills in science whilst building rockets and parachutes, and learning about the history of flight. In RE the children have learnt about who St Dominic is and have explored the value of generosity whilst also exploring the topic of Creation. We are working as a pilot school for the diocese, trialling the new RE units of work and related assessment which is likely to be introduced into Catholic Schools next September.

On Thursday 19th October at 6.30pm, we would like to invite you to **parent's information evening** where you can learn more about the age related expectations for your child's learning. Our aim is to give greater clarity on what is expected for each year group in the core subjects of Reading, Writing and Mathematics, and to give you an insight into how we design a bespoke learning experience through the Creative Curriculum. This will be an opportunity to visit your child's classroom and see resources, children's work and speak to the teachers. We will also share with you the life-long learning behaviours that we aim to grow.

Maths Passport: We are now ready to launch the maths passports, which will give your child clear targets for developing key number skills. The teachers will be sending out letters to you next week, outlining what your child's targets are. The children will be given a learning passport which they will keep in school, where it will be recorded when they have proved to their teacher that they are proficient in these skills. Some of the targets on the sheet you may think your child can do already, however some of the targets contained on the sheets they will need further practice on. They should try to work on one or two targets at a time, rather than trying to cover them all at once. It is important that we start children at a point where they feel they are able to achieve so that they grow in confidence and enjoyment of Mathematics.

Mountain Biking: We are delighted to be able to offer this opportunity to children in class 4 within school time, and the children have already brought home a letter about this. Stuart Rochford, who is a highly qualified trainer, will be running sessions with children in Year 5 and Year 6 on a Monday afternoon. Children will be put into small groups for safety reasons and they will get 4 sessions with Stuart before a new group of children will have their sessions and so on. This will continue until all children who wish to take part have had their sessions. The opportunity will then be offered to children in Class 3. We are using our Sports funding to offer this activity.

Young Voices: This year we are hoping to enrich our Music curriculum by incorporating the preparation for 'Young Voices' into school music lessons. Mrs Urquhart Dixon will also offer further practice to children who attend her after school Choir group. The teachers are very much looking forward to getting involved in this popular event. Mrs Gill has sent out information to parents of children in Class 3 and Class 4 giving all the necessary information.

Afterschool Provision: It is great to see so many children attending the new afterschool activities that are on offer. The cooking has been particularly popular and I would like to thank Miss Allen and Miss Rose for leading this with the support of Mrs Wheatley. After half term we will change some of the clubs on offer so that we can appeal to a wide range of tastes. For example Miss Allen and Miss Rose will offer textiles, and Miss Mansell will offer Dancing. This will encompass Country Dancing to get the children ready for the Country Dance Festival in March, but will also include

other dance forms. Where possible we endeavour to make them appropriate for all ages and thus teachers from the lower and upper key stages are working in partnership to assist Mrs Wheatley and Mrs Lowe. We will ask the children what clubs they would like to have on offer on a regular basis so that we listen to our clients! We would like to offer a Lego club, which from experience proves very popular, however we are very limited with the Lego and construction material we have in school. I wondered if you knew of anyone who may have Lego that they know longer play with sitting in a box somewhere which we could put to good use. If so, we would love to hear from them.

A reminder that the after school activities should be booked in the same way as after school provision, and they are detailed on the booking form for next term to make it easier. This booking form is now available on the school website with some hard copies available in the foyer. Payment can be made via ParentPay, or various child care vouchers, or simply by cheque/cash to the office, but as with school dinners we would appreciate your account being kept in credit, thank you.

Vision and Values: As a school community, we will be aiming to revisit our mission statement and review what makes St Dominic's distinctive as a Catholic School. We will also explore the core values that are considered the corner stones for all that we do. Originally, the governors, staff and I had planned for us to begin this process, working in partnership with you and the children this term. However Bishop Declan will be launching his vision of '**A future full of hope**' to all parishes and schools in the diocese, where he calls us to shape our communities in what we are called to be. This launch will take place in November and thus we will wait to review our mission, vision and values in relation to this call. We feel that the title itself is very apt for our own school community and we look forward to working with you to shape the future of our Catholic School.

Attendance: The governors and I are currently reviewing the attendance policy which will be updated on our website very soon. In addition, Attendance information will be shared with you through the mid-term mini reports that you will receive and the end of year report. Our school target is 96%. Our current attendance figures show that we are just achieving this at **96.2%**. Although some absences are unavoidable, it is very important that where possible this is kept to a minimum due to the impact this has on learning. It is especially important that holidays during term time should be avoided if at all possible. Each case is considered individually and individual attendance figures are also considered before any absence is authorised.

Nits and Headlice: There have been other cases of head lice in school so please can I recommend a weekly check for these creatures by combing your children's hair with a nit comb such as 'Nitty Gritty'. This will really help in keeping them at bay. There are various preparations available from the chemist for any 'outbreaks'.

Flu Vaccine: Information from the school nurse team has now gone out to all parents & carers of children in class 1 to class 3. A reminder that this will be undertaken on 15th November 2017, in the form of a nasal spray. Only children whose parents have *given express consent* will be given the vaccine. Please note that permission, ideally given online (website found on the information already sent home, or on the homepage of the school website) can only given by a parent. Paper consent forms can be collected from the office. We would encourage you to make the most of this opportunity, and the school nurse team would be happy to discuss this further with parents on 0300 421 8206.

Swimming: This will continue next term for year 2 – year 4 as the children are making good progress. A separate letter will be coming out to parents.

Y6 Secondary School Transfer: A reminder to Y6 parents that they need to notify the County of their preferences by 31st October. It is very important to complete this by the deadline, otherwise your choices will not be considered in the first round of allocations!

Flower Arranging: The Parish have organised a flower arranging demonstration on Monday 16th October from 1:30pm to 3pm in the school hall. The speaker will be Jane Morris who arranges flowers at Bristol Cathedral and has also been a judge in various national competitions. This is a wonderful opportunity to discover more about this skill, and you are welcome to either just come along and listen/watch, or please bring a vessel and oasis, flowers and foliage to create your own arrangement. There will be some extra flowers and foliage to share.

The event is free, but please let either the school office or Wendy Armistead in the parish know if you wish to attend. Thank you.

Film Club: This will be on Friday 13th October, and we are grateful to Mrs Szyrwelska and Mrs Fell for running this club. The film will be "Pete's Dragon" (PG) and the collection time is 5:15pm. The cost is £1 which includes a drink and snack. Please be prompt for picking up, which will be directly from the hall. Numbers are restricted so please sign your child up for the club in the foyer.

Finally, thank you very much to all those who donated food for our collection for the Stroud Food Bank. We very much appreciate your support. Thank you also for those who took part in the Macmillan event after Harvest Mass today, either by providing wonderful cakes and/or coming along to the event.

best wishes

Jacqui Sollars

A time to reflect... *Generosity*

The feast of St Francis was on 3rd October this week

Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace!

That where there is hatred, I may bring love.

That where there is wrong, I may bring the spirit of forgiveness.

That where there is discord, I may bring harmony.

That where there is error, I may bring truth.

That where there is doubt, I may bring faith.

That where there is despair, I may bring hope.

That where there are shadows, I may bring light.

That where there is sadness, I may bring joy.

Lord, grant that I may seek rather to comfort, than to be comforted.

To understand, than to be understood.

To love, than to be loved.

For it is by self-forgetting that one finds.

It is by forgiving that one is forgiven.

It is by dying that one awakens to Eternal Life.

—Saint Francis of Assisi—

Dates for your diary...

Monday 9th Oct Mountain biking sessions start

Monday 16th Oct Flower arranging demo

Friday 20th Oct End of term

Monday 30th Oct Start of term

Wed 1st Nov Swimming starts for Y2-Y4

Wed 15th Nov Flu vaccinations R-Y4

Wed 22nd Nov Height & weight for R & Y6