



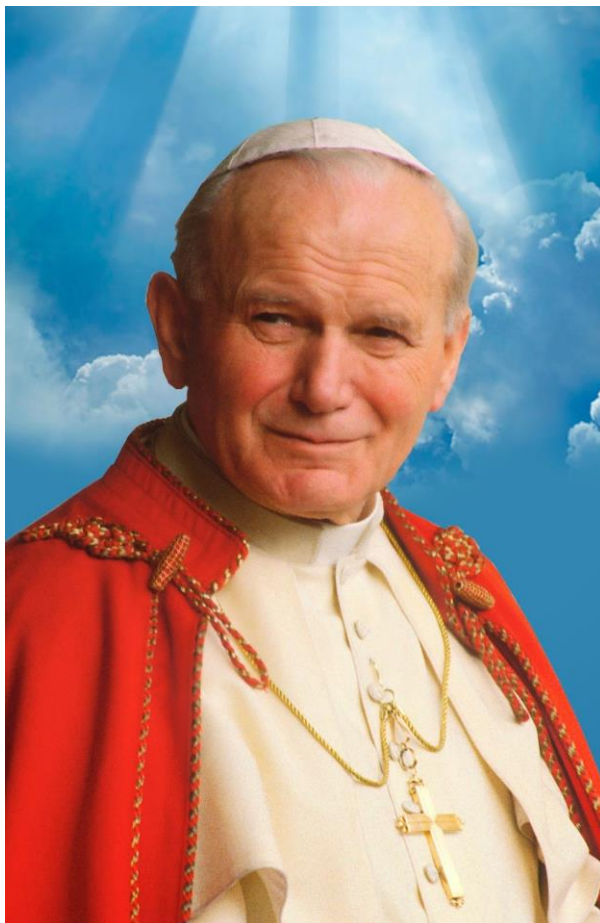
More News 12th January 2024

St Thomas More Catholic Primary School Newsletter



Peace Sunday

Sunday is a day of prayer for peace. With so many regions of the world experiencing instability, conflict or even war it is more important now than ever to pray and work towards peace. This morning the school prayed St John Paul II's Prayer for Peace together.



Lord Jesus Christ, who are called the Prince of Peace, who are Yourself our peace and reconciliation, who so often said, 'Peace to you' – grant us peace.

Make all men and women witnesses of truth, justice and brotherly love. Banish from their hearts whatever might endanger peace. Enlighten our rulers that they may guarantee and defend the great gift of peace.

May all peoples on the earth become as brothers and sisters.

May longed for peace blossom forth and reign over us all.

Amen



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.

We Are Made in the Image and Likeness of God Art Project

This year, one of our key aims is to help children understand that they are perfect just the way God made them as they are made in the image and likeness of God. We want children to know that they are valued and loved for being themselves and that all of their individual characteristics - the colour of their skin, their talents, their likes and dislikes, the way they learn, their sense of humour, whether they have a neurodiversity (Autism, ADHD, etc) - are all part of what makes them special and unique and perfect. We want children to be proud of who they are and what makes them unique.

We have been looking at this through assemblies and Collective Worship, through the way staff and children talk to each other, through stories and videos and other learning and will continue to develop this throughout the year. In the last few weeks of term before Christmas all the children in school took part in an art project looking at how the idea of being made in the image and likeness of God is represented in art and what children can take from that. Children reflected on Bible passages related to this and then created their own art. As you can see, we have some talented artists and we know that each child is truly made in the image and likeness of God and is valued and loved!

So God created mankind in his own image and likeness, in the image of God he created them, men and women he created them

Genesis 1:27

Reception



1 - Inspiration for Reception's art

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2: 10



Year 1



2 - Inspiration for Year 1's art

But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

2 Corinthians 3: 18



3 - Year 1

Year 2



4 - Inspiration for Year 2's art

I am continually with you; you hold my right hand

Psalm 73: 23



Year 3



5 - Inspiration for Year 3's art

I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.

Psalm 139: 14



Year 4



6 - Inspiration for Year 4's art

Then the Lord God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

Genesis 2: 7



Year 5



7 - Inspiration for Year 5's art

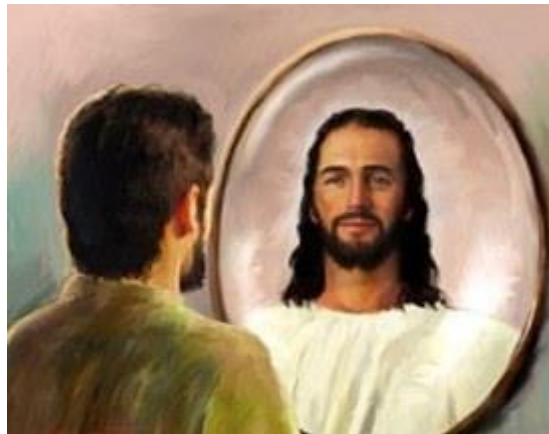
It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life

John 3: 63





Year 6



8 - Inspiration for Year 6's art

You have said, 'Seek my face.' My heart says to you, 'Your face, Lord, do I seek.'

Psalm 27: 8



Year 6 go to Dol-y-Moch

Year 6 are in for an exciting time next week as they head off to North Wales for their residential trip to Dol-y-Moch. There will be lots of adventure, challenge, camaraderie and fun as they experience activities they may not have done before and work together to make sure everyone has the best possible time.

Photos will be shared on X, this will depend on wifi connection, and we must stress that the week is extremely busy and staff will always prioritise ensuring children are safe and happy over uploading photos, so please be patient!

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.

I am sure we will see some very grown up, but tired, children return on Saturday. We ask that parents make sure they are at school in time on Saturday to welcome their children back as the coach pulls in and to take them home for lots of catching up.

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

Reception Admissions for September 24 - Closing Date is Monday 15th January

Applications for admission to Reception in September 24 are open. They can be made via the Coventry LA Admissions [page](#) or by phoning **02476975445**.

The closing date is **15th January 2024**

More information about the LA admissions process can be found [here](#) and information about admission to St Thomas More can be found [here](#).

If your child is Catholic and you wish that to be taken into consideration in any application of the over-subscription criteria, you **must** ensure the school has received a copy of your child's Baptism certificate.

The closing date for Nursery applications for September 24 is also **15th January**. Application forms can be obtained from the [school office](#).

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

Over the next few weeks 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!



PTFA Meeting - Monday 15th January, 6.30pm

The next PTFA meeting will be on Monday 15th January at 6.30pm in the Community Room at school.

The PTFA are a welcoming group who work together to create great experiences and raise money that goes towards the extras that school budgets can no longer afford, such as school trips, exciting resources and fun extras. They cannot do the excellent work they do without help, so please do go along and offer whatever help you can.

Parent Governor Vacancy

Danny Kingham, one of our parent governors, resigned from his position as governor at the end of last term. Danny gave his time very generously to support the school in myriad ways and his work and support is much appreciated. The thanks of the staff, children and Governing Body go to Danny for his work and generosity over the last few years.

This means the Governing body now 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.

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. If you have not picked your child up by the time the gates close, you will need to report to the office as your child will have been taken back inside. 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.

The **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.

Thank you!

A huge thank you to ASDA Whitley for their generous donation of art supplies.



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.

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/carers information - Managing Screen time

Taken from [National Online Safety](#):

99% of current children will own a smartphone before they reach 18. With phones and other devices offering an increasing number of ways to pass the time, it can prove difficult for young people to set them aside. As a gateway to messaging services, games, television, music and more, digital devices can become borderline indispensable items in a young person's life.

Studies have shown, however, that *managing* a child's screen time can have positive impacts on their cognitive development. Our **#WakeUpWednesday** guide provides you with some simple but effective tips to help you bring your family's screen time down to a healthier level, while suggesting alternative activities that are far less reliant on technology.



STM Pupils Love Problem-solving!

Whether its fidget spinners, yo-yos or something else, there's always a 'craze' that children are fascinated with and that drives parents and teachers crazy! Happily, over the last couple of months the craze that has swept across STM is one that has impressed us... We have an army of rubiks cubes solvers!

The children in Y5 have been especially impressive in their determination to learn how to solve the cube and then in their determination to get faster and faster in solving it. We now have children who are working on 5 x 5 cubes (a whole different level of challenge!) and this week two of our Y5 pupils very proudly showed that they are now masters of a 5 x 5 cube as well as the usual 4 x 4 cubes.

It has been great to see so many children determined to see a problem through to its conclusion, help each other to learn a new art, enjoy some healthy, friendly competition and direct their attention to something that provides a challenge and gets their brains working. Well done!



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.



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) if their attendance is getting lower than we'd expect. Please don't be offended if you receive a letter - 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 95.1%

Year R	98.3%
Year 01	93.5%
Year 02	99.4%
Year 03	92.2%
Year 04	94.6%
Year 05	93.4%
Year 06	94.2%

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

PLEASE CHECK CALENDAR FOR OTHER DATES

- Monday 15th January, 6.30pm: PTFA meeting
- Tuesday 16th to Saturday 20th January: Yr6 @ Dolymoch
- Sunday 21st January, 10am: Mass with special invitation to Years 4 and 5
- Tuesday 30th January: Vision Screening, Reception



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