



# St. Ambrose Barlow

## Catholic Primary School

Head of School: Mr J Clinton



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St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, 841 Shirley Road, Hall Green, Birmingham, B28 9JJ

Friday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Dear Parents,

Happy New Year! Welcome back to all our children, our staff, and our parents. The last four days of the first week have flown by but it has been wonderful to greet the children each morning at the gate. Yesterday, we walked down to Mass at St Ambrose Barlow church for the feast of the Epiphany, which is the first time that Reception have joined us. Father Paul gave a beautiful sermon about the Wise Men helping to show the divinity of Jesus - it is also important to remember that we all have gifts to offer and share, and in doing so we give greater glory to God, as all good things come from Him. I was so impressed with the children's behaviour throughout Mass and while walking there and back, greeting members of our local community with a smile and a 'good morning'. I was very proud of them all. If parents wish to volunteer to walk with us, please let class teachers know. Our next whole school Mass is on Ash Wednesday and will mark the start of our Lenten journey.

### Golden Book

**Reception:** Ismaeel Saghir for growing in confidence and independence. He has shown great willingness to learn and to give things a go in every aspect of his learning this week. Keep up the good work, Ismaeel!

**Year One:** James McColgan a lovely member of our Year One class who has come back to school refreshed and ready for a new term. He has given a 100% all week and produced great work all round this week.

**Year Two:** Darcie Bucknall for working especially hard in Maths this week, completing some very tricky word problems on length. You have been listening and contributing in every lesson! Well done, Darcie!

**Year Three:** Noah Deeley has returned from the Christmas holidays eager to learn and apply himself in lessons. He gave thoughtful and supportive feedback to his classmates in Literacy, with brilliant ideas to develop their verb choices and applying feedback given by others to improve his own work as well.

**Year Four:** Noah Sheedy for starting back the new term with great enthusiasm, curiosity to learn and consistently working to his full potential

**Year Five:** Ethan Drumm for having a wonderful return to school and showing a fantastic work ethic. Ethan has openly participated in class discussion. Keep up the good work, Ethan! Well done!

**Year Six:** Jacob Roberts for always participating in class discussions with enthusiasm. He has lots of excellent ideas to share and was particularly brilliant in our RE discussions this week.

### Welcome

Mrs Hunt is a welcome addition to our team and has now taken over from Mrs Healy, who remains with us but is mainly out of class as she develops a new and innovative approach to teaching phonics.

We also welcome Mrs Grange, who will work with us every Thursday, teaching French to KS2 and also teaching keyboard in the afternoon. She will also launch a choir after school each Thursday. More details to follow.

With **St. Ambrose Barlow** as our guide and **Jesus** at our side,  
we are all **learning to live, love and work together**.

### **New artwork around school**

This was shared on Twitter but I have included a picture below of the new vinyl's that were ordered have been installed on the hall windows and in the foyer. I am delighted with the work but, more importantly, so are the children. The installation took place on Tuesday and, walking through the hall at the end of the day, the children literally stopped open-mouthed to admire the work.



### **A message about Peter, our Crossing Supervisor**

Children, please wait for Peter to stop the traffic before you begin to cross the road. Wait patiently at the kerbside and Peter will call you across when he is in the middle of the road. Peter is a great asset to our school and enables children (and parents) to cross safely. We missed having a crossing supervisor for the first few weeks of this term, so please appreciate Peter now we have him. A cheery greeting and a wave is always appreciated!

### **Admission Policy Consultation**

Please see the section on the website if you have any comments to make about our proposed Admission Policy for 2023/24. As stated before, schools must undertake this formal process every seven years, even when there are no changes.

<https://www.sab.bham.sch.uk/admissions.htm>

### **INSET DAY**

Monday 28<sup>th</sup> February is now an INSET day so children will return to school after half-term on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> March. The focus of the day is on curriculum and effective feedback, both with the intention of improving the quality of education that children receive here at St Ambrose Barlow.

### **Year Six Alton Castle**

On Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> February, Year Six will travel to Alton Castle for a Confirmation day retreat. Ahead of making their Confirmation, our Year Six children will think about how they will use the gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit to let the flame of their faith shine. As they prepare to be confirmed into their faith and prepare for the Holy Spirit to be sealed within them, this day retreat programme will enable them to explore their unique relationship with God through the challenges the children are set. This day will start at 10am, but children will travel by coach and depart from school at 8:30am. They will return by 4pm.

### **Keyboard lessons**

We are now in the position to offer keyboard lessons every Thursday afternoon, starting off in small groups and progressing to 1:1. We have keyboards here in school that children can use during their lesson. Additionally, if you would like to purchase one or rent one for a nominal sum so children can practice at home, this can easily be arranged.

If you are interested in your children receiving tuition from Mrs Grange, please pay via School Money after speaking to the office. The cost is £6 per week each lesson, payable half-termly, for all year groups.

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### Sports clubs

The following clubs are operating this term:

Monday	Club	Cohort
Monday	Gaelic	All (starting from Feb half-term)
Tuesday (am)	Karate	KS2 – spaces available.
Tuesday (pm)	AVFC Football	ALL of KS2
Wednesday	Tennis	ALL of KS2
Thursday (hall)	Dance	Rec and KS1
Thursday (playground)	Tag Rugby	KS2
Thursday (library)	Choir	KS2

If you wish your child to attend, please pay via School Money or contact the office for further details.

### Currently reading...

We are having a huge push on reading (for pleasure) here at school. See below for what each class is currently reading as their class reader. Bear in mind that this book is in addition to the books they may study in Literacy, and different from their group Guided Reading book. This is a story, read by the teacher, daily, for nothing more than the love of reading.

**Reception:** *Naughty Amelia Jane!* by Enid Blyton

**Year One:** *A Bear Called Paddington* by Michael Bond

**Year Two:** *The Golden Goose* by Dick King-Smith

**Year Three:** *Fantastic Mr Fox* by Roald Dahl.

**Year Four:** *The Boy at the Back of the Class* by Onjali Q. Raúf

**Year Five:** *The Silver Sword* by Ian Serraillier.

**Year Six:** *Shoe Wars* by Liz Pichon

Carys Henvey, from Year Five, came down to deliver a message to my office yesterday, while Mrs Bresnan and I were talking. She told me that she's reading *Wonder* by R.J. Palacio, a book she got for Christmas. Mrs Bresnan said it's a book that everyone should read, so I'll add it to my list. (Carys and her sister Maeve, also donated their Christmas money so a child in Africa could learn to read. What an amazing and thoughtful gesture!)

Rory Goddard from Year Four has set himself the challenge to read 28 books before school starts again in March! He's currently on *Tom Gates: Extra Special Treats (Not)* by Liz Pichon but still has quite some way to go to achieve his target.

For the record, I've just finished ***What a Carve Up!*** By Jonathan Coe, who is now one of my favourite authors. Parents, if you haven't read *The Rotter's Club* by the same author, set in Birmingham during the late 1970s and the first in a trilogy of fiction books that brings us up to the time of Brexit in the present day, I heartily recommend it. I can't promise likeable characters but I can promise an excellent plot that interweaves with real-life historical events that take place in and around places (and pubs) that you probably know well.

Mrs Corrigan is reading *You Had Me At Hello* by Mhairi McFarlane, and Mrs Friel who is currently working one day a week in the office - is reading *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes, a story set in depression-era America about five extraordinary women and their journey through the mountains of Kentucky.

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### **Phonics Workshops**

Mrs Healy and I are going to host some workshops on 18<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of January at 2:30pm that focus on our new Phonics strategy that we are currently rolling out in school. The approach that we have embraced is called *Little Wandle Revised Sounds and Letters*, and is based on the latest education research on how children best learn to read. I cannot emphasise enough how important early reading is and how highly it ranks on our School Development Plan. Please, come along on one of the dates below and find out how best you can support your child at home (and find out what we do in school).

### **January dates for your diary**

**Tues 18<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Phonics workshops for Reception parents 14:30

**Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Phonics workshops for Year One parents 14:30

**Thurs 20<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Phonics workshops for all other parents who may be interested 14:30

**Thurs 20<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year Six St Chad's Cathedral visit

**Fri 21<sup>st</sup> Jan:** Year Five Class assembly 9:00

**Fri 28<sup>th</sup> Jan:** Year One Class Mass 14:00 – all parents welcome!

### **February dates for your diary**

**Fri 4<sup>th</sup> Feb:** Year Four Class assembly 9:00

**Tues 8<sup>th</sup> Feb:** Year Six Day Retreat to Alton Castle (details to follow)

**Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Feb:** Year Two class Mass 14:00

**Fri 18<sup>th</sup> Feb:** Break up at 15:30

**Mon 28<sup>th</sup> Feb:** School closed (INSET day)

### **March dates for your diary**

**Tues 1<sup>st</sup> March:** School re-opens

**Wed 2<sup>nd</sup> March:** Whole School Mass for Ash Wednesday 9:30

**Thurs 3<sup>rd</sup> March:** World Book Day (Children to dress as book characters)

**Mon 14<sup>th</sup> March:** Parent Consultations 3:40 – 6:20

**Wed 16<sup>th</sup> March:** Parent Consultations 3:40 – 6:20

**Fri 25<sup>th</sup> March:** Year Two Class Assembly 9am

**Mon 28<sup>th</sup> March:** Year Six @ Boreatton Park (Five day residential)

### **April dates for your diary**

**Fri 1<sup>st</sup> April:** Year Five Class Mass

**Mon 4<sup>th</sup> April:** Reconciliation for KS2

**Wed 6<sup>th</sup> April:** Piano and choir concert 2pm

**Mon 11<sup>th</sup> April:** Year Three Holy Week Assembly

**Tues 12<sup>th</sup> April:** Year Four Holy Week Assembly

**Wed 13<sup>th</sup> April:** Year Five Holy Week Assembly

**Thurs 14<sup>th</sup> April:** Year Six Holy Week Assembly

School closes at 2pm for end of term

### **Birthdays this week...**

Happy birthday to Niall Earp in Year Two who was seven on Monday and Danielle Velasquez in Year Four who is nine tomorrow. And happy birthday to all those who celebrated in the holidays too.

She will not thank me for saying so, but Miss Atkin also celebrated a birthday this week. Twenty-one again, as the old joke goes!

Enjoy the weekend, all. Thank you for all you do for your children and for the support you give the school also.

God bless,

Mr Clinton

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