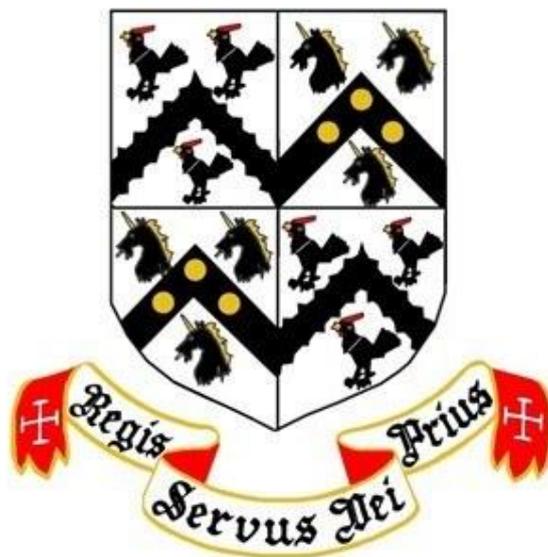




More News 19th January 2024

[St Thomas More Catholic Primary School Newsletter](#)



Thank you, Tenny

On Monday, Tenny, who is a seminarian who has been working in the parish alongside Fr Simon, came into school to deliver our Collective Worship. He invited us to reflect on knowing Jesus and how knowing Jesus asks us to show greater love to all.

Sadly, this weekend is Tenny's last weekend in his placement in our parish. Tenny has spent lots of time in our school, supporting our children in their journey in faith, so the children took the opportunity to say thank you by presenting him with a card from each class. Good luck in your vocation, Tenny. We will continue to keep you in our prayers



Invitation to Mass - Years 4 and 5

On Sunday 21st January, Years 4 and 5 are invited to Mass to receive a blessing from Fr Simon. The new year is a great time to renew a commitment to your faith by attending Mass more regularly and so this is a great opportunity to worship together within the school and parish community.

Of course, everyone is welcome, so whether you are weekly attendees at Mass, a non-Catholic family who would like to be involved in the shared worship of Year 4 and 5, or a family who don't have children in Year 4 or 5, please do come along.

Year 6 at Dol-y-Moch

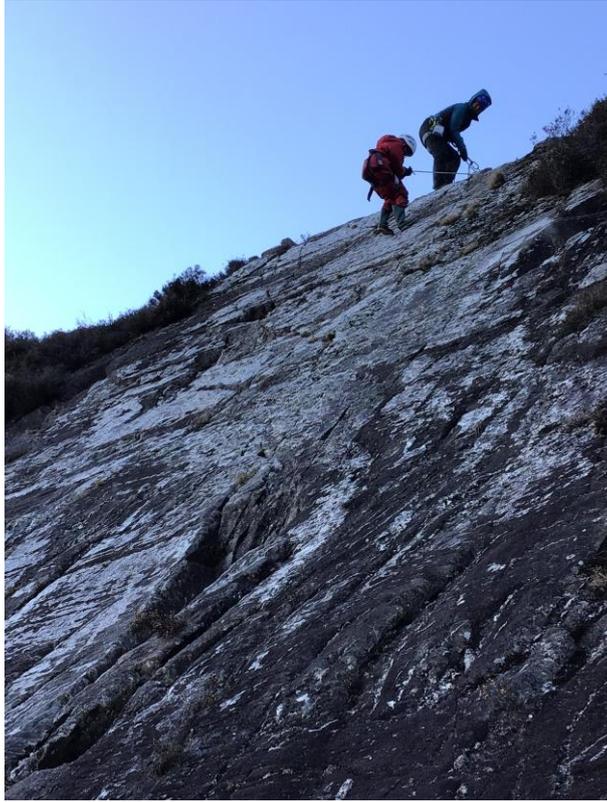
Year 6 are enjoying a wonderful time in North Wales on their residential trip to Dol-y-Moch. Reports from staff attending are that the children are really enjoying the adventure and have been a credit to themselves.

I am sure we will see some very grown up, but tired, children return tomorrow. We ask that parents make sure they are at school in time to welcome their children back as the coach pulls in and to take them home for lots of catching up. Please keep an eye on X (formerly Twitter) for any updates on expected return time in case of traffic delays, etc. If there aren't any updates, please arrive ready for your child to return at 1.15pm.

The staff and volunteers attending do not receive any additional pay for their generosity in giving up 5 days and 4 nights to be on duty 24 hours a day. I know the children and parents will really appreciate them giving up their time to enable the children to have such a magical week.

Please keep the children, staff and volunteers in your prayers.







Year 6 Parent/Carer Consultations

Parents and carers of children in Y6 will receive information today about the Year 6 parent/carers consultations that will take place on Tuesday 6th and Thursday 8th of February. Please note parents/carers of children with SEND will receive an invitation to a separate meeting which will cover the parent/carers consultation conversation and focus on their additional needs, so there is no need for parents/carers of children with SEND to book an appointment for the parent/carers consultation meeting.

The parent/carers consultations for children in Nursery to Year 5 will take place early in the summer term. This is to allow your child's assessment information from the end of this term to be analysed so that teachers can give you the most useful information in the meeting. The summer term 'drop-in' opportunity to discuss your child's report at the end of the year will continue to be at the end of the summer term.

Online Safety Workshop for Parents/Carers of Primary Aged Children

You received communication this week attempting to gauge interest in a parent/carers workshop delivered by the Police community Support Officer (PCSO) on online safety for primary aged children. As a parent myself, I know how much children are engaged in the online world and how hard it can be for parents to know the associated risks and put safeguards in place to protect your child. Some of

the information shared in workshops like these can be eye-opening and is essential in helping one to keep their children safe.

The form for registering interest can be found [here](#) and will close on Monday at noon. Please note the PCSO has advised that some of the content is not suitable for children and so children will not be able to accompany their parents/carers to the workshop. Once the form has closed, we will be able to ascertain whether there is enough interest for the PCSO to run the course and further information will be sent out to parents and carers.

I strongly advise all parents and carers to attend if they can.

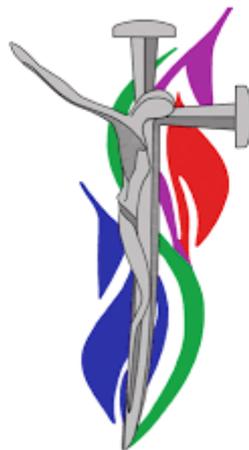
Cardinal Newman Consultation

The Department for Education, Holy Cross Catholic Multi-Academy Company (HCCMAC) and BAM Construction are pleased to share details of their proposals for the redevelopment of Cardinal Newman Catholic School, Sandpits Lane.

Your views are welcomed and can be shared in the [consultation](#) that is currently taking place. Please do take a look and support this excellent opportunity for our Holy Cross Catholic MAC and the children in our HCCMAC schools.

The current school is designed for 1361 pupil places for ages 11-18 years old with 208 sixth form places, including provision for 15 additional resourced pupil places for pupils with EHCP.

The proposed development will provide a new two-storey teaching building, sports hall and sixth form centre to replace the existing buildings (with the exception of the Caretaker's cottages and the recently built dining hall). The relocated playing fields will be accessed via Sandpits Lane and Bennetts Road, with enhanced pedestrian and cycle access proposed to connect to improvements already planned in conjunction with the major residential development at Watery Lane.



Coventry Building Society's Young Writer of the Year Competition 2024

Children in Key Stage Two will bring home a competition entry form for the 'Coventry Building Society's Young Writer of the Year'. To enter this competition children will need to compose a story starting with the line 'The clock stuck midnight, it was the start of a new year and...' Children must

bring their completed stories back into school by Thursday 25th January to be in with the chance of winning some fantastic prizes including a Kindle Kids. We look forward to reading your creative and imaginative ideas. Good luck!



Energy Saving Week

Next week we will be observing Energy Saving Week. The Eco-Team gave a presentation in assembly this morning to explain why it is important to save energy and how it can also help to save money on bills. They encouraged everyone to be very mindful of how they can save energy over the coming week.

Every child will bring home an energy-saving challenge this evening to complete over the week.

The Eco-Team also shared that the school will now be recycling any used plastic pens - with all the work that goes on every day we will be recycling a lot of pens and this will really help the school to improve its sustainability!



Parent Governor Vacancy

The Governing body has a vacancy for a parent governor. In the coming weeks information will be sent out explaining how to become a candidate for being a parent governor. The role involves attending approximately 6 evening meetings over the course of the year, and asks that governors visit school to find out more about how the school works. The role of the governors is to work with the school leaders to develop the strategic direction of the school, helping it to offer the best provision it can with the available resources.

If you are interested in becoming a parent governor and would like to find out more, please speak to Mrs Collins.

More information will be sent out shortly.

Sports Development UK Holiday Clubs

Sports Development UK will be running their holiday clubs for primary aged children, using STM as their venue, during the February half term, Easter holiday and May half term. The clubs will run on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday throughout these periods. More information will be available soon.

Please note Sports Development UK run these clubs independently of the school.

PTFA - Summer Uniform

The PTFA met on Monday and are busy planning the events they will put on to support the children in our school and raise money for the 'extras' that are not covered by the school budget.

They would like to provide opportunities for parents and carers to buy pre-loved summer uniform at vastly reduced prices. If you have any summer uniform that is in good condition but you no longer need, please donate it to the PTFA. Please ensure any donated uniform is washed before you send it in to school. Thank you.

Hometime

The start of the term is a good time to remind everyone of the correct times for picking children up.

School finishes at 3.20pm and the gates to the playgrounds are open from 3.20pm to 3.30pm.

Please ensure you advise the school office no later than 3.15pm if you are going to be late collecting your child. Please remember late collections will result in a charge if your child has to be supervised in Care Club.

After-school clubs finish at 4.30pm. Children attending after school clubs must be picked up at this time unless they are booked in to Care Club. Late collections will result in a charge if your child has to be supervised in Care Club.

Care Club sessions finish at 4.40pm and at 5.30pm. If your child is booked into Care Club, they can be picked up at anytime before the end of the session. Please note that if your child is booked into the early session and you become aware you will not be able to pick them up on time, please contact Care Club to let them know so that adequate staffing can be maintained. Late collections from Care Club will result in charges for the later session.

Nursery morning sessions, gate opens from 8.30am to 8.35am and collection is at 11.30am. Afternoon sessions, gate opens from 12.20pm to 12.25pm and collection is at 3.20pm. Please remember late collections will result in a charge.

Thank you for your co-operation

Do you have good quality unwanted games?

Care Club's games would really benefit from a boost! If you have any games that are in good condition - and have all the pieces - that you no longer want, Care Club would love to make use of them. Games can be donated by bringing them to school and giving them to Charlotte Turner, Care Club Manager.

Gymnastics Club

Uptake in our Gymnastics club is very low, and unfortunately, if the numbers have not significantly improved by the end of next week, we may have to cancel this club.

Gymnastics is on a Wednesday morning from 8am - 8.45am for years 3-6. The cost is £25.00 and the club runs until 20th March 2024.

Childcare Choices Campaign

Childcare Choices is a cross-government campaign that aims to make more parents aware of the financial support on offer to help them with the costs of childcare.

While most families in the UK are entitled to some form of support, many are missing out because they simply don't know they are eligible.

More information can be found at the [Childcare Choices](#) website.

Online safety parent/carer information - Smart Phone Safety Tips for Young People

Taken from [National Online Safety](#):

One in three 8-year-olds in Britain own a smartphone and that proportion rises to more than 90% by the time children reach 12. This concerted increase – driven by factors both personal (blossoming independence) and practical (the transition to secondary school) – makes it all the more valuable for young people to know how to use such devices safely.

Indeed, more than half of parents (52%) surveyed by Ofcom admitted to worrying about their child being bullied via their mobile phone – and with hazards like scams, screen addiction and inappropriate content to consider, that's far from the only risk around.

Our **#WakeUpWednesday** guide this week pulls together some simple but solid smartphone safety tips

At National Online Safety, we believe in empowering parents, carers and trusted adults with the information to hold an informed conversation about online safety with their children, should they feel it's needed. This guide focuses on use of many devices which we believe to be suitable. Please visit nationalonline-safety.com for further guides, links and tips for users.

SMARTPHONE SAFETY TIPS

for young people

You may have been lucky enough to have unwrapped a smartphone at Christmas, or you might be eagerly anticipating getting a new one at some point during this year. Whether it'll be your first ever phone or an upgrade on your old model, it's always useful to have a refresher about how to set it up and adjust the settings to keep yourself – and your valuable personal info – safe and secure. We've collected some expert tips to help you enjoy your smartphone in the healthiest way possible.

NEVER SHARE YOUR PASSCODE

Allowable face or fingerprint recognition, your passcode is crucial to protecting your phone and accessing your apps and personal information. You shouldn't give it out, even to close friends – after all, you wouldn't hand them a key to your house and let them go in for a night's sleep, would you? If you're really unsure if a friend wants to use your phone, ask them to make sure you can see what they're doing with it.

ONLY USE AGE-APPROPRIATE APPS

Before downloading a new app or game, check what age rating it has. Don't feel pressured into getting a particular game or app just because your friends are using it. If it's intended for older people, there's a chance that it could include content (which is violent or frightening, for instance) or language which isn't suitable and may leave you feeling upset or disturbed.

RESPECT PARENTAL CONTROLS

If you're allowed to have a smartphone, it's because your parents or carers feel that you're mature and responsible enough to use it safely. They might set controls and boundaries on your device, and you should try to help them understand how the too much content or time on it. If you're not sure how to do this, ask your parents or carers. Respecting these rules means you can enjoy using your phone while respecting their wishes.

REMOVE TEMPTATION

A good night's sleep is so important for concentration, mood and overall health. Unwinding properly before going to bed – which means not staring at a screen late at night – can make a huge difference. Put your phone in a charge overnight, but not in your room. This means you'll have a set time to go to bed, check any notifications, reply to messages or get caught up scrolling on social media.

TALK TO A TRUSTED ADULT

Whenever it's time to update your phone, create content or chat with friends, using a smartphone should be fun. If you're ever feeling anxious, worried or scared about things on your phone, then something isn't right. It's important not to ignore these feelings. Instead, talk to a trusted adult about what's happening and how it's affecting you.

THINK ABOUT OTHERS

Watching videos, listening to music or calling someone can all bring to mind the time while we're on the bus, waiting for a train or walking down the street. It's important to remember that other people, though they might not want to hear your voice or your conversation. Likewise, if you're taking a selfie or posting a picture, don't forget that anyone could overhear something personal about you.

STAY ALERT

Two words: look up. It might sound obvious, but it's so easy to get immersed in what we're looking at on screens that we lose track of our surroundings. It's important to be aware of what's going on around us. People often walk with their heads down, focusing on their phone, and forget to check for obstacles in their path, such as other pedestrians coming towards them, which is clearly dangerous.

DEVELOP HEALTHY HABITS

Phones offer a vast amount of content and the chance to chat with friends whenever and wherever it, which can make it difficult to take time away from the screen. If that's something you struggle with, you could try setting time limits on certain apps. Putting your phone down for a while gives you more time to spend with others or do something physical that helps keep us fit and healthy.

IGNORE UNKNOWN NUMBERS

There are some scammers who might call or text asking you to share personal details or to click on a link and provide your details. Some may claim to be from a genuine company, but trustworthy businesses don't spontaneously call or message to ask for your information. It's safest to ignore calls or texts from unknown numbers, and never give your personal details out over the phone.

SWITCH OFF GEOLOCATION

In your phone's settings, you'll be able to disable geolocation for individual apps and photos. This means that people online (including strangers) won't be able to see where you are when you share photos or post a pic. On the information front, it's also important to ask permission before taking or sharing a photo of someone else, and not to share embarrassing images of your friends with others.

Meet Our Expert



The National College

NOS National Online Safety

#WakeUpWednesday

@nationalonline_safety

Users of this guide do so at their own discretion. No liability is entered into. Current as of the date of release: 17.02.2022

Online Sleep Workshop

Sleep issues are common for children and young people and can have a huge impact on the quality of family life. This two-hour workshop looks at the importance of sleep, understanding sleep cycles, causes of sleep issues and what you can do to support your child to sleep better.

The next session is on 4th March on Teams.

For further information or to book your place on the workshop please email:

parenting@coventry.gov.uk Please include the following details in your email: Preferred workshop date, Your name, address, postcode, parents email, age of child and child's name.

Sleep Tight Workshop for parents/carers of children
aged 1 year and over

Tuesday 9th January 1-2:30p.m.

Monday 4th March 1-2:30p.m.

This session will be delivered virtually on Microsoft Teams



NEW DATES
JUST ADDED!

Sleep issues are common for children and young people and can have a huge impact on the quality of family life. This two-hour workshop looks at the importance of sleep, understanding sleep cycles, causes of sleep issues and what you can do to support your child to sleep better.

This session will be delivered by a parenting practitioner who has been trained by The National Sleep Charity.

For further information or to book your place on the workshop please email:

parenting@coventry.gov.uk

Please include the following details in your email:

Preferred workshop date, Your name, address, postcode, parents email
age of child and child's name



Early Help - Virtual Family Hub

Early Help is a partnership of organisations that provide help, advice and support to children, young people and families.

The aim of Early Help is to help you as soon as possible and prevent problems from getting worse by providing you support, as early as possible. Early Help services can help families, children and young people - pre-birth to 19 years old and 25 years old where there are special educational needs or disabilities

You can find lots of helpful information in different areas of life at the [Virtual Family Hub](#).

Mental Health Support

More and more families are being affected by mental health challenges. This is not something that only affects adults: many children are indicating they would like support in managing and promoting improved mental health.

[Kooth](#) is a website that offers advice, forums, strategies and can signpost to other areas of support. Take a look with your children to see if there is anything that will be beneficial to sustain or promote good mental health for them.

Help available for children struggling with emotions

Is your child struggling with their emotions and feelings? Compass Shine deliver workshops covering various topics and offer 10 minute consultations for parents and carers to get advice. Please see the flyer below for more information.

The flyer features a white background with blue and orange accents. At the top right is the logo 'IT'S MY TIME TO Shine Compass'. The main text is centered in a blue oval: 'Are you a Parent or Carer? Are you struggling with your child?'. Below this, it says 'Maybe we can help we deliver workshops covering various topics as well as provide 10 minute consultations for you to obtain advice, suggestions or signpost you to other agencies'. Contact information is provided at the bottom: 'For further information please contact Compass Shine on T: 02475 186206 or E: compass.cypeip@nhs.net' and a website URL. On the left, a blue vertical box contains text: 'Compass Shine supports Children and Young People aged 5-18 years (25y SEND), who are struggling with their emotions and feelings.'. On the right, a blue box says 'New Workshops coming soon'.

Protect Your Child Against Measles

There has been an increase in measles cases across the country including recent cases in Birmingham, Coventry and Solihull.

Measles is highly infectious and spreads easily from person to person. While most people recover completely within a couple of weeks, measles can cause serious illness and in rare cases can be fatal. Vaccination with two doses of MMR is the only way to provide maximum protection.

The Local Authority is encouraging people to check that they and their children have had two doses of the MMR vaccine - which is the safest and most effective way of protecting against measles.

This week you received a copy of a letter from the Local Authority advising parents of how to keep their child safe from measles with the MMR vaccine. For your ease, a copy of the letter can be found at the end of the newsletter.

Attendance is important!

We monitor all pupils' attendance and will contact you (often by letter and text message) if their attendance is getting lower than we'd expect. Please don't be offended - we have a duty to keep you informed of things that can affect your child's progress and/or wellbeing.

Lastly, please remember that term-time holidays **will not be authorised** and, in many cases, will result in a Fixed Penalty Notice (fine) being issued.

Whole school attendance so far this year is 95.3%

Year R	95.5%
Year 01	93.9%
Year 02	99.0%
Year 03	96.9%
Year 04	94.3%
Year 05	97.1%
Year 06	98.5%

Parish facilities

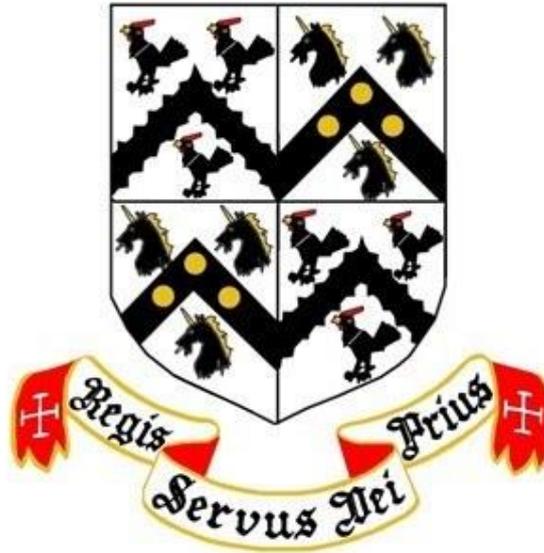
Planning a party/event? Looking for a Venue?

The Margaret Roper Room at Church is available for hire for parties and events. It is in high demand, so enquire early about dates. Excellent kitchen facilities available. Holds approximately 80 guests. Hire charge £25 per hour. Please enquire to: admin.stm.covty@rcaob.org.uk



Important Dates

- Saturday 20th January, 1.15pm: Yr6 return from Dolymoch
- Sunday 21st January, 10am: Mass with special invitation to Years 4 and 5
- Tuesday 30th January: Vision Screening, Reception
- Thursday 1st February, 2.30pm: Guitar Assembly
- Monday 19th to Wednesday 21st February: Y5 Alton Castle
- Monday 19th February: School closed for all pupils, MAC Inset Day



Measles and the Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR) vaccine



Public Health, Education Services, December 2023

Dear Parent / Carer,

There has been an increase in measles cases in Coventry. Most of the measles cases are children who have not had the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine.

This letter is to give you information about measles and encourage you and your family to have the MMR vaccine.

About measles

Measles is a disease which spreads very quickly and easily in communities such as schools and nurseries where people have not had two doses of the MMR vaccine. Measles can cause serious illness and can be fatal. People in certain at-risk groups, including babies and small children, pregnant women, and people with weak immunity (immunosuppressed) are at **increased risk** of complications if they catch measles.

Vaccination with **two doses of MMR** is the only way to give people maximum protection from this serious disease.

The **first signs of measles** are:

- High temperature (fever)
- Cold like symptoms such as runny or blocked nose, coughing, sneezing
- Red, sore, watery eyes
- A non-itchy, blotchy red brown rash. This usually appears a few days after cold-like symptoms (sometimes starts around the ears before spreading to the rest of the body). The rash can be harder to see on darker skin tones.
- Small white spots appearing inside the cheeks and on the back of lips (for a few days)

A measles case is infectious for four days before any rash appears and for at least four days after the start of the rash.

Anyone with measles symptoms is advised to stay at home and phone their GP practice or NHS 111 for advice. After contacting the GP or NHS111, you should try to rest and stay at home.

If you do need to visit a GP or hospital, you must call ahead to let them know that it could be measles. The staff will make special arrangements to see you and/or your child so that, if they have measles, they won't pass it to others.

If your child has measles, they cannot attend nursery/school or group activities for 4 days after the start of the rash.

Important information about the MMR vaccine

The MMR vaccine can be given to anyone who missed their MMR vaccinations when they were younger. People can 'catch-up' by booking in for MMR vaccination at their GP practice free of charge.

The first dose of MMR vaccination is offered to children soon after their first birthday. The second dose is normally given before your child starts school.

- If your child has not received **two doses of MMR vaccination** as part of their childhood immunisation programme, you should take up the offer of the MMR vaccine for your child.
- If you are not sure if your child needs an MMR vaccine, you can check their Red Book (personal child health record) or you can contact your GP to check.

It is never too late to get vaccinated. MMR vaccination is very important when there are cases of measles in the community – as we have in Coventry now. This is because any child or adult that has not had **at least one dose of MMR and comes into contact with a person with measles cannot attend nursery/school or group activities for 21 days** after contact with the infected person. This is the time it can take for measles to develop.

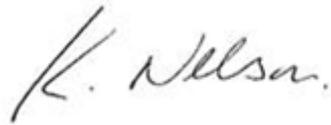
Did you know?

- One person with measles can infect 9 out of 10 unvaccinated close contacts.

More information about measles and MMR vaccination can be found on the NHS website at www.nhs.uk/conditions/measles/ .

Thanks for your support.

Best wishes,



Allison Duggal

Director of Public Health

Coventry City Council

Kirston Nelson

Chief Partnerships Officer

Coventry City Council