



## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION AND THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL



In this week's celebration of the word, we focused on the Baptism of the Lord, which marks the end of Christmastide and the beginning of Ordinary Time. Reflecting on the Gospel of Matthew (3:13-17), we considered Saint John the Baptist's initial hesitation to baptise Jesus and the deeper meaning behind Jesus' choice to be baptised. Baptism is the sacrament of initiation into the family of God. Jesus humbled himself by being baptised, setting an example for us all to follow. As God declared: "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I

am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17). These words reveal not only God's love for Jesus but also His love for each of us. Through Baptism, we too become God's beloved sons and daughters. This week, the children were given a mission to strive to be more like Jesus by living out Catholic Social Teaching principles, particularly striving for peace which is our theme for this half term. In assemblies and class prayers, they reflected on how they can show kindness, compassion, and understanding to others as members of God's family - whether by offering a helping hand, speaking kindly, or including someone who might feel left out. Let us all take this mission to heart in the week ahead, following Jesus' example in our words and actions. Always remembering that God loves each one of us unconditionally.

## SCHOOL/ST MARY'S PARISH MASS – SUNDAY 2 FEBRUARY AT NOON

We warmly invite all children and their families to join the parish Mass at **St Mary's church, Marple Bridge on Sunday, 2 February, at noon**. This celebration will be a wonderful opportunity for our school and parish families to come together in faith. Our children will be actively supporting the Mass by welcoming parishioners, reading, and leading the offertory procession. The parish music ministry will also enhance the celebration with their beautiful music. We encourage as many families as possible to attend and share in the source and summit of our faith, as we strengthen our connection with St Mary's parish and each other. Children are asked to wear their school uniform and sit with their family during Mass.



**WEDNESDAY WORD** The latest version of the Wednesday Word can be accessed [here](#). Please enjoy spending some time sharing the Word of God with your children.

## DRUHM WORKSHOPS

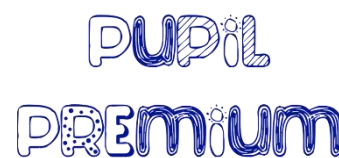


On Monday, the children had a fantastic experience taking part in dynamic Druhm workshops. Led by an energetic and inspiring facilitator, Ian, the sessions introduced the children to the power of movement, rhythm and music, blending creativity with teamwork. All our children from Nursery to Year 6 took part in a workshop where they combined drumming on exercise balls with movement. They all got their hearts pumping and enjoyed the challenge of something new. It was a fun way of enjoying a non-competitive sport and remembering that exercise should be fun. The workshops not only brought smiles and laughter but also helped to develop key skills such as listening, coordination, and collaboration. It was a truly memorable day, with the sound of drumming echoing through the school and the joy of music bringing everyone together! A Year 5 pupil reported: *'I really enjoyed the drumming session; it was very informative and was mixed in with maths! It was a challenge at first trying to figure out the rhythm. But when we put it all together it sounded amazing!'*



## PUPIL PREMIUM / FREE SCHOOL MEALS

You might be eligible for additional funding through the government's Free School Meals initiative. Benefits of receiving this include your child receiving free hot dinners every day but also attracting additional funding for the school to enhance broader provision as well as some targeted support for your child. If you would like to find out if you are eligible, you can do so through the [website linked here](#). If you would like any support completing the application form, please let us know and we will be happy to support you.



## ONE STOCKPORT FAMILY HUBS – COFFEE & CONNECT SESSIONS



These are free sessions for parents of neurodivergent or SEND children looking for information or advice. They are running on various dates this term in Brinnington and Reddish. For more information about these sessions, please contact: [ndteam@stockport.gov.uk](mailto:ndteam@stockport.gov.uk).

## SPOTLIGHT ON A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE

Living a healthy lifestyle means making choices that help us feel our best every day, and it's something we can all work on together! At ST Mary's, we focus on teaching children how to live a healthy life, including taking care of both their bodies and minds. Here are some fun and easy ways to stay healthy: **1. Eat a Balanced Diet** – Enjoy a variety of colourful fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and nutritious snacks. Eating different foods fuels our bodies with the energy needed for play, learning, and growing! **2. Stay Active** – Whether it's running, dancing, or playing a sport, find something fun to do. Regular physical activity keeps our muscles strong and our hearts healthy. **3. Drink Water** – Water is essential for staying hydrated and feeling good. It helps our bodies function at their best! **4. Get Enough Sleep** – Sleep is crucial for feeling rested, staying focused in school, and maintaining a positive mood. Make sure to get enough rest so you're ready for the day ahead. **5. Take Care of Your Mind** – Mental health is just as important as physical health. Take time to relax, enjoy your favourite activities, and reach out to someone you trust if you ever need support.



## SAFEGUARDING UPDATE – EARLY HELP

Early Help means identifying needs within families early and providing preventative support and intervention before they become difficult to address. Early Help can be provided at any time in a child's or young person's life, pre-birth to adulthood. Support can be delivered from a wide range of services depending on what is needed; people already working with



your family might offer additional help or support so that you can access more specialist or targeted services. How will we know when Early Help is needed? Parents, carers and children may recognise when support is required, or school may identify that there are emerging needs for the family. This will usually centre around the concerns about a child. What sorts of concerns might parents/carers share with us? A wide range of issues such as behaviour management, toileting, establishing routines, domestic abuse, mental health issues, mobility issues, bereavement and loss - in fact any concerns which you are worried about might be having a negative impact on your child. If you want to discuss Early Help support further, [information is available here](#) or please speak with Mr Nish or Mrs Norburn.



# BAG 2 SCHOOL

Our next Bag 2 School collection takes place next **Tuesday, 21 January**. Bag 2 School is a way for families to donate old clothes etc. to raise money for the school. With the New Year being a good opportunity to have a clear out, this a perfect time to declutter and support charity at the same time! The [full list of items accepted is available here](#). Any money raised is spent by our PTA to support school projects they agree on. Please send donations in the bag provided on 21 January only by 9:00am. Thank you for your support.

## PTA FAMILY QUIZ NIGHT

Don't miss our **Fun Family Quiz Night** on **Friday 31 January** from **6:00pm – 8:00pm** in the **School Hall**! Enjoy a lively evening with **child-friendly quiz rounds** created and hosted by our brilliant Year 6 children. There's something for everyone, with a **reasonably priced bar**, delicious **pizza and hotdogs**, and a **tuck shop** to keep the fun fuelled. Tickets are just **£2.00 per adult**, and **children go free**! Grab your tickets now via the [PTA website](#) and secure your spot for a fantastic family evening.



## PTA MEETING & AGM



The next meeting of the PTA will take place on **Tuesday 21 January at 8:00pm** via Zoom. [The meeting can be accessed here](#):

Also, it's that time of year again where the PTA need new members to join us. ALL positions on the committee are up for election. We have a fabulous tradition of PTA events at St Mary's from the Christmas fair to the World book discos and the Colour Run, but it needs people to organise and run them. Please see the separate attachment outlining the 'Job descriptions' of the roles up for grabs. The AGM is on **Wednesday 5 February at 6:20pm** in the school hall. All are welcome.

## THE MONTH (OR SO) AHEAD...KEY DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Date	Event
<i>Please note the dates and times detailed below are provisional and may be changed if necessary. New dates in <b>bold</b>.</i>	
20 January	Year 2 celebration of the word. 2:30pm. All welcome.
21 January	PTA Bag 2 School collection. <a href="#">What We Collect   Bag2School</a>
<b>21 January</b>	<b>PTA meeting. 8:00pm via Zoom. All welcome. <a href="#">Click here to join the meeting</a>.</b>
22 January	Year 6 SATs meeting for parents. 6:00-7:00pm.
31 January	PTA Family Quiz Night. 6:00pm – 8:00pm.
2 February	Parish/School Mass. 12 noon at St Mary's Church, Marple Bridge.
3 February	Hinduism workshops for each class.
5 February	PTA AGM. 6:20pm in the school hall. All welcome.
<b>7 February</b>	<b>NSPCC Number Day. Children can wear an item of clothing with a number, shape or pattern on it.</b>
7 February	Choir to sing at Young Voices 7:00pm Co-Op Live arena, Manchester.
10 February	Year 1 celebration of the word. 2:30pm. All welcome.
14 February	Coffee and cake with Mrs Bradbury and Mrs Norburn 1:15pm -2:15pm.
14 February	School closes for the February half term break.
24 February	INSET day – school closed to pupils.
25 February	School reopens to pupils following the half term break.
25 February	Year 1 parents phonics meeting 5:00pm – 5:30pm.
26 February	NSPCC Speak Out. Stay Safe Workshops (Years 2, 5 and 6).
4 & 11 March	Parents Evenings 3:30pm – 6:30pm.
8 March	Cross Country at Woodbank Park. 10:00am.
17 March	St Patrick's Day Year 6 celebration of the word. 2:30pm. All welcome.
20 March	First Confessions in school for all Sacramental Programme children.
25 March	School Council to visit Houses of Parliament.
28 March	Mother's Day assembly led by Reception class at 9:30am. All welcome.
<b>7-11 April</b>	<b>Stations of the Cross led by Year 5. Each morning at 9:00am. All welcome.</b>

Wishing you all a wonderful weekend.

Mr John Nish.