



HOLY FAMILY CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

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Headteacher Mr P.O'Kane

Newsletter 343 Friday 5th May 2017

Last Friday's performance of Aladdin by the Benfleet Young Drama Group was fantastic. I would like to thank Jackie Poth and all her helpers for coming into school to set up this event. However, most praise and thanks should go the performers themselves—most of them current Holy Family pupils.

Bank Holiday Monday always seems to confuse me for the remainder of the week—the children will tell you that I kept referring to Tuesday morning's assembly as Monday morning's assembly! As May is the month of our Blessed Mother Mary, I chose Mary as the topic for my assemblies on Tuesday and on Thursday. I was extremely impressed by the number of children who went home on Tuesday and set up May Altars at home—this is a wonderful old, Catholic tradition that I remember from my childhood. Thank you to all the parents who have been busy building May Altars or moving furniture around to accommodate them.

Scarlet Fever & Slapped Cheek Syndrome A small number of children have presented symptoms that may or may not be **Scarlet Fever** or **Slapped Cheek Syndrome**. If you think that your child has either one of these conditions, please see your G.P. If one of these infections is confirmed by your doctor, please inform the ladies in the school office. The NHS Choices website has excellent information about what you can do to minimise the risk of spreading these infections as well as other advice. A **Scarlet Fever** letter and information sheet were sent out via Parentmail today; they have also been posted on the **Safeguarding** section of our school website.

RE Inspection Yesterday, Mrs Pam Brannigan a representative of the Diocese of Brentwood spent the day in school to carry out a Section 48 RE Inspection. She observed the teaching of RE in all classes; watched my whole school assembly; looked at children's work and other documents; and most importantly of all she spent time meeting with and talking to children as individuals and in groups. We expect the diocese to publish a final report in 2—3 weeks' time. Mrs Brannigan wanted me to pass on how wonderful and engaging the children are at Holy Family. She was greatly impressed by the Catholic life and ethos of the school. I am grateful to Fr Eduard and Mrs Herridge who spent the day in school as representatives of the governing body.

NFER Pilot Tests Holy Family School has a long history of working with government agencies and NFER to trial proposed new tests and assessments. Yesterday, Mrs Gillian Stimson from NFER administered two potential new SATs tests to our Year 2 children in the school hall. All of our Year 2 pupils were a credit to the school and did their very best. The insights that Holy

Family staff members gain from seeing these pilot tests is invaluable in helping to plan our curriculum and best prepare our children for future assessments.

Class Masses & Liturgies Fr Eduard met with Mrs Hurley and me on Wednesday to set dates for class Masses and other services. In the summer term, KS2 Masses will be in Holy Family Church on Thursday mornings at 10.00am (*KS2 dates to be confirmed*) Fr Eduard will also join us for Crowning of Our Lady at the end of May and will lead a procession and devotions in honour of the Blessed Sacrament for ***Corpus Christi***.

Swimming Lessons We were so pleased that, despite the rain, swimming lessons began on Wednesday and the children who took part really enjoyed themselves. There have been queries from some parents about the compulsion for children to take part in swimming lessons. Class swimming lessons have been part of the Holy Family School PE curriculum for over 40 years. The pool itself was built and paid for by fundraising in the parish community. The school governors are keen to ensure that all children have the opportunity to swim as part of the summer term PE curriculum. The refurbished pool and the brand new changing rooms are the envy of many other schools—Kents Hill Infants will once again be renting our facilities later this term. The governors understand that the £30.00 donation requested of parents (capped at £60.00 per family) is another domestic expense, but at £3.00 per lesson, with a qualified swimming teacher and additional support staff, this is extremely good value. The governors would expect that all of our children (unless there is a medical reason) participate in swimming lessons. They are grateful to the parents who have already paid their contribution. If all families contribute, then the pool and swimming lessons can continue to be offered for the collective good of all our children.

SATS Week Our Year 6 children will be sitting their SATS tests in the school hall next week. All of them have taken home a timetable of exams and an invitation to come into school and join Miss Fordham for breakfast in the hall each morning. One boy said: “It’ll be like Danbury all over again.” Our Year 2 children also undertake SATS assessments at this time of year, but do so in their own classroom.

Saint of the Week May is the month of Our Lady, the Blessed Virgin Mary. Please encourage your children to pray to Mary throughout May; perhaps they would like to use their Rosary to pray to Mary in a very special way. In hymn practice this week, the children began learning some traditional Marian hymns which they will sing this later in the month when we have our Crowning of Our Lady service.



Mgr George Stokes Earlier this week, we were notified of the death of Mgr George Stokes, the former Diocesan Director of Education. Mgr George had been a resident in the Nazareth House, Southend prior to his death, as his ill-health prevented him from fulfilling his parish duties in Grays. Mgr George was a formidable man and was a staunch defender of Catholic education throughout his working life, at local, regional and national level. Please pray for the happy repose of his soul.

Attendance RF 93.8% 1F 90.7% 2T 98.7% 3W 90.6% 4D 96.6% 5LB 97.7% 6F 96% Well done to Year 2 once again for best attendance last week. Recent Pupil Progress meetings that I have held with class teachers have highlighted a number of children with very poor attendance. There is a clear link between absence and attainment.

School Health Drop-in service If you have concerns about your child's health then you can use the Drop-in service where no appointments are necessary. The limit is 15 minutes per child but for more in-depth problems please contact the clinic directly to speak to a member of the school nurse team. The locations are:

Central Canvey Primary Care Centre, Long Road, Canvey Island, SS8 OJA. Phone 01268 686041 from 2-4pm 18th May; 8th & 22nd June; 6th July.

Oak Tree Children's Centre, Grovewood Primary School, Grove Road, Rayleigh, SS6 8UA. Phone 01268 686041 from 2-4pm 9th & 23rd May; 13th & 27th June; 11th July.

Wishing Well Children's Centre, Waterman Primary School, The Boulevard, Rochford, SS4 1QF. Phone 01702 541460 from 2-4pm 15th May; 5th & 19th June; 3rd July.

Mr P. O'Kane

Headteacher

Diary Dates

Monday 8 th May	SATs week
Thursday 18 th May	Sponsored Bounce
Thursday 18 th May	Year 3 Trip—Wat Tyler Park
Friday 19 th May	World Food Revolution Day (Cookery for Years 5 & 6)
Saturday 20 th May	First Holy Communion, 11.00am Holy Family Church, Benfleet
Monday 22 nd May	Year 5 Parents' Meeting with Senior Staff from St Bernard's and St Thomas More
Thursday 25 th May	KS1 Cross Country Pentecost Dash 9.30am

Friday 26 th May	Crowning of Our Lady service 2.30pm Parents and carers welcome
Monday 29 th May- Friday 2 nd June	Half-term holiday
Tuesday 27 th May	Year 5 Day, St Bernard's & St Thomas More tbc
Sunday 4 th June	Pentecost Sunday—Birthday of the Church
Friday 9 th June	EYFS & KS1 Mass, 9.30am, School Hall (Parents & Parishioners Welcome)
Thursday 15 th June	Corpus Christi Procession and Adoration, 2.30pm (Parents & Parishioners Welcome)
Friday 23 rd June	School Sports Morning
Monday 26 th June	Year 6 Deanery Mass, 11.00am Our Lady of Lourdes Church, Leigh-on-Sea (<i>date change</i>)
Tuesday 27 th & Wednesday 28 th June	The Appleton, The Deanes and The King John School Y7 induction days
Thursday 29 th June	Feast of Saints Peter & Paul—Mass in School (Children & Staff Only)
Thursday 29 th June & Friday 30 th June	St Bernard's & St Thomas More Y7 induction days
Wednesday 5 th July	KS1 Catholic Sports 9.30- 12.00pm St Teresa's
Thursday 6 th July	KS2 Catholic Sports 9.30-12.00pm St Thomas More High School
Friday 7 th July	Year 3 Eucharist Day St Bernard's High School
Tuesday 11 th July	KS2 District Sports The Deanes School
Thursday 20 th July	Year 6 Leavers' Mass, 7.00pm Holy Family Church

Non-pupil Days 2017—2018 The following non-pupil days were approved by the school's governors at their meeting on Monday evening: Monday 4th September 2017, Tuesday 5th September 2017, Friday 20th October 2017, Tuesday 2nd January 2018, and Monday 19th February 2018.