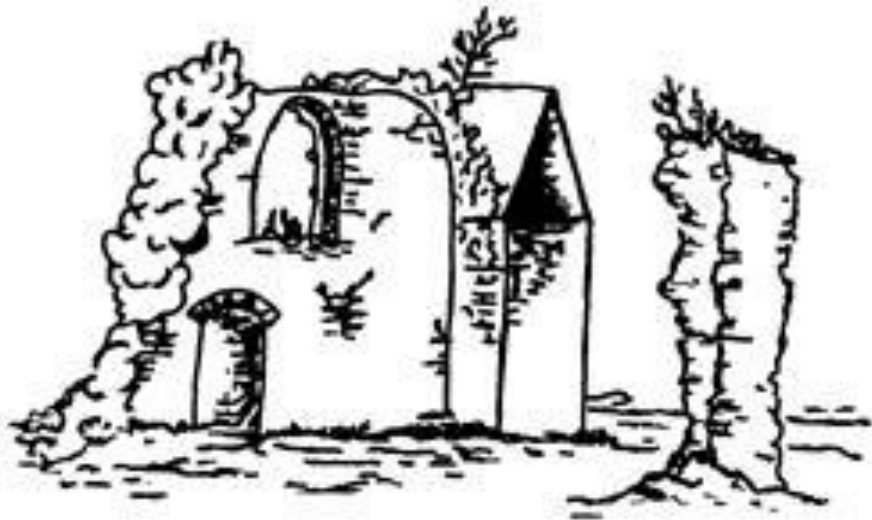


The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy



Newsletter February 2024

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)

Teaching Assistant Vacancy Closing Date: Wednesday 28th February 2024

Catholic Life

Weekend Mass: Our Lady of Good Counsel Eastwood – Sunday 11am (live streamed).

Racial Justice Sunday – 11th February: Next Sunday is a special day of prayer for Racial Justice. The following day I will lead our usual Monday liturgy, and in doing so reinforce the need for absolute zero tolerance for anybody who uses any racist actions or remarks. We will also pray this prayer which you may wish to share with your family:

‘God of our past, present and future, you created each one of us in your likeness; help us to recognise you in each person. As we pray for an end to suffering caused by racism, lead us this day to walk with one another, pray with one another and work together, so that we can create a future based on justice and healing, where all can fulfil the hope, you have for all peoples. We ask this through Christ our Lord. **Amen**’.

Coffee Afternoon: Everyone is welcome to school on Friday 16th February after the celebration assembly (which begins at 1pm) for coffee and refreshments. This is an opportunity to turn off the heating at home and come for a chat with other parents and carers of the school. Our PTA members have kindly volunteered to run this afternoon on behalf of the school and parish community, as parishioners have also been invited. The aim is to have a lovely, relaxing afternoon whilst waiting for the children to finish school as we break up for half term.

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.

Shrove Tuesday: On the 13th of February, Mrs Pierrepont (our new school cook) will be cooking pancakes as part of a themed school dinner day.

Ash Wednesday Mass: This takes place on Wednesday 14th February (St. Valentine’s Day). Mass is celebrated at 9.30am at Our Lady of Good Counsel. A fish lunch will be served for school dinners on this day – with Valentine’s Day Biscuits!

A prayer for Lent: Dear Lord, as we enter Lent help us to draw near to you in praise, stripping away all that distracts us from worship. As Jesus resisted temptation by the devil in the wilderness, help us reflect on his faithfulness to God, his rejection of worldly values and hold these thoughts in our hearts throughout Lent and into our future lives. **Amen**.

Virtues to live by: This term we explored the virtue of **Discipleship**: Being helpful and of service to the entire family of humankind.

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).

Tuesday 27th February: **Inclusivity** – we pray to God for the ability to be welcoming to all people, as we understand that we were created equally in God’s likeness. (The story of Abraham from Sunday’s first reading helps us understand this).

Monday 4th March: **Inclusivity** – we pray to God that we can live together in peace and harmony – following God’s laws. We take our example from the story of Abraham receiving the 10 Commandments from Sunday’s first reading).

Monday 11th March: **Inclusivity** – we pray that people throughout the world can be free from oppression and hurt – all treated equally under the same sky. This Sunday’s Psalm (The captives in Babylon) teaches us this – (Psalm 137:1-6).

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-Priory-Safeguarding-Child-Protection-Policy-2023-2024.pdf \(srscmat.co.uk\)](https://www.prioryeastwood.srscmat.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2023/12/The-Priory-Catholic-Academy-Pupil-Premium-Strategy-2023-2026-2022-2023-review-of-provision.pdf)

Chinese New Year: On Friday 9th February, pupils throughout school will be learning about the Chinese New Year which takes place the following day. This year, we are celebrating the year of the dragon. The celebration assembly will take place as normal at 1.00pm on this day.

School Volunteers: My thanks go to the growing number of parents and carers who give up their time to help in school with reading and assisting class teachers. If you are a parent or carer who thinks that you could lend a hand and regularly support the school in this way, then please contact Mrs Helen Smith who is responsible for organising our helpers.

Questionnaire: Thank you to those who completed the recent questionnaire – this has now closed. The Governing Body will feed back the findings after their meeting on 14th March 2024.

Internet Safety Day – Tuesday 6th: Please note that as part of safeguarding children, we at school have a duty of care (as do you as parents) to ensure that all are safe when using the internet. I will deliver a presentation that centres on:

- Using effective, positive language to communicate.
- How we can stay safe online.
- What we should do if something worries or upsets us.

This term, we have had Year 5 and 6 children worried and upset about online issues. These stem from accessing sites that they are not emotionally or cognitively able to deal with. Most apps and sites that we find to be causing stress and strife are not age appropriate as the law states that children must be 13 or over to use and access them. In turn, the way that children have been seen to have communicated on social media is concerning, as some messages are unkind and use language that is hurtful and demeaning. The use of WhatsApp by children at school has mirrored what I am reporting here. We aim to tackle this head on at school in the coming weeks and would welcome your support in teaching our children how to use the internet in a safe, productive, and positive way.

Pupil Premium and Free School Meals: For each pupil who receives free school meals, the government send the school a sum of money to help pay for resources and in-school provision. For more information about how this money is spent, please take the time to read our Pupil Premium Report posted on the school website. You can find the report by following this link: <https://www.theprioryeastwood.srscmat.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2023/12/The-Priory-Catholic-Academy-Pupil-Premium-Strategy-2023-2026-2022-2023-review-of-provision.pdf>

Relationship and Health Education: Relationship and Health Education became statutory in all primary schools in England from September 2020. As a Catholic school, our mission is to support the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all of our pupils, rooted in the wisdom and teaching of the Catholic Church. Please read the letter that has been sent out today by Mrs Grimes as this gives an overview of the course content. Also, do get in contact with senior leaders via the school office if there is something that you feel needs clarifying.

Teaching Assistant Vacancy: If you – or you know of anybody who is a TA and is looking for a job – then please do consider the role that is currently being advertised for us by the Academy Trust. Information is provided on the trust website: <https://www.srscmat.co.uk/work-with-us/vacancies/>
Do pass this information on to friends and family members.

Teaching Assistant Vacancy Details: The Priory Academy is committed to creating a diverse workforce. We'll consider all qualified applicants for employment without regard to sex, race, religion, belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy, maternity, age, disability, marriage, or civil partnership.

Main purpose - The Teaching Assistant will:

- Work with class teachers to raise the learning and attainment of pupils.
- Promote pupils' independence, self-esteem, and social inclusion.
- Give support to pupils, individually or in groups, so they can access the curriculum, take part in learning, and experience a sense of achievement.

Duties and responsibilities

To work under the instruction/guidance of teaching/senior staff to undertake work/care/support programmes, to enable access to learning for pupils and to assist the teacher in the management of pupils and the classroom. Work may be carried out in the classroom or outside the main teaching.

Supporting pupils

- Build positive relationships with pupils, promoting high self-esteem and independence.
- Adapt communication style to respond to pupils according to their individual needs.
- Support pupils with their social, emotional, and mental health needs, escalating concerns where appropriate.
- Promote high standards of behaviour, responding to incidents in line with the school's behaviour policy and guidelines on physical intervention.
- Assist with the development and delivery of individual education and support plans (as appropriate).

Planning

- Contribute to effective assessment and planning by supporting the monitoring, recording, and reporting of pupil performance and progress as appropriate to the level of the role.
- Read and understand lesson plans shared prior to lessons.
- Prepare the classroom for lessons.

Supporting SEND pupils – Contribute to the planning of differentiated learning activities for individual or small groups of pupils with special educational needs (SEN), delivering activities inside or outside the classroom.

Teaching and learning

- Demonstrate an informed and efficient approach to teaching and learning by adopting relevant strategies to support the work of the teacher and increase achievement of all pupils including, where appropriate, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND).
- Support the teaching of a broad and balanced curriculum aimed at pupils achieving their full potential in all areas of learning.
- Promote, support, and facilitate inclusion by encouraging participation of all pupils in learning and extracurricular activities.
- Use effective behaviour management strategies consistently in line with the school's policy and procedures.
- Support class teachers with maintaining good order and discipline among pupils, managing behaviour effectively to ensure a good and safe learning environment.
- Organise and manage teaching space and resources to help maintain a stimulating and safe learning environment.
- Through observations, provide regular feedback to teachers on pupil progress, attainment, and barriers to learning.
- Supervise a class if the teacher is temporarily unavailable.
- Use ICT skills to advance pupils' learning.
- Undertake any other relevant duties given by the class teacher.

The successful Teaching Assistant will be required to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people and follow school policies and the staff code of conduct. As already mentioned above, please pass this information on to friends and family members who may be interested in working here at our school.

Calling Catholic Teachers: Do you know somebody who is a practising Catholic and who is a teacher or senior leader working in a school outside of the Catholic sector? The Diocese of Nottingham along with the Catholic Multi-Academy Trusts is leading a virtual information session about working in a Catholic school on Monday 4 March from 7.00pm – 8.00pm.

For further information, please contact: Julie Sweeney at the Diocesan Education Service (julie.sweeney@nottingham-des.org.uk).

Food for thought: Equality is the soul of liberty; there is, in fact, no liberty without it. Virtue can only flourish among equals. These men ask for just the same thing, fairness, and fairness only. This, so far as in my power, they, and all others, shall have – Abraham Lincoln
God bless, Anthony Harrison