

The Priory Catholic Voluntary Academy



Newsletter November 2024

Catholic Life

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

Prayer for Holy Souls: Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.

Virtue to live by: **Enthusiasm** This half term we have been reinforcing the virtuous learning characteristic of having enthusiasm in our work and in the way we approach life. In school, this means living out our school mission with great enthusiasm.

Enthusiasm: having interest, passion, eagerness, keenness, willingness and effort. Our statements to live by this November have been:

Monday 4th November: **I can show initiative, like the scribe, and be enthusiastic in my learning** – linked to the scribe who asked: Which commandment is the greatest? They agreed on his Jesus' answer: "The first two commandments!" (Mark 12:28-34)

Monday 11th November: **I can show passion in standing up for people who are being bullied** – linked to the story of a poor widow gave her last two pennies as an offering to God; people looked down on her whilst the rich and mighty scribes showed off by giving silver coins. (Mark 12:38-44) We must stand up for people like the poor widow.

Monday 18th November: **I show that I am ready to accept Jesus into my life by my love, kindness and enthusiasm** – linked to nobody knows the hour when God will appear in judgement – so live life being ready – tackling life's work with love, care, kindness and enthusiasm (Mark 13:24-32)

Monday 25th November: **I am ready to accept Jesus as the king of my life by my love, kindness and enthusiasm** – linked to The Feast of Christ the King – a king who taught us to tackle life's work with love, care, kindness and enthusiasm (Mark 13:24-32)

Please do discuss these statements to help your child re-cap on the learning that has taken place in school about enthusiastically working as Jesus' disciples. Our virtue of working enthusiastically continues through the season of Advent which begins on Sunday 1st December.

Celebration Assemblies: Throughout the year, Celebration Assemblies will take place from 1pm each Friday.

Eastwood Food Bank: Please do send tinned and dried food into school as we continue to collect it in the main entrance. All food donations will be delivered to the Eastwood Food Bank on Friday 13th December – as we break up for Christmas.

Remembrance Poppies: Members of the Royal British Legion delivered poppies into school along with other items to be bought. Thank you to our school community for sending in money for this worthy cause – specifically for ex-service men and women who are in need of our help. During November, we remember all our loved ones who have passed away as well as all soldiers who have given their lives so that we can enjoy living in freedom from tyranny.

Working and living out the mission of our Catholic faith: Our school mission is fundamental to the way our school operates in terms of working together and playing together. We do not promote any ways of working that go against our Catholic principles and the teachings of Jesus Christ. Therefore, parents who wish for their children to not play, or to not go near certain other pupils are going completely against the ethos, purpose and mission of the school. We of course will not go against our Catholic principles in teaching and allowing pupils to play and learn together. Anything other is discriminatory.

Online Abuse/Bullying: Please monitor your child's device(s) as we have had a sharp rise in online bullying to which the school has applied the Behaviour Policy and the Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy. These instances have taken place in Key Stage 2. Bullying in any way, shape or form will not be tolerated. For your information, if bullying and discrimination in any form takes place off the school premises, Headteachers have the power to act accordingly to keep staff, pupils and the wider school community safe.

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 (SENDCO). 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: <https://www.theprioryeastwood.srscmat.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/sites/28/2024/07/Safeguarding-and-Child-Protection-Policy-SRS-PRI-V3-2024-2025.pdf>

Parent Questionnaire Responses: In total, the school received 29 responses to the Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) questionnaire. The comments were all very positive and reinforced the view that it is a good time for children to learn about key knowledge about their bodies and that the curriculum will help keep them safe. Over half of respondents would value further information and support as their children journey through school – with most also commenting on that they felt that their child will need additional support in understanding the course content. Across the school, I have asked each Classteacher to be absolutely clear about their RSE curriculum so that they can inform you in greater detail in class newsletters – providing you with lesson objectives and the vocabulary that will be taught. I have also asked them to share links with you from the course syllabus.

Homework: We recently had parents asking about the school's policy on homework – as all work sent home should not involve new learning but should be practice and revision tasks. If you and your child do not understand any work, please do return it to school with a message to your child's Classteacher. The last thing we want to do is make doing homework a negative experience. Teachers can then use this information to teach the concepts again or re-think the instructions around the work sent home. I am sure you will agree, homework is an essential part of a good education and supports the learning taking place within the classroom. It is part of a wider partnership between you and school and should complement classroom learning. Evidence does show the education of pupils is enriched when parents support their children's learning at home.

Free School Meals: Children who officially qualify for free school meals are eligible for the Pupil Premium. This is not the same as universal free school meals for pupils in reception and year groups 1 and 2. Children who are in receipt of the Pupil Premium (including Armed Forces pupils) are charged 50% of the total costs of trips, after-school and breakfast clubs. If you would like to know more about whether you are eligible, then please contact the school office, or Mrs Helen Smith; they are always on hand to help. Indeed, you can also just follow the link: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/education/school-meals/free-school-meals-and-milk

Kindness: Over the last two weeks the school has been working closely with the Children and Young People department at Broxtowe Borough Council. Pupils enjoyed working on a kindness project that involved outside speakers delivering thoughtful assemblies to Key Stage 2 pupils during anti-bullying week. Mr Trivedi, who worked with us on this project, composed his own kindness poem.

Kindness

What would happen if I was kind every day?
Kindness is a choice I can make.
It's a decision I can take.
For me and my mates
And for those that make mistakes
There is a magic that kindness creates

Imagine you could be kind to someone
That wasn't kind to you
You could confuse them with your actions
Maybe make a friend or two.

Even adults need reminding
That kindness needs inviting
If we show kindness at home
And we do this without being told
Kindness will be valued more than gold

What does kindness actually do?
It connects me and you.
When someone is kind, it can bring hope
To someone who was struggling to cope
Kindness changes the atmosphere
And takes away panic and fear.

We all need the message of kindness
Just think if all grownups and children knew this?
Would there be fights, would there be wars?
I know kindness can bring peace, I'm sure.

I don't know about you, but I love people who are kind
They make you feel special and that makes us shine.

If it was only down to me,
I would be kind to everyone I see.
But it takes all of us
Everyone here
To make this world kind
For us to feel safe
And make a kind place.

By Jay Trivedi

SEND Support: Mrs Symonds would like to inform parents and carers of children who are on the school's special educational needs register that we now have their autumn term SEND plans in place and that these will be reviewed at the end of this term. New targets will be set at the start of the spring term, in January 2025. Also, for your information, we have had an increasing number of parents who have asked about having their children assessed for an Educational Health Care Plan (EHCP). Mrs Symonds would like to draw to your attention "The Graduated Approach" which you can find on the school website. Here you can find details of the stages of support that must be put in place, right from initial conversations when concerns are raised, through to universal provision – targeted and specialist support: <https://www.theprioryeastwood.srscmat.co.uk/information/send/> The school along with parents and carers cannot automatically apply for an EHCP, or additional funding, without going through this graduated approach. Mrs Symonds is more than happy to talk to parents about this should you so wish.

Important Information: Three weeks ago, the school office sent out a request for parents and carers to give their consent for school to use photographs of pupils on the school website. They also sent a request for consent to be given by parents so that classes can take pupils on short trips; these trips are mainly up in Eastwood or on Hill Top to do history or geography lessons – or are to go to other local schools to take part in sporting events. Please can you check through your messages and send in these pieces of information, as it really does speed to processes up for going out in the local area. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Staffing: Congratulations to Mrs Dunham who is expecting a baby around Christmas time. Her last day of work is soon, so the school is wanting a person to fill her Teaching Assistant role while she takes her maternity leave. Last week, the school held interviews for two positions (one was permanent, and one was the temporary position). The permanent position has been filled, while we are still looking for a person to work in school to cover the temporary maternity leave – which should be for just under a year. If you know of any TAs who are looking for work, then please ask them to contact the school office, or look on the trust website.

Food for thought: "Never post negative or personal comments/images about another person on the Internet" – Lorna Naylor Notts County Council Safer Internet Use Coordinator 2015. Kindness poem by Jay

God Bless – Anthony Harrison