



St. Ambrose Barlow

Catholic Primary School

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Thursday 14th April 2022

Dear Parents,

John Hall, the Chair of our Governing Body, wrote to you all yesterday to confirm the appointment of Mrs Bresnen as the substantive Deputy Headteacher, having occupied the position in an interim capacity since October. I wish to add my congratulations and echo the sentiment that Mr Hall expressed: the school is making changes to improve the Quality of Catholic Education and Personal Development that we offer the children - the appointment of a strong Senior Leadership Team is part of this. We were blessed with many applicants, of whom three were shortlisted, and I know Mrs Bresnen will work to the best of her undoubted ability to make St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School all it can be.

We have ended the Spring term on a high note. Every morning during Lent, we have had a daily Walk With Me assembly led by a staff member. Every day during Holy Week, a KS2 class has led us in a reflection based upon Jesus's final week before his crucifixion - Palm Sunday, the Last Supper, the arrest of Jesus and, finally, Stations of the Cross. This afternoon, we have had our celebration assembly, climaxing with our Easter Egg raffle being drawn and every child receiving a small Easter treat.

Golden Book

Reception: Ethan Hughes for working so hard this week. He has really tried with his sounds in phonics and developing

confidence in blending sounds together. His attitude to learning has really improved and we are all really impressed with him! Ethan has also put an amazing effort into his writing this week, taking time with his handwriting and not giving up. Well done, Ethan!

Year One: Aurora Clifton has worked hard this term to improve her handwriting and the overall presentation of her work. She is working on slowing down her pace, ensuring it is quality, not quantity. She is becoming a brilliant expressive reader, using her prosody when reading. Aurora is a kind-hearted girl, who is always willing to help and support her peers. Well done for all of your hard work, Aurora!

Year Two: Henry Newton for having such a fantastic work ethic. His reading has improved so much and all the staff were really impressed with your retell of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Henry continues to be a superstar on Times Table Rockstars and Numbots each week, which has improved his confidence in Maths.

Year Three: Cian Nevin for pleasant nature, always greeting staff with their name every day and also for his outstanding efforts on Times Table Rockstars this half term. Keep up the good work!

Year Four: Freya Nixon for consistently working to her full potential, showing off her talents and becoming increasingly confident. Freya is a fabulous role model to everyone at St Ambrose Barlow and she brightens up the Year Four classroom everyday.

Year Five: Charlie Burke's portrayal of Jesus in the Year 5 Holy Week assembly was excellent and he put a lot of effort into learning his lines. Charlie has been working so hard the past term: he consistently

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shows his dedication to his work and he is always asking extra questions to get further knowledge on subjects. Keep up the good work, Charlie!

Year Six: Joseph Maloney for producing lots of detailed and thoughtful writing in RE this week. He has also made lots of progress during our SATs preparations. Thank you for your hard work, Joseph!

'Caught being KiVa'

Daisy May Edginton; Erin Fegan and Charlie Burke for always looking out for classmates who are sitting in the quiet zone and for helping their friends when they might feel lonely during break time.

Holy Week Assemblies

As mentioned earlier, the Holy Week Assemblies were a great success. Every class in KS2 led an assembly throughout the week and, following the performance, children had the opportunity to recount the events as a Literacy task in their RE books. In the afternoon, the Diocese RE strategy was taught. I sincerely believe that the children's understanding of the events of Holy Week has been deepened as a result. I really appreciate, also, the effort that parents and grandparents made to come and support their child and the school in the re-enactment of the events of Holy Week. I hope that you, too, felt a deepening spiritual connection with the Catholic Life shared here in school.

Lenten fundraising

Our grand total from our seven weeks of fundraising – the Easter raffle run by Mrs Thorne, the silver coin collection, copper coin trails, St Patrick's non-uniform, the film afternoon, the Friday board games fun, etc -was a whopping £1214.60! An incredible effort. Furthermore, we also asked for donations for the Fr Hudson's Good Shepherd Appeal, which raised another £245.07.

I am overwhelmed by your generosity. There will be £173.51 making its way to each of the seven charities below.

Reception: *Comfort the Sick*

Birmingham Children's Hospital Trust

Year One: *Give Drink to the Thirsty*

Water Aid

Year Two: *Clothe the Naked*

St Chad's Sanctuary

Year Three: *Shelter the Homeless*

St Basil's

Year Four: *Pray for the Dead*

Rainbows

Year Five: *Feed the Hungry*

Church of the Ascension Foodbank

Year Six: *Visit the Imprisoned*

Mind

Well done, also, to Declan, Caoimhe and Callan Kerr, who raised a further £463 for Mind, walking over 100 miles in memory of their uncle Kevin. An incredible achievement and a lovely way to remember a loved one

Orlaith the way to Galway

As you may be aware, some of our parents, and other members of our parish and school community are cycling to Galway this June in a bid to raise funds for one of our pupils and the provision she receives. Please see below for the fundraising page - one of six, actually, that have been set up amongst the team.

<https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/fundraising/orlaith-the-way-to-galway>

Any parents wishing to donate can do so via the page, but you can also find out more about the challenge and ongoing training, as well as the charities that are being supported. Good luck to all involved. Keep those legs turning over and embrace that burn. *Chapeau!*

Reading at St Ambrose Barlow

I cannot emphasise how highly reading features in our School Development Plan in our quest to make sure our pupils have all the experience, knowledge, and confidence they need to succeed in life – no matter what this vocation may be. If any parents or grandparents wish to volunteer their time, please do so! We are more than happy to encourage this!

Phonics features daily for Reception, Year One and Year Two. Reception and Year One also have Reading Practice sessions that occur three times a week where EVERY child is heard in a group with a member of staff. Each session has a different focus: decoding, reading with prosody, and comprehension. Reading Practice continues into Year Two and KS2 in a slightly different format, where children either read independently or with an adult

Additionally, we have class libraries, a school library, and plans for all children in Year Two and above to visit Hall Green library. We have a daily class reader that is read to the children in class every day. We also use high quality literature in lessons – not just Literacy but in foundation subjects too. Our provision currently is not perfect but neither have we finished improving our approach. Parents, I know you support the school in a great many ways already, but please make the time and the effort to read daily with and to your children, and to hear them read also. At school, it is our number one priority and this is shown by the time we dedicate to reading. It is also apparent in *how* we hear children read: we sit at a desk, on a chair; we sit with the book in front of us and hold it appropriately; and the staff give the children their total attention. These are behaviour and habits that emphasise how much we value reading. Please ask your child what the class reader is; ask them to

summarise the plot. Supplement it with reading the same text at home. If your child is in KS2, you can even give them their own copy that they can bring to school.

Year Two were three chapters from the end of *Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator* on Wednesday morning, hoping to finish the book before they broke up for Easter! Lauren Dewell is reading *Wind in the Willows*. She said she is looking forward to reading over the Easter holidays. Oisin Finnegan is reading *Diary of the Wimpy Kid: The Meltdown*. He told me that he is really enjoying it and is taking it on holiday to Ireland over Easter. Annie Stephenson is reading *Four Kids and It*. She has only just started it but says so far that it is both mysterious and magical. All three of the children above are in Miss Atkin's Year Five class, where regular discussions happen about reading. Miss Atkins herself has three books to read over Easter and Mrs Drewry currently is reading two books at the same time!

I hope to get time to start a new book that was recommended to me: *A Gentleman in Moscow*. I will let you know how I get on.

Friends Of St Ambrose Barlow School (FOSABS)

A reminder there is a meeting on Monday 9th May at 3:40 in the school hall. Please make every effort to attend and share good ideas and previous practice!

Birthdays this week...

Happy birthday to Abel in Year Two who was seven on Monday. Lauren in Year Six was eleven on Wednesday. Finally, Dharam, also Year Six, is eleven tomorrow. Happy birthday all!

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May dates for your diary

Tues 3rd May: School re-opens after Easter

Thurs 5th May: School closed for local elections

Sat 7th May: First Holy Communion (10am and 11:30am)

Mon 9th May: FOSABS AGM 3:40 in school hall

Fri 20th May: Year One class assembly 9am

Thurs 26th May: Whole School Mass 9:30 (The Ascension)

Fri 27th May: Procession 2pm

June dates for your diary

Fri 17th June: Reception class Mass 2:30pm

Fri 24th June: Reception class assembly 9am

Sun 26th June: Year Three Going Forth Mass 10am (followed by Communion breakfast)

Wed 29th June: Whole School Mass St Peter and Paul 9:30am

Have a relaxing, calm, happy and holy Easter. Just like during Advent, a Catholic school is a special place during Holy Week as we prepare to celebrate Easter. Enjoy the well-earned break (for those that are having one) and I shall see you all on Tuesday 3rd May, as we start our final term of this academic year. I know Father Paul will appreciate seeing you all at Mass.

There is Mass tonight at 7pm for the Lord's Supper. On Good Friday, tomorrow, there is the Solemn Liturgy at 3pm. At 7pm, there is a Children's Stations of the Cross. On Saturday, at 8:30pm, Fr Paul will celebrate the Easter Vigil Mass. On Easter Sunday, Masses are at 10am and 5:30pm. I know life is busy, but please make time to nurture your faith at this very holiest of seasons.



Mr Clinton