



St. Ambrose Barlow

Catholic Primary School

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Friday 22nd September 2023

Dear Parents,

A bumper newsletter with so much to share! First, congratulations to our new Reception children on their first full week of school. They have settled in well and they make wonderful additions to our community.

Secondly, you are all invited to join Year Three at their special 'Belonging' Mass this Sunday at 10am. This marks the start of their sacramental journey. It would be great if so many of our own children from school were there to support them. You might also take the opportunity to wish Father Paul a happy birthday – a little bird tells me that he shares his birthday with the feast of Padre Pio, which is tomorrow.

Thanks to the Year Three parents who joined the parish catechists yesterday at the parish hall to discuss and articulate what it is that makes Catholic education distinct from other approaches – the answer is, of course, that we actively embrace the Church's call to holiness in whatever form this may take, starting with the sacraments and ending (hopefully) with recognition of being a saint! Please keep in mind the words of Pope Benedict XVI:

"A good school provides a rounded education for the whole person.

And a good Catholic school, over and above this, should help all its students to become saints."

Golden Book

Reception: Nancy Hall for settling into life at St Ambrose Barlow so well! Nancy has followed are routines and rules around the classroom and even impressed Mrs Bresnan with getting changed completely independently for P.E. Keep up the hard work, Nancy!

Year One: Amelia Ahmed has been a star this week! She has worked hard to ensure that she has given 100% in every lesson. She has showcased her Phonics in all her lessons and has been keen to share her ideas with the class. Super work, Amelia!

Year Two: Ethan Hughes has worked really hard this week in all his lessons, he is started to become confident in contributing to lessons and also becoming more independent as the days go on. Both Miss Hookes and Mrs O'Driscoll are really impressed with this start from Ethan and they know it will continue as the year goes on. Keep it up, Ethan!

Year Three: George Parkes has shown great focus and determination in his work. This week, he has worked hard in planning and producing a new original fable. He used his wonderful imagination to create characters for his fable. He has also shown diligence in his presentation of his work in class. Well done, George! A great start to your year.

Year Four: Elora Tipper because she has made every effort to display virtues and values this week, especially generous in giving her time to help other students. She been very focused and dedicated in all subjects providing insights in class discussions and making sure her presentation is always flawless.

Year Five: John Aju for putting a lot of thought and effort into his work. Not only

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has he been trying extremely hard to ensure his handwriting is of a high standard, but his vocabulary and ideas and exceptional as well. His behaviour is exemplary and is a great role model for others, both in his class and around school. Well done for making a fantastic start to Year Five.

Year Six: Alex Kartsios for putting one hundred percent effort and commitment into all that she does. Her work is always beautifully presented and the writing she has produced in Literacy and RE this week has been exceptional. She has also made a great start to her role as a leader of the Eco-Council, writing letters to ask teachers to provide recycling bags for their classrooms and producing posters to put around school to remind people to turn off the lights when they leave a room.

Year Six Perfects



It is my great pleasure to announce that after much deliberation, the following children have been appointed prefects: Tierney Brady, Caoimhe

Kerr, Liam Lynch, Helena Nadolna, Noah Young, and Danielle Velasquez. I am sure they will carry out their duties diligently and responsibly.

Alessandra Kartsios and Seamus Griffin have been appointed leaders of the Eco-Council, working with Mrs Fayaz in helping us achieve our CAFOD Live Simply award. I've already seen around school the posters the council have designed and I look forward to our marrow and tomato soup.



Peter Ridgeway and Bianca Hammondson are our newly appointed Head Boy and Head Girl. As a special treat, they can write

the introduction to next week's newsletter...

School Council

After elections taking place this week, I can now announce new School Council 2023/24. All votes have been counted and independently adjudicated.

Year One: Ella Mynett and Archie White

Year Two: Aibhlinn Brady and Finley Dewell

Year Three: Sophia Davies and James Smyth

Year Four: Ava Ling-Lee and Eugene Newman

Year Five: Lila Delaney and Elijah Roberts

Year Six: Patrisha Arulprasad and Logan Wilkes

Mini-Vinnies

Rory Goddard is the new President of our Mini-Vinnies, stepping in the shoes vacated by Carys Henvey, who has hopefully gone on to inspire her fellow Year Seven students at St Peter's. Rory chaired his first meeting on Tuesday, outlining his plans for the year and encouraging application for the positions of Vice-President, Secretary and Communications Officer. Anyone from Year Six is invited to apply for these roles, and anyone (and everyone) from Year Five and Six can be a Mini-Vinnie and help those in need.



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Next week, on Friday 29th September, the Mini-Vinnies are holding a cake sale to raise money for Macmillan Cancer support. Children can wear green (and donate £1) and can bring in 50p should they wish to buy a cake too!

PTA

I am sure you will agree that the Reception playground looks fabulous! The tarmac has been treated and new markings have been laid. As I write this, I can hear Year One making full use of it! Thank you to the PTA for their kind donation of £5,000 to cover some of the costs. Our next target is a minibus (so if any parents have any experience in this matter, please make yourself known)! It might be a pipedream at the moment but it would certainly make local trips (Sarehole Mill, swimming at Tudor Grange, Blakesley Hall, Bishop Challoner, Catholic Sports tournaments, football matches, etc.) much easier and all children would benefit!

Below is a message from our PTA:
Is this you?

You are good at taking an overview of a situation and objectively considering all options. You can balance differing views and think it's important that everyone gets heard. You know how to chair a meeting so it ends on time and are happy for the buck to stop with you. **You could be our Chair!**

Email holds no fear for you! You can run a to-do list, reprioritising on the fly, and write an accurate set of minutes. You can keep an eye on what the rest of the team is doing and make sure their contributions are coming in on time. **You could be our Secretary!**

Numbers are easy for you, and you can do basic bookkeeping and reconciliation. Accountancy experience is helpful but not required. You look after the pennies AND

the pounds, especially around event time when money is going in and out. **You could be our Treasurer!**

You have children at St Ambrose Barlow School and feel like you'd like to do something to help. You enjoy the events and appreciate the work the PTA does to help improve things. You don't mind coming to meetings sometimes and might even have something to say. You're a parent (or guardian or grandparent) and would like to do something positive. Maybe you have an idea for a project that is completely new. **You could be a Committee Member!**

Meeting new people is one of your favourite things to do and a stranger is just a friend you haven't yet met. You know the importance of looking after people who are doing you a huge favour and treat rotas like a fun puzzle. **You could be our Volunteer Coordinator!**

Words fly from your fingers when you're typing, and you can tell a story within a word count. You know how to talk to people on the page and how to get a message across in print or on social media. **You could be our Communications Lead!**

The environment is important to you and you think reducing landfill is important. At the same time you can be pragmatic about what is actually reusable. You'll be able to pop into school sometimes to manage donations and run second hand uniform sales. **You could be part of our Second hand Uniform team!**

You're familiar with the funding landscape and can complete funding applications with ease. You're open to new ideas that we can pursue and will support people with good ideas who need help making their projects come about. **You could be our Grants Lead!**

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Please come along to our PTA AGM on Thursday 19th October at 6pm in the parish hall to find out more!

Safety around the surrounding school site

It pains me to say that there was a criminal incident a few days ago on one of our neighbouring roads which occurred during pick up time. In order to keep yourself and your belongings safe, please ensure your car doors are kept locked, including **when you are in the car**. The police have been informed.

Currently Reading...

Year One are reading *'Supertato and Evil Pea Rules'* by Sue Hendra and Paul Linnet for their



Literacy texts, and for pleasure are reading *'The Wizard and Me'* by Simon Farnaby. Year Two are reading *'The Pirates Next Door'* in Literacy and *'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'* for pleasure! Year Three are reading *'The Akimbo Adventures'* by Alexander McCall Smith, and Miss Traynor is reading *'Us Against You'* by Fredrik Backman in her spare time and Mrs Thorne is falling in love with Heathcliff all over again as she re-reads *'Wuthering Heights'*.

Year Four are reading *'The Firework-Maker's Daughter'* by Philip Pullman, which serves as their Literacy text, their class reader, and their Guided Reading text. Miss Reynolds is attempting to read *'The Idiot and the Prophet'* by Jonas Jonasson and *'The Thursday Murder Club'* by Richard Osman.

Year Five are reading Michael Murpurgo's version of *'Beowulf'* and Year Six are reading *'War Horse'*, also by Michael Murpurgo. Miss Newman has just finished reading *'Over My Dead Body'* by Maz Evans, who is the author of the *Who Let the*

Gods Out series (one of her favourite Year Six texts!) She says it her first novel aimed at adults, and is just as funny as the books for children!

Mrs Fayaz is reading *'I See You'*, the Number One Sunday Times bestseller. As for me, I am reading *'Bournville'* by Jonathan Coe and Richard Osman's *'The Last Devil to Die'* is awaiting me once I've finished. Over summer, I read *'A Little Life'* by Hanya Yanagihar which was absolutely brilliant: harrowing and heart-breaking. It was so good, I am seeing a recording of the theatre production at the Mac next Thursday.

Parent Consultations

Parent Consultations will take place on Monday 9th October and Wednesday 11th October. Booking is now open and appointments are from 15:40 until 18:30. This is a wonderful opportunity to see how well your child has settled into their new class, discuss their progress and targets with their teacher, and view your child's work thus far.

KS1 and KS2 Christmas trips

These are now available to pay via School Money. The cost is £17.10 for KS2's trip to the Old Rep on Wednesday 20th to see Peter Pan and £20.00 for KS1's trip to the Mac on Friday 15th December to see 'Starchitects'.

Open Days

Archbishop Ilsey's Open Evening takes place next Thursday 28th September from 5.30pm-7.30pm. Applications for Secondary School places for entry in September 2024 open on 1st September 2023 and the **closing date is 31st October 2023 at 11:59pm**. I would encourage you to use all six of your choices. Please apply online at



<https://eadmissions.birmingham.gov.uk/prefs.php>

Illness and absence

As we all know, school attendance is vital to the life chances of children and young people. We appreciate that ascertaining whether or not your child is too ill to attend school can be a challenge, particularly post COVID. The NHS has produced a document called 'Is my child too ill to attend school?' which lists some common minor ailments and gives advice on when pupils should stay at home and when they can attend school. The link is here:

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/is-my-child-too-ill-for-school/>

Birthdays this week...

Happy birthday to Lauren in Year Five who was ten on Tuesday and happy birthday to Violetta, also in Year Five, who is ten today! Happy birthday also to Father Paul, who celebrates his birthday tomorrow. I won't disclose his age but feel free to guess and surprise him on Sunday at 10am Mass with your outlandish estimates!

September dates for your diary

Sat 23rd Sept: Year Three children at Parish hall 10am – 12pm

Sun 24th Sept: Year Three Belonging Mass 10am

Thurs 28th Sept: Archbishop Ilesley Open Evening 5:30 – 7:30pm

Thurs 28th Sept: Year Four at Hall Green library 2pm

Fri 29th Sept: Mini-Vinnies cake sale (50p). Children can wear Green for Macmillan (£1)

October dates for your diary

Thurs 6th Oct: Year Five at Hall Green library 2pm

Fri 6th Oct: Harvest Festival Mass 2pm in school hall

Sat 7th Oct: Year Six children in Parish hall 10am – 12pm

Sun 8th Oct: Year Six Enrolment Mass 10am

Mon 9th Oct: Parent Consultations 3:40pm – 6:30

Wed 11th Oct: Parent Consultations 3:40pm – 6:30

Thurs 12th Oct: Year Six at Hall Green library 2pm

Fri 13th Oct: Year Two Class Mass 2:30pm

Thurs 19th Oct: Year Two at Hall Green library 2pm

Thurs 19th Oct: SAB PTA AGM 6pm in Parish hall

Fri 20th Oct: Year Six Assembly 9am

Thurs 26th Oct: Year Three at Hall Green library 2pm

Fri 27th Oct: Break up for half-term

November dates for your diary

Mon 6th Nov: School re-opens

Thurs 9th Nov: Year Four at Hall Green library 2pm

Fri 10th Nov: Year Four Class Mass 2:30pm

Thurs 16th Nov: Year Five at Hall Green library 2pm

Fri 17th Nov: RISE theatre visit for all children

Tues 21st Nov: Open Afternoon for prospective Reception parents 2pm

Thurs 23rd Nov: Open Morning for prospective Reception parents 9:30am

Thurs 23rd Nov: Year Six at Hall Green library 2pm

Fri 24th Nov: Year Five Assembly 9:00am

Sat 25th Nov: Year Six children at Parish hall 10am – 12pm

Sun 26th Nov: Year Six Mass 10am

Tues 28th Nov: Year Six at St Chad's

Thurs 30th Nov: Year Two at Hall Green library 2pm

December dates for your diary

Fri 1st Dec: Year Six (Group One) at Dementia cafe

Mon 4th Dec: KS2 Reconciliation Service 2pm

Thurs 7th Dec: Year Three First Confession 6pm at Church

Fri 8th Dec: Feast of the Immaculate Conception School Mass Year 1-6

Fri 8th Dec: Year Six (Group Two) at Dementia café

Fri 8th Dec: Reception Nativity 2pm

Mon 11th Dec: KS1 Nativity for Year One parents 2pm

Tues 12th Dec: KS1 Nativity for Year Two parents 2pm

Fri 15th Dec: 'Starchitects' KS1 at Mac

Fri 15th Dec: Choir / keyboard concert 2pm

Thurs 19th Dec: KS2 Carol Service 7pm

Wed 20th Dec: KS2 Old Rep for 'Peter Pan'

Thurs 21st Dec: Christmas Jumper Day / Christmas dinner

Fri 22nd Dec: Whole School Mass (including Reception) 9:30

Fri 22nd Dec: School closes for Christmas at 2pm

Have a wonderful weekend. Year Three are leading our Mass on Sunday and we hope to see as many of you there as possible. I do not often promise extrinsic rewards for doing what should be done anyway but, in order to launch our new year of house points, any child at Mass will be gifted a gold star worth ten house points for their house saint!



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J Clinton'.

Mr Clinton

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