



St. Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School

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

Friday 22nd December 2023

Dear Parents,

We have reached the end of what has felt like one of the busiest terms ever! That said, school has been a delight to be in these past few months, especially so in the last few weeks. We have had wonderful Nativities from Reception and from Key Stage One, a superb choir and keyboard concert, and a very prayerful and reflective carol service from Key Stage Two.

Children, have a wonderful festive break—we hope that Father Christmas brings you something nice! Parents, thank you as ever for your support and for your generosity. Take the opportunity to enjoy the time with family, with friends, with loved ones, but also make time to remember the very real meaning of Christmas: the birth of Jesus, the example that is set for us, and the actions that our faith calls us to undertake. Keep in your prayers those less fortunate: the sick, the lonely, the isolated, the bereft, and share good wishes and cheer with all you can. Merry Christmas!

Golden Book

Reception: Alyza Arsalan for being an excellent role model to her peers. Alyza shows such willing when completing her work, always trying her hardest and becoming more and more independent each week. She always shows kindness with a big smile on her face! Well done, Alyza!

Year One: Remy Augustus for working so hard to be independent in every task he completes. He has so far this year used his sound mat in his work when forming

sentences and is beginning to develop a lovely pre-cursive script when he is forming letters. Remy is confident to share his ideas with the class and works well in small groups. Remy always makes all the adults smile by telling a joke or doing a little dance; this makes our day! Well done for all your hard work, Remy - keep it up!

Year Two: Francis Corcoran for trying so hard in his writing this week. Francis has been working incredibly hard at forming his letters and joining his handwriting. It is very pleasing to see how hard he is working and persevering whenever anything gets difficult. Keep it up, Francis - well done!

Year Three: Ethan Burke for working so hard to learn the words for the carols for the carol service. Ethan showed great enthusiasm when performing. Ethan is a great role model for the rest of the class always using his manners and displaying great behaviour. Keep up the good work, Ethan.

Year Four: Francis Fitzpatrick has worked incredibly hard these last few weeks, and this week especially has tried to spread joy throughout his class. It is always wonderful to hear his insights and ideas during lessons and has produced some fantastic work around Jesus' ancestors in RE. Well done, Francis!

Year Five: Elijah Roberts for always putting so much effort into everything he does. He contributes well to every lesson and always shows a willingness to learn more. He was also a fantastic asset during the Ks2 carol service learning all the words off by heart and singing confidently throughout to represent our school brilliantly.

Year Six: Freya Nixon for being an all-round superstar, each and every day this term! Freya always has a smile on her face and a

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kind word to say to everyone. Her behaviour is absolutely exemplary and she works to the best of her ability in every lesson. As a result, she has made super progress in all areas of learning and has been a very valuable member of the Mini-Vinnie's committee.

Virtues and Values

The focus for this half-term has been on 'Attentive and Discerning'. Every half-term, we celebrate those pupils in our school who have demonstrated these virtues in a variety of different ways: maybe by paying attention, remembering something important and explaining its significance, or demonstrating discernment by making the right choice. The following children have stood out to staff for being 'attentive and discerning'. Well done!

Reception: Arlo Tranter

Year One: Theresa Joseph

Year Two: Phoebe Maxwell Duffy

Year Three: Mila Caine

Year Four: Emily O'Keeffe

Year Five: Halle Parsons

Year Six: Dani Sangha

KS2 @ Old Rep

Children, we hope you enjoyed the performance of Peter Pan! It was a lovely treat and, again, behaviour was exemplary. Thank you to the PTA who provided snacks and to *Perfect Balance Accounting* who covered the cost of the snacks.

Christmas Carol Service

Well done, KS2! You did yourselves proud, as we all knew you would. Wonderful readings, singing, solos, reverence, and behaviour throughout. Parents, the recording can be shared using the following link:

<https://mcnmedia.tv/Camera/saint-ambrose-barlow>

The password to access the recording is SAB123.

A note from Olton Friary

I received a lovely email out of the blue, on Monday morning from a parishioner from Olton Friary. I read it out in assembly and copy it below.

"I am a governor at OLC and help to lead a little children's choir at the 9 o'clock Mass at Olton Friary. We had our annual Carol service yesterday evening.

Can I mention three of your pupils - Oliver Ellard, Aurora Clifton and Thea Dawson - who deserve special praise for their contribution to the service. They were part of our little group of 10 singers and also supported the little church tableau.

In all, they sang three hymns. They sang and did sign language to "Hail Mary" with the adult choir. They sang their own carol called "Light One Thousand Christmas Lights" and finally they sang "Away in a Manger" with the little church tableau. Only the children's choir received an applause from the congregation, so they did a great job! You should be proud to have them as ambassadors for your school."

A note from the PTA: Autumn Term Report

What a fantastic start to the fundraising year. So far this term, we have raised funds with the following events:

- *Tea towels £831*
- *Disco £610*
- *Raffle £735 (after cash prizes have been subtracted)*

Total Raised - £2176

Thanks to the very kind donations from school parent businesses, we've

been able to keep costs at a minimum and still supply:

- *theatre trip snacks for KS1 and KS2*
- *Bookmarks and chocolates for children's Christmas presents*
- *Printed raffle tickets*
- *Snacks and glow sticks for disco*
- *DJ for disco*
- *Grotto presents for the parish fair*

Thank you everyone for the support, help at events, donations, purchases of both tea towels and raffle tickets. It all helps and is all very much appreciated.

We have also arranged for a special surprise for the children in the New Year - we will reveal more details after the holidays.

We will be arranging a coffee morning at the start of next term to discuss ideas for fundraising in 2024. Have a great Christmas and New Year everyone.

PTA Raffle winners

THE RESULTS ARE IN! Massive congratulations to the following winners



£250 – Eliza; Year 1

£150 – Erin; Year 2

£50 – Henry N; Year 4

£50 Alfresco Restaurant voucher Helena; Year 6



The raffle has yet again been a huge success and we thank you all for your support and generosity! We sold £1235 in tickets which is amazing!



Winner of movie afternoon is Year Three!
Well done - this will be in January.



A thank you for your generosity

Parents, thank you for the many cards, gifts, and well wishes this festive season. The staff have worked very hard and your tokens of gratitude – whether they be words or wrapped - show how highly you value them. None are necessary, but all are appreciated.

Thank you, parents, also for your kind and generous donations to our advent charities. We have raised a grand total of £899.94, which has been split between the Catholic Partnership Rwandan schools fund, and to Father Hudson's initiative at Brushstrokes, where it has paid for Christmas dinner for those in need.

A thank you to the staff

It goes without saying that the teachers and teaching assistants are hugely capable and very much appreciated. They are superb, and their children reap the benefits of their hard work and efforts daily. However, my heartfelt thanks also go out to all the unseen and unsung heroes of the school and the extended community: to Miss Brookes and Mrs Hardiman in the kitchen, and to Mrs Pitcher who has been helping out during periods of staff absence.

Thank you to Madam Grange, who teaches French in KS2, runs our choir, and teaches keyboard to those who elect to learn. Thank you to Mrs Vinti, who teaches music and leads our hymn practices. Both were invaluable during the Christmas carol service too!

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Thank you to Mrs Nazir, Mrs Dumasia, and Mrs Mariampillai who work with our support staff in keeping the children safe at lunchtimes. Thank you to Mrs Roberts (and Mrs Mariampillai and Mrs Yusuf) for the tireless efforts and enthusiasm in leading Kids Zone, our before and after school club. They are all hugely appreciated.

Thank you to Mr Hawkins, for managing the site and keeping it clean and tidy, and to Mrs Zuhra, who helps clean the site and always greets the staff and the children alike with a smile! She is a ray of sunshine. Thank to Mrs Corrigan in the office, who juggles about four different roles simultaneously, and thank to Miss Kazadi, who is training in the office and is an invaluable source of extra support.

Thank you to the catechists who work in the parish and support our Year Three and Year Six children along their sacramental journey.

Thank you to all our governors – Mrs Pickering, Mrs Young, Mr Newman, Mrs Cunnane, Mrs Gilbride, Mrs Grew, Mrs Fayaz, Mr Keating, Mr Evans, Cllr Huxtable, and Father Paul, our chair. Thank you to Josie O’Rafferty, our clerk, who keeps us all up to date with everything we need to guide the school strategically.

And thank you, again, to Father Paul, our parish priest, who is not only chair of the Governing Body - itself a source of strength and support – but also, as parish priest, someone who knows the children and the school: someone who guides us, advises us, leads us and loves us.

Mass Times at St Ambrose Barlow over the festive period

As Father Paul said in his newsletter last week, the Sunday obligation remains this

weekend, in addition to the extra obligation that the Christmas Mass brings. Put simply, go to Mass on the morning of Christmas Eve for the Sunday Mass as normal, and go again on Christmas Day to celebrate the birth of Jesus.

The times for Christmas Masses are as follows:

Sunday 24th 5.30pm
Sunday 24th 7.00pm
Monday 25th 10.00am

INSET Day

School remains closed on Monday 8th January due to staff INSET – training on positive handling and de-escalation techniques. School will re-open for children on Tuesday 9th January, with our Breakfast Club accepting students from 7:30 and our gates opening at 8:45.

Birthdays this week...

Happy birthday to Alex in Year Three who was eight on Monday; happy birthday to Nancy in Reception who was five on Wednesday. She shared her birthday with Ezra in Year Two who was seven. Yesterday, Annabel in Year Four was nine and tomorrow, Lennon in Year One will be six. Happy birthday to all!



Happy birthday to all those who celebrate before we return back to school in January. Chris in Year One turns six on Boxing Day, and Faaris in Reception turns five on the same day; Millie in Year Two turns seven on 28th Dec; Rico in Year Three turns eight on 29th Dec. Amelia in Reception turns five on New Year’s Day and Elijah in Year Five turns ten on 2nd Jan; Niall in Year Four turns nine on 3rd Jan and Zinedine in Reception turns five on 4th Jan; Mia in Reception turns five on 7th Jan and Danielle in Year Six turns eleven on Monday 8th. And then it’s back to school! Happy birthday to all those who celebrate.

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January dates for your diary

Mon 8th Jan: School closed for staff INSET
Tues 9th Jan: School re-opens for children
Tues 9th Jan: KS2 flute concert 2:30pm
Thurs 11th Jan: Year Six Parent Meeting
6pm parish hall
Fri 12th Jan: First Mass of New Year 9:30am
at church
Sat 13th Jan: Year Six children Confirmation
workshop 10am-12pm
Sun 14th Jan: Year Six Mass 10am
Tues 16th Jan: Year Six Maths INSPIRE
workshop 9am
Thurs 18th Jan: Year Five Maths INSPIRE
workshop 9am
Fri 19th Jan: Year Four class assembly 9am
Fri 19th Jan: Year Six Confirmation sponsor
workshop 2pm
Fri 19th Jan: Year Six Confirmation 7pm
Tues 23rd Jan: Year Four Maths INSPIRE
workshop 9am
Wed 24th Jan: School choir at Young Voices
Thurs 25th Jan: Year Three Maths INSPIRE
workshop 9am
Fri 26th Jan: Year Five Class Mass 2:30pm

February dates for your diary

Thurs 1st Feb: Year Two Maths INSPIRE
workshop 9am
Tues 6th Feb: Reception Maths INSPIRE
workshop 9am
Fri 9th Feb: Year Three Class assembly 9am
Fri 9th Feb: Break up for half-term at
3:30pm
Fri 23rd Feb: Year Six Class Mass 2:30pm
Thurs 29th Feb: Year Five @ Black Country
Museum

I will end this newsletter in much the same way I started it: by warmly wishing you a merry Christmas. We shall see you all when school re-opens after the break, on Tuesday 9th January 2024. Happy new year!

God bless you,



Mr Clinton