

'Be who God wants you to be and so set the world on fire.'

St. Catherine's Newsletter: Spring Term 2 2024



A Message From Mrs Quiligotti

Dear parents and carers,

We have had another wonderful half-term of learning throughout our school. Although it's been a short half-term, we've still managed to squeeze in lots of exciting learning opportunities for our children, including STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Day, World Book Day and St. Patrick's Day. Our worship time and Religion themes have helped us to reflect on the season of Lent and the events leading up to Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, the ultimate miracle. Our KS2 children have worked throughout this week to put together a moving reflection of the events of Holy Week, which has then been visited by our younger children to learn more about Holy Week and the significance of these events.

As we navigate through the Lenten season, I am reminded of the profound significance it holds for our Catholic community. Lent is a time of reflection, prayer, and sacrifice, leading us on a journey towards renewal and spiritual growth. Lent offers a unique opportunity for introspection and self-examination. It calls us to reflect on our lives, our relationship with God, and our connections with others. Through prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, we are encouraged to deepen our faith, strengthen our resolve, and cultivate compassion and empathy towards those in need. As a school community, let us embrace the spirit of Lent wholeheartedly. Let us use this sacred time to deepen our faith, strengthen our bonds of solidarity, and reaffirm our commitment to living lives of virtue and integrity.

Father John taught our children a great way to remember 'joy' as we approach the Easter weekend: J – Jesus, O – others, Y – you. He said this is a great way to reflect on truly feeling joyful during this Easter season

We hope you all have a blessed and joyful Easter and we look forward to welcoming our wonderful families back to school on Wednesday 10th April.

Mrs Quiligotti



Love

Faith

Respect

Perseverance

Compassion

Inspiration

Whole School



This Half-Term...

This half-term, we have been learning more about the liturgical season of Lent and its importance within the church calendar. During Holy Week, our KS2 children created a moving reflection representing the events of Holy Week, which our EYFS and KS1 children then visited to learn more about the significance of Holy Week.

We've also held our annual STEM Day (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) which was a fantastic day of experiments, fun learning and more! We celebrated St Patrick's Day in church with Father John, followed by an event in the community centre where we invited parents and parishioners and put on some great entertainment (and refreshments!) for everyone, including Irish singing, dancing and instrumental performances! Our World Book Day celebrations were a great success too and we loved seeing everyone's costumes!



World Water Day

On 22nd March, World Water Day, Justin Neal (an Environmental Lawyer) came into school to talk to our children about World Water Day and to highlight the importance of clean water in our communities and how we need to protect our water ways. Children learnt about the impact of human actions on our water systems and the importance of changing these habits. They also learnt about the negative impact of our actions on different creatures that live in our water, including fish. The children enjoyed learning about water pollution, the impact on our society and changes we can make to reduce this pollution. Thank you, Dr Neal!



Lent & Holy Week



During Lent, we have been focusing on the theme of Perfect Promises, looking at different stories from the bible that reflect Jesus' journey to the cross. Our different Perfect Promise themes have included belonging, presence and guidance. We have also looked at the word 'covenant' and how this is a personal agreement of commitment. We have looked at different covenants from God and Jesus, particularly during our Lenten journey.

During Holy Week, our KS2 children worked diligently to prepare and facilitate a moving reflection of the events of Holy Week. We identified key events from Holy Week to show Jesus' journey to the cross and to reflect on the ultimate miracle of his resurrection.

Our younger children then toured around school to visit each reflection, learning more about Jesus' journey and giving thought to what this means for us as Catholics today.

We are so proud of the wonderful reflections our older children created and it was a beautiful way for our younger children to learn more about Holy Week.



Nursery



This Half-Term...

Our topic this half-term has been Journeys and Transport. We have enjoyed listening to and learning the story, 'The Journey Home from Grandpa's'. We have been sequencing the story and, in our writing, drawing and labelling our own vehicles, using our increasing knowledge of letters and their sounds! We have also been reading 'Whatever Next'. We loved imagining going on a journey to space and thinking about what we would take!

In Maths, we have been focusing on size and learning to describe things that are long, tall and short. We have been continuing with our number work too, recognising and counting up to 6!

We have also enjoyed other learning opportunities such as 'Green Day', when we made frogs, ate green food and discovered which colours make green! We loved World Book Day too and having the chance to talk about the different clothes we were wearing and our favourite stories! We are also preparing for spring, and have been busy planting cress seeds. We are excited to see them grow!

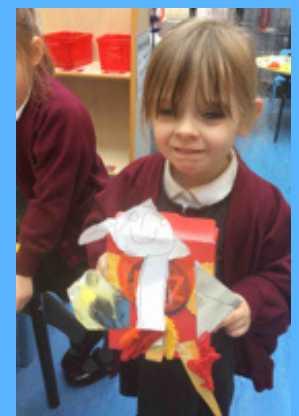
This half-term, we have also been preparing for Easter. We have been learning that Lent is a time to be more like Jesus by being kind and looking after each other.

Our children say...

"On World Book Day, I was a vet, he was in 'Mog and the V, E, T!'"

"Green day was fun, it was all green food, green peppers, green beans, just green!"

"I loved planting, we put soil in and some seeds. It grewed."



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Reception



This Half-Term...

Our topic this half-term has been 'Transport including Space'. In literacy, we have explored the book 'How to catch a star' as well as non-fiction texts about Space. We know that non-fiction books contain information. We have learnt lots of facts about different forms of transport including transport into Space.

In Maths, we have been learning about numbers which are one more and one less than a given number. We have also explored making repeating patterns and 3D shapes.

In the creative area, we have design and built playdough aliens. We enjoyed creating an in-depth design, ensuring they were labelled.

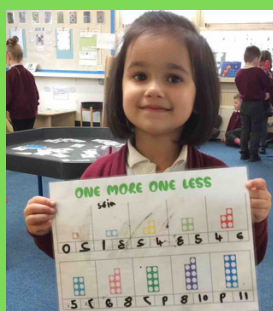
In our outdoor bike track, we have had a 'Traffic Controller Station'. To ensure we are using the bikes safely, the children have role played as traffic controllers, helping friends to follow road signs and writing driving offense tickets. We are very safe on the bikes thanks to our friends' support.

Our children say...

"Jesus died and rose on Easter Sunday. He died on the cross because he loves us."

"I liked the Space writing. I drew an Alien and a planet."

"I drew a planet Neptune. When you label it, you get a star for it."



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Year 1



This Half-Term...

This half-term, both Class 3 and Class 4 have completed their worships surrounding our core value "Faith". Mr Westbrook's class focused on the importance of Lent and how our faith supports us during this time. Miss Ryan's class focused on the importance of having a faith and believing. We already can't wait for our next worships!

In English, we have been focusing on the text, "The Curious Case of the Missing Mammoth". We have continued building our writing skills by starting to add adjectives, suffix and prefixes to our work.

In PE, we have been focusing on dance this half-term in particular street dance. We have learnt a dance based on the movie "Trolls" and have started performing it in pairs/small groups. There are some future dance stars in the making!

During STEM day, we created our very own rafts using recyclable materials. We built the rafts independently and then tested whether they would float when having a weight such as a marble placed on top.

Our children say...

"I loved World Book Day when we all got to see all the other year groups costumes during the parade!"

"Maths has been really fun because we have been measuring different objects and seeing what is heavier and lighter. I can use scales now when baking".

"I liked when we learnt the Our Father in Religion as I can say it now at home with my big brother".



Year 2



This Half-Term...

In Topic, we have been learning about the five oceans and seven continents. We used salt-dough to create a map of the world and we have learnt a special rap to help us remember the different continents – it's so catchy!

Class 5 performed a special class worship all about Saint Patrick. We told the story of Saint Patrick and we explained how he helped to spread the Christian faith throughout Ireland. We shared some songs and also performed an Irish dance. We had lots of fun and we think we deserve the golden buzzer.

This half-term, we ended STEM day on a high with some 'Silly Science'. The children had a fantastic time joining in with some silly experiments such as 'walking water' and creating our own static electricity with balloons!

Class 6 performed their class worship all about Palm Sunday and how it links to faith. We performed it as a news broadcast and filled it with two lovely songs. Look out Hollywood, we're coming for you!

Our children say...

"I loved taking part in the World Book Day parade and I wish I could dress up as Harry Potter every day."

"I loved learning to Irish dance and I'd love to be in Riverdance one day."

"The silly science was so much fun! I tried some experiments at home."



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Year 3



This Half-Term...

We started our new topic: From Riches to Ruins, which is all about the Romans. We have had fun being code breakers on our Launch day and finding out about how the Roman army is strong and powerful.

In PE, we have been focusing on gymnastics with Mr Borjus. We have been practising different jumps and rolls making sure our bodies are like perfect gymnasts!

In English, we have been looking at the importance of looking after our oceans and the damage that plastic can sadly do to wildlife, particularly whales.

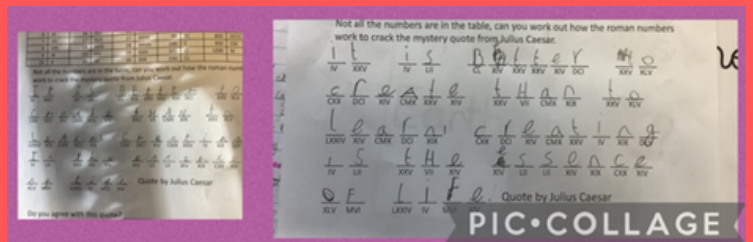
In Art, we have been focusing on Eric Carle and the wonderful art he produced. We have mixed paint to make our own paper, and cut shapes out of it to make different animals and insects.

Our children say...

"I have really enjoyed Art and mixing colours to make different shades. I have also found it interesting to focus on different textures."

"It is really fun to practice the different types of jumps. My favourite jump is a tuck jump."

"Our research project for homework helped me to find lots of information about threats and how to protect blue whales."



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Year 4



This Half-Term...

In Science, we have been learning about sound. We have loved discovering more about how sound travels and how we hear sound through investigations.

In Computing, we have been using iMovie to create presentations linked to our topic – Rivers. We have learnt how to add sound, videos and how to use transitions to make our work more engaging.

We have been reading a text that has reminded some of us of Moana – we found this very exciting and love discovering more about our character and the adventures she goes on!

In PSHE, we have been learning about how to stay safe online. This has been very useful for us and we have lots of discussions about how we ensure we are using the internet safely.

Our children say...

“I’ve enjoyed science and learning by experimenting!”

“I really enjoyed the Spanish café– I liked how we were learning Spanish while eating and having fun.”

“I’ve enjoyed learning about Henri Rousseau and using his art to inspire our own.”



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Year 5



This Half-Term...

We have linked our English work to our science learning this half-term by reading the text 'Cosmic'. We have answered questions about the text in Guided Reading sessions as well as writing a non-chronological report and a space fantasy story in Writing lessons.

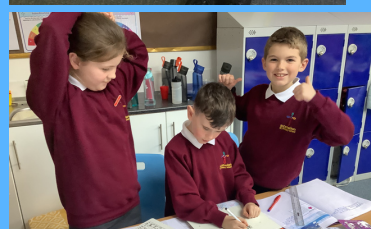
We thoroughly enjoyed the opportunity to take part in the Spanish Café! Waiting on our families, friends and the year 4 pupils was a fantastic chance to practise our Spanish vocabulary and phrases.

In preparation for the upcoming Spanish Exchange experience, we have based our Topic learning around Nigrán. Learning about the geography of Nigrán has helped us to better understand what life for our Spanish pen friends is like – we can't wait to meet them!

In Religion, we have been learning about 'Sacrifice'. Our Lenten topic has helped us to understand the sacrifice that Jesus made for us when he was crucified. We have revisited the story of the Last Supper and Judas' betrayal in order to understand the events of Holy Week in more detail.

Our children say...

"I have enjoyed learning lots of facts about space in science – did you know, Pluto is a dwarf planet and isn't a planet in our known solar system?"
"Spanish café was amazing! I really enjoyed pouring drinks and preparing the food to serve all of the adults and children who came. Fue fenomenal!"
"In Topic, we have been learning about Nigrán so I made a map out of modelling clay, bubble wrap, newspaper and tissue paper to show the location of Nigrán."



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Year 6



This Half-Term...

This half-term, we have been working hard to create descriptive narratives based on our class novel 'The Explorer' and persuasive holiday brochures during English. Year 6 are ready to book their flights!

Biomes has been our focus for Geography as we explored how climate, humans and location can make places on Earth so different.

In Maths lessons, we have learnt how to calculate the area of a variety of shapes and also how to convert measurements.

Our Religion lessons have explored the meaning of 'Death and New Life' in the Catholic church and the significance of this within the liturgical calendar. This has helped us to reflect on the season of Lent and the importance and significance of Jesus' actions and what they mean for us today.

Our children say...

"I really enjoyed our sleep workshop. We learned so much about the importance of a good night's sleep and how to reduce blue light exposure before bedtime."

"I loved our Science lesson where we created classification keys for Liquorice Allsorts. STEM day was also really good fun!"

"I really enjoyed PE this term. I'd never tried Gaelic football before and now I want to continue playing it!"



Music



The children in EYFS have certainly been getting both 'CREATIVE' and 'ACTIVE' in response to their Music lessons this term e.g. using hoops to identify patterns and leaps within songs and using parachutes and elastic bands to create the motions of rhythm in the song 'Row, row, row your boat'! This exercise was to try to ensure that they mark the pulse accurately and rhythmically with Music.

What our Nursery and Reception children have had to say about Music:

"I like playing instruments with Mrs Dewsnap."

"I enjoy shaking things."

"I like playing a tambourine and I even made a maraca at home with pasta, rice and stickers."



In Year 3, children combined 'CREATIVITY and ART' with some children actively making percussion instruments as a fun accompaniment to songs.

In Year 1, one of the aims and objectives in Music was to engage imaginatively with the music and explore sounds and images through listening to 'Nautilus' by Anna Meredith. The children were highly responsive and really enjoyed using their bodies to demonstrate an internal sense of beat, focusing on the low, high, and rising sounds within the piece using paper plates as a prop!

Music



Our Famous 'Singing Square' took place last week for our Key Stage 2 pupils, which showcased all the wonderful singing that takes place in each class. Each Year group sang two songs, one of which was sung in a different language. The songs had a theme based on positivity, resilience and following your dreams.



Our choir children performed at our St Patrick's Day celebrations, where we invited parents and parishioners into the community centre for some refreshments and Irish entertainment!

We are so proud of our Year 5 and 6 children who showcased lots of their musical learning and talents during our musical showcase on Wednesday. This was a great opportunity to show off our children's curriculum music learning, including different songs they have been learning to sing and play. A small number of our children who access piano or woodwind tuition were also able to show off some of what they have been learning with their peripetetic teachers. Well done, children!

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Sports



There are so many things to celebrate this half-term!

- Children from Years 1-6 attended two gymnastics competitions. The children worked hard to prepare a routine with Mr Borjus and practised this at home. A huge well done to all the children who attended and congratulations to KS1 who came 1st place and KS2 who came 2nd place at both competitions.
- Children on our netball team have been working on their team skills and technique; they had a fantastic time at two events that they attended. Well done everybody!
- All of our football teams have been working hard developing their skills and playing at The Barlow on Thursday evenings. Congratulations to the girls who finished their league in 3rd place. The boys' team are through to the next stages of their league and events will take place next half-term for this.
- Some of our children attended an event for athletics which was great fun for all and the children shown fantastic team work skills.
- Year 6 have been enjoying Gaelic football sessions. Year 5 have sessions planned next half-term.
- Reception have been enjoying outdoor PE sessions with Mr Hollins for the first time this year and are learning lots of new skills.



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Student Leadership



Laudato Si Council

This half-term, we met to discuss ways to improve provision at break and lunchtimes. We want to introduce more resources for the outdoor classroom as well as develop new playground games that are inclusive for wheelchair users. We've also been busy filming a mental health video all about the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' – look out for it on the school website soon!

Caritas Ambassadors

Our Caritas Ambassadors have had a busy half-term caring for our local community and putting their faith into action. Our children expressed their concerns about local parking and put together information for parents and our community to remind everyone to park safely and to prioritise the safety of all of our community, especially our children. Our Caritas Ambassadors have also been raising money for Francis House, our local children's hospice, through selling crocheted chicks with creme eggs inside – a popular treat!

GIFT Team

This half-term, we have continued to support the wider catholic life and mission of the school through reading in Masses. During Holy Week, we have had the opportunity to lead our younger pupils in reflection as they toured the school to visit the different KS2 performances of Holy Week enactments. We have also made and handed out some prayer cards during Holy Week. We look forward to next half-term and delivering Collective Worship across school and leading our St Catherine of Siena celebrations.

Think before you park!

At St. Catherine's, our children's safety is our top priority. Our staff and children want to tackle poor parking to make our local community a safer place for our children and residents.

Time to change your parking habits?

- Could you park further away from the school and walk in?
- Do you need your engine on when you're waiting?
- Could you switch just one of your morning journeys in the week to a walk or bike?
- Could you use the FREE one hour parking by the Wishing Well pub on School Lane?

It could make a BIG difference to your child's start to the day. Exercise gets them ready to learn, helps improve behaviour and can even help to improve concentration.

Parking near our school office

We ask that parents please do NOT drive into the car park by our school office.

This car park is always full and has very minimal space for turning around. This makes it a really dangerous area for pedestrians when drivers do not follow our school rules.

If you need to access the school office, please park locally and then walk. This will help to keep our children and local community safe.

Student Leadership



Climate Change Champions

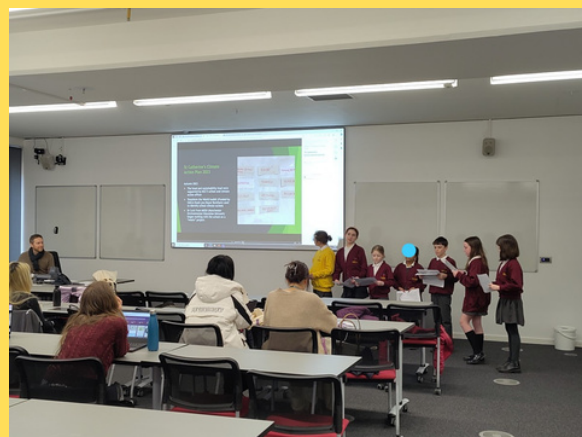
This half term, the Eco Team have been very busy! They have been keeping up the good work in the school with helping Nursery and Reception to begin using the mini compost bins for their fruit waste. They have also been gaining confidence away from the school in a number of different activities.

Firstly, the children were invited to participate in holding a climate change stall at the University of Manchester Students' Union, where the children went up to students from all backgrounds and quizzed them on their understanding of climate issues. They went on to present a PowerPoint about how they are actively leading the school in sustainability projects in front of lots of university students in a lecture room. And finally, they went to see a sustainable charity shop called 'Want Not Waste' which is run by students. The children showed incredible confidence, decorum and fantastic oracy skills.

On Wednesday 20th March, some of the Eco Team were able to present information about how we have actively sought to improve our Carbon Footprint at St.

Catherine's in front of a hundred adults at a Networking event for East Didsbury called Deeds Not Words. They were magnificent and were a true credit to the school! Last Friday 22nd March, Justin Neal (an Environmental Lawyer) came into school to talk to both KS1 & KS2 about World Water Day and to highlight the importance of clean water in our communities and how we need to protect our water ways.

Finally, this Thursday, the Eco Team will be organising an Eco Fair to promote a number of green initiatives. We are hoping to have a number of stalls from showing how to grow your own vegetables, to creating pledge cards, learning to upcycle by sewing, a toy and book swap and some climate activities.



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Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)



Dear parents and carers,

Finance update

St Patricks Day celebration – £264.50

Your School Lottery since Sept – £360.50

Amount raised since Sept – £6,961.66



New Logo

Our PTA team have worked hard to come up with a new logo to represent our wonderful PTA! We love the unity shown within the new logo and we send all our thanks to everyone who supports our PTA and is able to get involved with 'making our school shine brighter' (written by Mrs Quiligotti).



UPCOMING EVENTS:

Break the Rules Day

For one day only on Friday 26th April, the children will be allowed to break some school rules!! Form will be sent home after Easter.

Bag2school

The next Bag2school collection will take place on Friday 26th April. Remember to leave your donations in the church porch by 9am on the day.

School Disco

We are so excited to have DJ Dom back for our last discos of the year on Friday 10th May. As always we will need many volunteers on the day, please get in touch with Marian or your school rep if you are able to help.

Coffee Morning

Our next coffee morning will take place on Friday 17th May, hosted by Year 2 and Year 3.

Rainbow Day

To celebrate the end of term on Friday 24th May there will be a non-uniform day. Children are invited to wear the colours of the rainbow for a £1 donation – The Brighter the Better!!

Parent and Teacher Association (PTA)



ONLINE FUNDRAISERS

Your School Lottery

Congratulations to our recent local draw winners, the more people that play the bigger our weekly guaranteed prize will be!!!

<https://www.yourschoollottery.co.uk/lottery/school/st-catherines-r-c-primary-school>



Easy Fundraising

<https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/stcatherinesdidsbury/>

Easy Fundraising is a great way you can help raise funds for school whenever you shop online without costing you a penny! Use Easy fundraising to shop with over 7,000 brands including Amazon, John Lewis, Tesco, Currys, Asda, Apple and many more – when you shop you will raise a free donation for St Catherine's every time. Its that easy, follow the link above to join today.

Gift Matching:

Please check with your employer to see whether you are eligible for Gift Matching as part of the company benefit. Your contributions towards fundraising activities for the PTA can often be matched either in full or in part by your employer.

Thank you for your continued support, have a wonderful Easter.

The PTA ❤️

PTA Committee

Chair – Marian Glorioso

Co Secretaries – Tina Fitzpatrick and Daniela Bartolo Romano

Treasurer – Katie Sammonds