



Diocese of Portsmouth

ST EDMUND'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

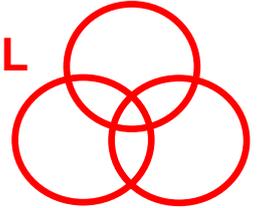
Radley Road, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 3PP

Tel: 01235 521558 Fax: 01235 532778

e-mail: office.3856@st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk

www.st-edmunds-rc.oxon.sch.uk

Headteacher: Mrs M Delany-White



29th November 2021

Love cures people, those who give it and those who receive it. Karl A. Menninger

Dear Parents and Carers,

THE FOUR WEEKS OF ADVENT

Yesterday was the first Sunday of Advent. Advent is a time of preparation for the birth of Jesus. During the first two weeks of Advent we light the first two purple candles on the Advent wreath. The Third Sunday of Advent is called Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday. On this day we celebrate that our waiting for the birth of Jesus on Christmas day is almost over. Rose (pink) is a liturgical colour that is used to signify joy, so we light the single pink candle on the third Sunday of Advent. Then on the fourth Sunday of Advent, the final purple candle is lit to mark the final week of prayer and penance as we wait expectantly for the soon-coming birth of the King of Kings.



The 1st Sunday of Advent symbolises Hope with the "Prophet's Candle" reminding us that Jesus is coming.

The 2nd Sunday of Advent symbolises Faith with the "Bethlehem Candle" reminding us of Mary and Joseph's journey to Bethlehem.

The 3rd Sunday of Advent symbolises Joy with the "Shepherd's Candle" reminding us of the Joy the world experienced at the coming birth of Jesus.

The 4th Sunday of Advent symbolises Peace with the "Angel's Candle" reminding us of the message of the angels: "Peace on Earth, Good Will Toward Men."

On Christmas Day, the white candle,

known as the "Christ Candle" is lit. This is a reminder that Jesus is the light of the world. He is our King and our Saviour.

You can find more information about Advent and fun activities for your children on the youth page of our parish website: [Advent & Christmas | Church \(ourladyandstedmund.org.uk\)](http://ourladyandstedmund.org.uk)

Jake's CAFOD fund raising

I was proud to hear of Jake in Year 4's recent sponsored 'no technology' week to raise money for CAFOD. In Jake's words:

I am 9 years old and have learnt that the world needs help, if we don't do it now we never can. I am spending Monday to Saturday with no TV/films/iPad/Nintendo or any technology





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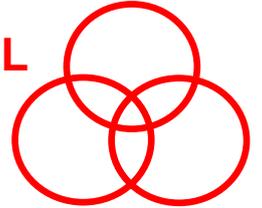
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to try and raise some money for CAFOD. My family are helping me and my brother is suffering the consequences of helping me!

This Advent we are fundraising for a CAFOD World Gift. World Gifts are CAFOD's alternative charity gifts that transform lives. Perfect for Baptisms, birthdays and anniversaries, you can choose a unique, virtual gift that will make a real difference to a family living in poverty. If you want to see the other World Gifts which are available from CAFOD, please head straight to cafod.org.uk/worldgifts

I am including the link in case anyone would like to support Jake in his fund raising: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Jacobwood06?>. Thank you, Jake, for thinking of others in such a practical way and well done for your technology free week!

Congratulations Harry - Air Quality Superhero artwork competition - Winning design



We are delighted that Harry in Year 6 won the South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council Air Quality competition with his Swift design. The councils challenged children of primary school age across the districts to create an air quality superhero as part of their campaign to highlight the issue of local air quality and awareness campaigns such as Turn It Off

(<https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/turnitoff/>). Harry's Swift design was chosen as the overall winner out of all the competition entries received from schools across the districts. Harry was presented with prize of a micro scooter and helmet by Councillor Webb in school last week and his winning design had been incorporated in

a roadside banner which we will display outside school, reminding us all to think about the environment, by switching off our car engine whilst waiting, etc. Harry's Swift design was also included in posters and key rings which were given to children to take home and share with their parents. Well done Harry!





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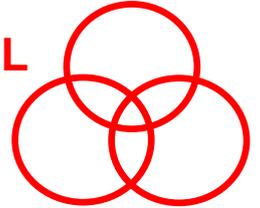
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Covid update

Although we have had few cases since the half term break it is important that we do not become complacent. If your child shows symptoms, please make sure that they have a PCR test and keep them at home until you receive the result. Please then forward the result (negative or positive) to the office for our records. If any child or member of staff has been a close contact of someone with Covid they also need to have a PCR test and, under our current Covid Risk Assessment, will need to stay at home until they receive the result. Thank you to all parents for continuing to support all our Covid risk assessment procedures, particularly by wearing a mask when you come onsite for pick up. Please continue to do so. Staff absence has a significant impact on our ability to provide high quality education to your children and our aim continues to be to keep all staff and children safe, whilst providing face to face education for all.

Christmas Events

During the weekly headteacher meeting, led by the Local Authority and Southeast Health Protection, last week all Oxfordshire headteachers were encouraged to look again at their Covid risk assessments and think very carefully about holding any Christmas events that involve large gatherings or parents onsite. The impact of people contracting Covid at the end of term could ruin many family Christmases due to ill health and self-isolation. With this in mind, we regrettably will be keeping to our current risk assessment and not holding our usual Nativities or Christingle service again this year. Each class will however be recording the children singing Christmas or Advent Carols and these will be shared with parents via the class email addresses. We will of course make the run up to Christmas in school as cheerful and fun for the children as possible, including class Christmas parties, **Christmas lunch on Wednesday 8th December** and children wearing a **Christmas jumper** over their uniform on **the last day, Thursday 16th December**.

Staffing Update

As many of you are aware, we sadly said goodbye to Mrs Patel from the school office last week. After twelve years at St Edmund's Mrs Patel has decided to increase her hours at Waitrose now that her children are all grown up and she no longer needs the flexibility of school term working hours. We thank Mrs Patel for all her hard work over the years. We have now recruited Mrs Julie Knipe as our new admin assistant each morning. As Mrs Knipe has worked in our school for many years, she already knows many of you and your children well but do please welcome her in her new role. She is proving to be a cheerful and efficient addition to the office staff. We have also recruited Mrs Julie Rowe as our new teaching assistant who will start supporting Year 5 from 9th December onward.

Target Cards

Hopefully parents of children in Year 1-6 had a chance to look at your child's Target Cards when they came home again last week. We originally planned to send the cards home fortnightly as in previous years, but in consultation with the class teachers, we have decided that it may be more meaningful for parents if the cards are sent home monthly after





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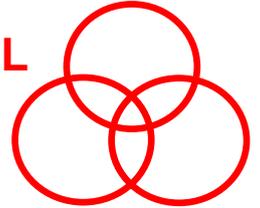
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Christmas. That way you will have a clearer picture of the progress your child is making as there will be more dates recorded on the cards each time. The routine will be the same as before- the cards will be sent home on a **Wednesday** to be returned on **Thursday morning without fail please**. There is a cover sheet which accompanies the Target Card folder which you may want to read to refresh yourself but do feel free to ask the class teacher at any time during the academic year if you are unsure about your child's progress or want to know more about how to support your child in their learning at home.

Reception admissions September 2022

You must apply now if your child was born on or between 1st September 2017 and 31st August 2018 for a primary school place. You need to apply for a Reception class place via Oxfordshire County Council, even if your child already attends our nursery. Your child is not automatically offered a place in our Reception class if they are currently in our Nursery. All children must apply for a Reception place via the Local Authority, and we strongly encourage you to make sure you do not miss the deadline as you may not get a place if you are a late applicant. The **deadline for applications is the 15th of January 2022**. Apply online at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/primaryadmissions – it is quick, easy, and secure. For help and information, please speak to Mrs Semple in Nursery or Mrs Dingwall in the school office or email: admissions.schools@oxfordshire.gov.uk Tel: 0345 241 2487

Talking Space Plus

Talking Space Plus is a free, confidential NHS service for adults in Oxfordshire, to help people when they're feeling stressed, anxious or low and we offer our treatments online for your safety and convenience. If you feel you would benefit from support, please contact our service directly on 01865 901222 or visit www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/talkingspaceplus

Thank You

Finally, I would also like to ask you and your children to remember to thank all the staff for their care, professionalism, and dedication through what has been another difficult year. I am grateful for their continuing enthusiasm throughout and their determination to make sure our school is the happiest and safest place it can be for your children so please do join me in thanking them for all that they do. If I do not see you to speak to you personally before we **break up on Thursday 16th December**, I would like to thank you for all your support this year and wish you and your families a happy, healthy, and holy Christmas. I will then look forward to seeing you all again on Wednesday 5th January 2022.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Delany-White

Headteacher

