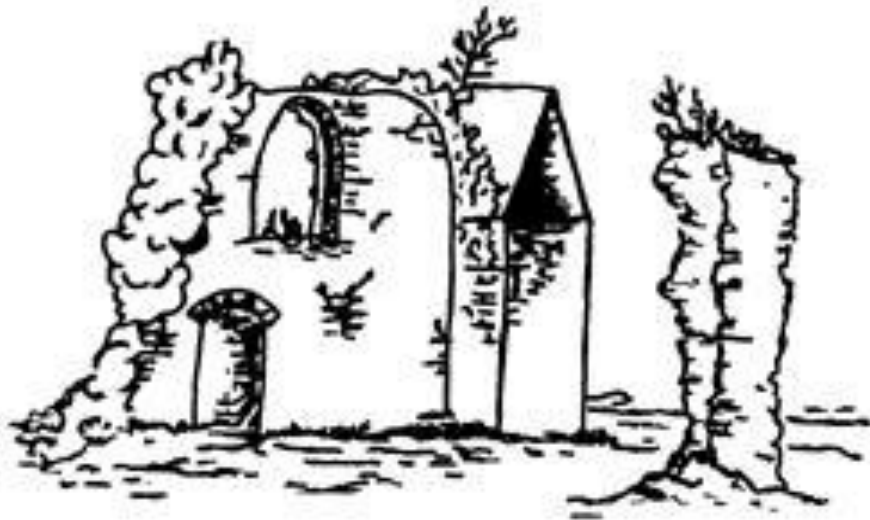


The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy



*Newsletter
January 2024*

Catholic Life

Weekend Mass: Our Lady of Good Counsel Eastwood – Sunday 11am.

Week of prayer for Christian Unity 16th – 21st January: Every year somewhere around 18th – 25th January we celebrate a week of prayer for Christian Unity. In Eastwood we will be having our annual visits for prayer at some of the churches. The following is a list of venues that will host a time of prayer at 12 noon on these dates: Monday 22nd January at Newthorpe Baptist Church. Tuesday 23rd January at New Horizons, Langley Mill. Wednesday 24th January at St Mary's Greasley. Thursday 25th January at Dora Phillips Hall Eastwood with Reach. Friday 26th January at Our Lady's Eastwood. Saturday 27th January at Eastwood Baptist Church, Percy Street. If you can, please join us. There will be refreshments available after the services. Pupils from school (Year 4 Class) will be attending the service at our parish church.

First Holy Communion 2024: A message from Canon Paul: "Thank you to all those who have registered for the First Communion Programme. There will be introductory meetings for parents at our parish church, Our Lady of Good Counsel, on Sunday 21st January after 11am Mass. Sessions for the children begin on 5th/6th February 2024. A letter giving all the dates and details of the programme and First Holy Communion celebrations will be sent to all parents this week either via email or letter."

Eastwood Food Bank: Please do send tinned and dried food into school as we continue to collect it in the main entrance. We wish for upper Key Stage 2 pupils to visit the Food Bank; to take our donations before we break for February half-term. Thank you for the food that was donated before Christmas – there was too much for Year 5 to carry, so Mr Wardle (our caretaker) took some up to Eastwood in his van.

Toddler Group: If you have a toddler or even a babe in arms, then why not come along to the school's toddler group; each Tuesday morning in term time, starting at 9.15am. Parents and grandparents bring their children to the parish social centre (at the end of the church car park) where they get to play and develop, as well as learn to socialise and make new friends. If you know anybody who has a baby or toddler, then please pass on this information. My sincere thanks go to Mrs Debbie Lane and a band of 3 or 4 more helpers for their hard work and commitment in running such a vital resource for mothers and toddlers in the local community.

IMPORTANT DATES: Spring/Lent

Term 3: Monday 8th January 2024 to Friday 16th February 2024

Term 4: Tuesday 27th February 2024 to Thursday 28th March 2024

(Inset Day – Monday 26th February 2024)

Virtues to live by: Our virtue to be explored throughout the next term is **Discipleship**: Being helpful and of service to the entire family of humankind. This can also be called **beneficence**, which means helping the greater community for the common good. In Catholic social teaching, a well-rounded person is someone who gives of himself/herself and recognizes the needs of the greater community – also known as **Missionary Discipleship**.

Monday 15th January: **Discipleship** – Jesus changed Simon’s name to Peter (which means rock). We need to be as hard and as strong as a rock in the work we do when serving and following in Peter’s footsteps. (John 1:35-42)

Monday 22nd January: **Discipleship** – Jesus started his mission by gathering his disciples – our duty is to take the place of the twelve who were first called to serve. (Mark 1:14-20)

Monday 29th January: **Discipleship** – Blessed are those who are determined to follow the teachings of Jesus and be his true disciples, as Jesus taught as a rabbi (which means teacher) and he taught with authority. (Mark 1:21-28)

Monday 5th February: **Discipleship** – we pray to God for the strength to look after the poor and vulnerable, just as Jesus taught us. (Mark 1:29-39)

Monday 12th February: **Discipleship** – we pray to God for the compassion to look after the poor and vulnerable as Jesus showed pity on the leper (Mark 1:29-39).

School Dinners: You may be aware that our school meals are now served by Derbyshire County Council. This is a new, improved, service with more variety on offer for pupils to choose from, as well as a daily salad buffet bar, from which pupils can freely access to add to their meals. (Please see the Derbyshire CC menu which has been sent out to you). This service has now been further enriched by the fact that the school now has meals cooked freshly, onsite, by our own cook: Mrs Danielle Pierrepont. The start of 2024 was rather special, as it is the first time since Covid19 came and went, that the school has cooked meals on site. However, these improvements as well as the rising costs of food and energy does mean that the prices of a school dinner will rise to £3.30 from Tuesday 27th February – this will ensure that the school breaks even, as it currently subsidises meals served, and has done since Covid19 started.

Free-school meals: As you are aware, every Key Stage One and Foundation Stage pupil is entitled to receive a free school meal for each academic year. Currently the cost to Key Stage 2 pupils (until Tuesday 27th February) is £2.70. In light of this, and if your circumstances have changed – you may wish to investigate if you are entitled to receive free school meals at the current time. If you require information about this then please do not hesitate to contact Mrs Helen Smith or myself via the school office. Your enquiry will be treated in strict confidence.

Sandwiches and snacks: We ask that you send only healthy meals and snacks for your children to eat in school. Please also send snacks that do not contain any nuts, as some of our children have serious nut allergies. In addition, if sending sweets for birthdays, teachers will give sweets out only at the end of the day with the instruction that pupils are only allowed to eat sweets when you have given them permission to do so – I know some parents do not like their children to receive sweets at school while others do not mind. Again, some children may well have allergies or have reactions to sweets that are given to them.

Safeguarding our Children: In accordance with our Safeguarding Policy, from time to time we may need to make a referral to Children & Young People Services at Nottinghamshire County Council. The school’s Designated Safeguarding Leads are Mrs Smith (Family Liaison Lead) Mr Harrison (Headteacher) Mrs Grimes (Deputy Headteacher) and Mrs Symonds (SEND/CO). You can contact our DSL team at ANY TIME by emailing directly to: Safeguarding@pri.srscmat.co.uk Your concerns and correspondence will be treated in the strictest confidence. Our safeguarding policy can be accessed on the school website or by following this link: [The-Priority-Safeguarding-Child-Protection-Policy-2023-2024.pdf \(srscmat.co.uk\)](https://www.pri.srscmat.co.uk/Assets/Docs/The-Priority-Safeguarding-Child-Protection-Policy-2023-2024.pdf)

Start of the school day: Unless attending Breakfast Club (which runs from 7.30 to 8.35am) these are the start times for your child:

- Year 5 and 6 (and younger siblings) **8.35am**
- Year 3 and 4 (and younger siblings) **8.40am**
- EYFS, Year 1 and 2: **8.45am**

Please note, pupils are to line up along the school drive (one gate is closed at 8.30am to prevent delivery drivers entering from this time).

The start time is when your child should reach their classroom – so arriving a couple of minutes before the scheduled time is to be encouraged. The side gate leading to the playground from where teachers meet their classes is locked at 8.50am – pupils arriving after this time are recorded in the register as being late. Registers open for each class at the times displayed above.

End of the school day: At the end of each day – please utilise all the space on both playgrounds – please do not stand in the area that connects both playgrounds; and do not allow children to play on the school grounds or the timber trails. Please use the time as displayed on mobile phones, as we have staggered departure times:

- EYFS (Reception Class) **3.05pm** (From under the reception class shelter)
- Key Stage 1 (Year Groups 1 and 2) **3.10pm**
- Key Stage 2 (Year Groups 3, 4, 5 and 6) **3.15pm**

Breakfast and after school Club reminder: Thank you to all of those who attend breakfast club. It runs every morning starting at 7.30am and costs £5.00 a day. Our after-school club is also £5.00 per session: £5.00 for the session 1 which ends at 4.45pm and then another £5.00 for session 2 which ends at 5.45pm (5.15pm on Fridays). Please make your payments as close to using these services and if possible, before using the clubs – as we do have some customers who owe for up to four weeks. Payment in a timelier way will help both the school and you manage the funds so that they do not increase to become unmanageable. If you do need to use these services on a regular basis, and are finding difficulties, then do contact Mrs Helen Smith or myself via the school office. Your enquiry will be treated in the strictest confidence.

Attendance: During these next few weeks, as we approach February half term, parents and carers who are experiencing some issues around attendance are being contacted by school. If you are worried about your child's attendance, please talk to me or Mrs Smith by either emailing the school office: office@pri.srscmat.co.uk or by phoning school: 01773 713731. As a school, we are quite concerned about attendance, as for the second year in a row, over the last fifteen years, we are below national and local attendance figures. We are here to help you in ensuring your child is safe and attending school.

Time away from school in term time: I draw your attention to the Attendance Policy on the school website which states that parents do not have an automatic right to withdraw pupils from school for a holiday or time off school. In law, you must apply for permission by emailing office@pri.srscmat.co.uk in advance. Such permission can only be granted where I agree that there are "special circumstances" to be considered. Applications for absence must be received at least 12 school days prior to the planned absence, or as soon as possible!

Parking: After complaints were made by local residents about inconsiderate and illegal parking on the roads and pavements around school – school has contacted Nottinghamshire County Council Highways Department asking them to assess the need for new road markings, as well as seeking their help in making the environment safer for our pupils, our neighbours and all road users. They have informed us that they will be stepping up patrols in the area to combat this by sending out the camera vehicle to do spot checks before and after school. Please remember to park safely and sensibly; and, within the law if bringing your car into the immediate area. May I also remind you that the CO-OP has free parking for 2 hours that can be utilised when coming to school, as can the spaces in church and across Hill Top. I thank you for your cooperation in this important matter.

Questionnaire: The Governing Body are keen to receive your views about the school. Please look out for a questionnaire that will be sent to you electronically over the next few days. If you require a hard copy, then please contact the school office. Also, if you want to explain any of your answers or if there is anything else you want the school to know, please email suggestions or further explanations to: office@pri.srscmat.co.uk The governing body will in turn feedback the results of the questionnaire and put together an action plan by the end of term.

Snow: If snow should arrive, the school will endeavour to stay open and run as normal. If you think your journey to school will be too hazardous, you can make the decision to keep your child at home as only you know the potential hazards of your journey. We therefore invite you to use your discretion as to whether you bring your child/children to school. Please inform school if you are keeping your child at home. We will treat this as an authorised absence, and this will always be the case whenever there is severe weather conditions. Furthermore, if snow was to fall during school time, you may think it wise to collect your child early – we are aware that many of our pupils travel a good distance. For news about the school's decision, please keep access open to receiving and reading text messages sent using the Parent Mail system and from the Class Dojo text messages.

Play and lunchtimes: When the school remains open during wintry weather, your child may wish to play in any snow that may have fallen. If it is safe to do so, he or she will only be allowed, if they have boots that cover the ankles and a coat. If it is too icy, or far too cold to play outdoors, the children will play inside in order to ensure their safety. During every lunchtime play, Key Stage 2 children are allowed to change into their trainers at lunch break only. If your son/daughter comes home with worn out shoes on a regular basis, you may wish to consider sending in a pair of trainers for this purpose. Pupils who wish to do this, must change their trainers back for their school shoes promptly at 12.55pm.

A prayer for an end to war: God of peace and justice, we pray for the people of war-torn countries around the world. We pray for peace and the laying down of weapons. We pray for all those who fear for tomorrow, that your Spirit of comfort would draw near to them. We pray for those with power over war or peace, for wisdom, discernment, and compassion to guide their decisions. Above all, we pray for all your precious children, at-risk and in fear, that you would hold and protect them.

We pray in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

Amen.

School Uniform Policy: The school has a uniform policy that is unfortunately not always adhered to by all parents and carers. Please ensure that you follow the policy which is presented here at the end of this newsletter, as it is important that our children look smart, while feeling in equity with all other pupils who learn here at the school. If for some reason you find it difficult to follow the policy for your child, then do please contact myself or Mrs Helen Smith via the school office.

Uniform

The academy has a school uniform which looks very smart and is greatly respected by parents, staff, and governors; as well as the local community who hold the academy in high regard. In sending your child to The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy, the Governing Body expects parents to uphold the dress code as set out in this policy.

All school uniform can be purchased from Hamilton's at **41- 43 Granby Street, Ilkeston, Derbyshire. DE7 8HP. Tel: 0115 9326333.**

The only part of the school uniform that must be purchased from Hamilton's is a red cardigan or red V-neck sweatshirt, as these carry the school logo. All other items may be purchased from outlets such as supermarkets or other clothes shops, which may even be online.

Pupils are expected to wear the following school uniform:

Winter (May be worn all-year round; also see summer uniform which is optional. Winter uniform must be worn after the October half-term, and up until the Easter Holidays).

- Red cardigan or red V-neck sweatshirt with school logo
- grey trousers or grey knee length skirt or grey pinafore dress or grey tailored school shorts

- long sleeve white school blouse (with collar)
- long sleeve white school shirt (with collar)
- red tie
- red or grey tights
- black, grey, or white socks
- winter coat (Please ensure your child always has a coat or raincoat in school with them).
- sensible black shoes: laced, Velcro or buckled are all allowed. These must be plain black, with no visible logo or motif; acceptable school shoes will have a distinctive heel. No slip-on shoes or trainer type shoes are allowed. No open toe sandals are allowed for health and safety reasons. (Please do contact the school office if in-doubt before purchasing).

Summer (**Optional:** after the Easter holidays and up until October half-term.)

- red and white checked dress (not striped)
- short sleeve white school blouse (with collar) and red tie
- short sleeve white school shirt (with collar) and red tie

Hats

We encourage children to wear sun hats in summer to give some protection from the sun.

General Appearance

Jewellery

Pupils may wear up to one pair of inexpensive earrings, providing they are small and in the lobe of the ear. They may also wear an inexpensive digital and/or analogue watch. (These must not be over-

sized or smart watches). All articles of jewellery must be removed for PE and when requested to do so by members of staff for your son or daughter to participate safely in curriculum activities – especially those of a practical nature.

Hair and eyelashes

Pupils' hair should be no shorter than number 2 and must not cover the face. There must be no tram lines or patterns cut into the hair and no excessive gel styling. A plain red or white, narrow headband or bobble may be worn. Flowers, bright bold hair clips and other hair fashion accessories are not allowed. Long hair must be tied back for PE and practical subjects – hair that is below collar length must be always tied back. False eyelashes are not allowed.

Make-up and nails

No make-up, false nails or nail varnish is allowed as part of the dress code at The Priory Catholic Academy.

PE Uniform

Plain red shorts, a plain white T-shirt or white polo shirt (with or without school logo), and black plimsolls. Each year, pupils will require tracksuits, football boots and/or trainers for outdoor games. (Class teachers will inform you as to when these will be needed as part of their half-term class newsletters). Tracksuits must be black or navy.

Additional Information

In order to return misplaced items of clothing, please label your child's uniform. Name tags inside items of clothing will suffice, and

only these are acceptable. Children should not have their name or initials showing on any exterior part of their uniform.

If you are ever in any doubt about our uniform requirements, please check with the members of staff in the office.

Book bags

Book bags which carry the school logo are available from our suppliers. We recommend that these are used, as they are strong and well-designed, in helping carry books and work, to and from school.

The Governing Body formulated this policy in line with the aims, goals and vision of the academy, taking into account the long traditions and history of the school. The governors see the wearing of school uniform as compulsory as it adds to the high expectations and enhances the standards of The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy – pupils who attend the academy are renowned for looking smart in the local area. The Governing body delegate their duties to the Headteacher who is the sole arbiter in all matters relating to the school uniform and personal appearance.

New employees: Our congratulations go to Mrs Samantha Chocholko and Mrs Natalie McNeil who were successful at recent interviews to become Teaching Assistants in school. We look forward to working with them and wish them both a most successful and happy time as they join The Priory Team in serving the community and pupils within our care.

Food for thought: "Is it snowing where you are? All the world that I see from my tower is draped in white and the flakes are coming down as big as popcorns. It's late afternoon - the sun is just setting (a cold yellow colour) behind some colder violet hills, and I am up in my window seat using the last light to write to you." — Jean Webster, Daddy-Long-Legs

God bless, Anthony Harrison