

Attendance target: 95% Actual Attendance: ↓92.9%



# St Laurence Catholic Primary School



Spring 1 Newsletter - February 2024

*Through God's grace, a community growing in knowledge and understanding.*

*Ten:Ten Newsletter*



**Pope Francis** ✓  
@Pontifex

Emphasizing the importance of listening to the cries of the oppressed and confronting personal and societal idols, the Pope calls for a Lent marked by prayer, fasting, and communal action. **He envisions Lent as a season of renewal and hope, inviting believers to embark on a journey toward genuine freedom and solidarity.**

Dear Parents and Carers,

Spring is on its way and the Lenten season, of the church, has begun. We had a prayerful start, on Ash Wednesday, with a liturgy led by Fr. Simon. Of course, Shrove Tuesday was fun-filled with St. Laurence's pancake races. As well as having lots of fun, the children were raising money for this year's charity, Mary's Meals.

Thank you to the parents who joined us for the liturgy and to Mrs. Quail who supported Mrs. Harvey in organising and running the pancake races.

A couple of weeks ago, some of our children had the opportunity to meet and greet a very special visitor to Arbury—Queen Camilla. The queen was visiting Meadows Community Café and we were invited to be part of the welcoming party. Our children presented Queen Camilla with flowers, drawings and get well cards for King Charles and the Princess of Wales. See, inside, for some photos from the day.

Enjoy the half-term break with your family and friends!

Mrs McGhee Wallace and the St. Laurence Team

Committed to the words of Christ and the Gospel Values.



**Head of School**

Mrs McGhee Wallace

**Assistant Head**

Mrs Chalklin

**SENCo/Inclusion**

Mrs Harvey

**Our Classes**

**Wrens** Mrs Chalklin

**Skylarks** Miss Armstrong  
- Mortlock

**Kingfishers** Miss Tanvir/  
Mrs Thompson (Friday)

**Quails** Mrs Kitagawa

**Swallows** Miss Corcoran

**Doves** Mrs Groves

**Magpies** Miss Ward

**Owls** Mrs Tilley

**Kestrels** Mrs Prokop



**For yours and your children's safety, please do not enter the car park unless you have permission to do so, in your car.**

## TERM DATES

**Spring Term**

**Half-term week**

**Monday 19th February**

**PD Day**

**Monday 26th February**

**Pupils return**

**Tuesday 27th February**

**Term ends**

**Thursday 28th March**

**Administrative Officer**

Mrs Rokitnicka

**Administrative Assistant**

Miss Tu

**Caretaker**

Mr. Tapp



# ATTENDANCE

Why is attendance so important?



**EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS!**

Children are required by law to attend 190 school days per year. The Government states that every pupil's attendance should be at least 95%.

## HOW DO YOU MEASURE UP?

Attendance	Days Absent	Weeks Absent	Lessons Missed
95%	9 Days	2 Weeks	50 Lessons
90%	19 Days	4 Weeks	100 lessons
85%	29 Days	6 Weeks	150 lessons
80%	38 Days	8 Weeks	200 lessons
75%	48 Days	10 Weeks	250 lessons
70%	57 Days	11.5 Weeks	290 lessons
65%	67 Days	13.5 Weeks	340 lessons

89% and below  
Drastic effect on academic achievement



95% - 90%  
Cause for concern



100% - 96%  
Excellent





## Spring term in Wrens

Wrens have had a busy half term

where we have had opportunities to learn through a range of experiences.



## Space



We have learnt many new things about space including the names of the planets in our solar system, what stars are and how and why astronauts float in space. All of the Wrens sent their questions about space to Dr Tazzari's who then kindly came and answered them all and told us many more amazing facts about our solar system.



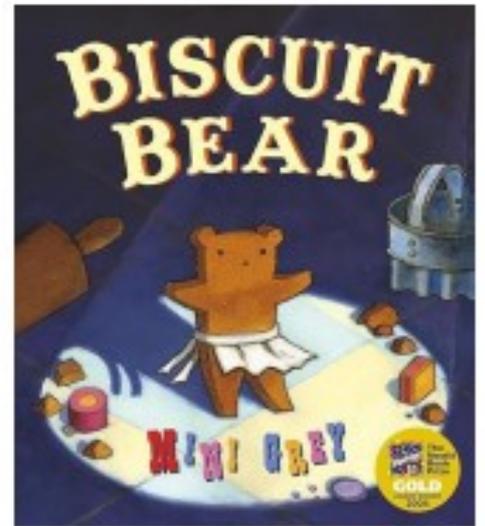
We have created our own planets...



...and counted down to rocket launch!

# Biscuit Bear

We shared the story of Biscuit Bear and baked and decorated our own biscuit bears. We used the story



to develop our own reading and writing.



# Lent

We have thought carefully about what Lent means and how we can all make changes for the good during the next 40 days before Easter. We will continue to reflect on this in the coming weeks.



Pancake races on Shrove Tuesday

## Skylark Class

What a busy, happy half-term we have had! It has been lovely to see how the Skylarks have been growing, and we have especially enjoyed our story time after lunch and keeping our new reading diary. A hit has also been our cat calendar, which has formed a very important new part of our morning routine. We have learned about the countries in the United Kingdom, and several children seem to be planning their family holidays already! We have also been getting creative, working on the backgrounds for our sketchbooks and then using these to complement our sketches for our architecture unit. These really do make our artwork look special.



I am pleased to note that I have been impressed by how Year One are working on being kind and helpful towards one another, and they are learning about the impact their kind words have on others, particularly in our writing unit for informal letters. It has been exciting to explore the new R.E curriculum together, and as well as listening and responding to stories from the Bible, other highlights have included our trip to visit the church, with the children being especially excited to see the stained-glass window in person.



Mrs M-J's singing lessons have been a real treat as well- what a wonderful way to begin our Wednesday mornings. Skylarks are always known for their beautiful singing, and the 2022 St. Laurence cohort is no exception!

Another half-term gone! Thank you for your continued support, especially when it comes to reading regularly at home, and have a lovely break.

Kingfishers have been working really hard this half term. They have produced some really lovely writing and especially enjoyed writing their non-chronological reports and formal invitations. The children have enjoyed learning about electricity in science and were especially interested in making circuits and experimenting with conductors and insulators. In Geography, we learnt about the British Isles and children used atlases to find out more facts. Finally, children did a wonderful job of painting their self-portraits and we were able to celebrate each child's uniqueness. Well done Kingfishers- we are all very proud of you!



# Quails



## Science lessons

In science, Quails class was learning about light, shadows and mirrors. We had a lot of fun using a laser to test if some school objects were opaque, transparent or translucent. We have also tested how images are formed in normal, concave and convex mirrors.

## Art lessons

In art, the children had very exciting lessons. They have made their own sphinx using clay and an Egyptian necklace using macaroni and conchiglie pasta. They had the opportunity to revise what they learnt in history last term.



## Geography and English

As children have learnt a lot about different rivers around the world, they used their knowledge to write a non-chronological report about three of their favourite rivers.

## Computing

Quails class has also enjoyed their topic in computing: scratch. They have learnt how to use sprites, costumes, sounds and backdrops. At the end of the term, they created their own project using all they have learnt and the result was amazing.



## Lent

As we started Lent, we have been following a Lent calendar with a variety of activities children can do to show kindness or to reflect during this very important period. One of them was to make a bookmark with the question Jesus has asked Simon Peter: Who would you say I am? Children reflected on the question and designed impressive bookmarks.

We hope you all enjoy your halfterm!

## Swallow Class

### Science

Our topic this term has been light. Working like scientists, the children planned and carried out an investigation to answer the question, 'Do shadows stay the same throughout the day?' The children had to think about the best ways to investigate things, how to make sure their investigation is fair, and how to record their findings.

### Art

The children have really enjoyed their art (Art of Egypt) topic this term. They created their own sphinx from clay and used pasta and paint to make Egyptian collars.

### Geography

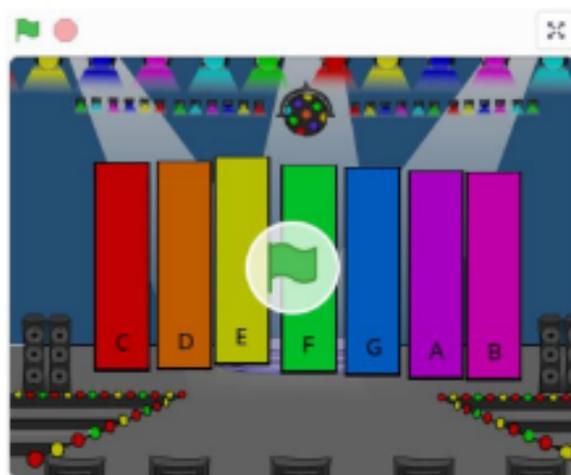
Swallow class has been studying the rivers of the world. As geographers they used maps and atlases to locate the river, the countries they journey through and described their features. We used a great AR app called (WWF Free Rivers) to bring rivers alive in the classroom. The children then used their knowledge to write a non-chronological report in their English lessons.

### Computing

The children have become computer coders this term. For their final project they made a representation of a piano. They created code so that when the keys on a computer were pressed music played.

### Dance

The children had great fun creating their machine dances! They enjoyed working individually, with a partner and in small groups, sharing their ideas. They developed their use of counting and rhythm. They also learned to use canon, unison, formation and levels in their dances.



One highlight this term has been our science topic, which has looked at light. We completed one experiment, measuring our shadows at different times of the day to see how the shadows lengthen or shorten according to the sun's movements. We then conducted a second class experiment looking at how light affects the growth of plants. This has resulted in many questions, which might spark further investigations. Some of our experimenters are pictured below!



A further highlight this term has been studying the Vikings and their fantastic longboats. It turns out that they really were good at conducting surprise raids on the unsuspecting English; unfortunately they really did not wear horned helmets!

## Doves Class



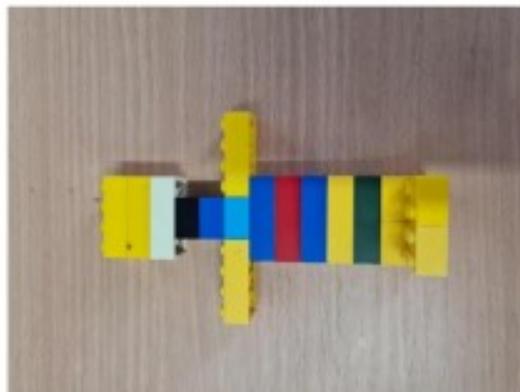


## Magpies

Magpies have had a busy, but short half-term. In January we started swimming lessons and the pupils are becoming increasingly confident, as the weeks go by. Recently we have been practicing the shout Rescue and butterfly legs. In Science we have used tomatoes to get seeds and we are hoping to grow our own tomatoes. The pupils are going to try different methods and see what works. RE has been very successful this term and the pupils have written their own bidding prayers and creeds. Many of the creeds were amazing, well thought out and used beautiful vocab to show their understanding and reverence for the subject.

## Lego Club

Over the past few weeks, the pupils have enjoyed making pictures, mazes, cars and robots. The pupils from different classes and year groups have been working together, but more importantly, talking , playing and sharing their ideas.





Owls class has had a wonderful and busy half-term. In our guided reading sessions, we delved into the inspiring book 'I am not a Label,' filled with captivating biographies of individuals who confronted and conquered unique challenges to pursue their dreams. These stories not only enhanced our learning but also provided valuable lessons in resilience, kindness, and teamwork. Meanwhile, in mathematics, the students dedicated their efforts to a focused study on fractions. Additionally, the students explored Australian and Egyptian cultures, weaving their discoveries into interesting and exciting narratives. The resilience displayed by the year 5's and 6's was particularly evident in their commitment to swimming and preparation for SATs. While there were numerous highlights throughout the term, two main standouts were the hands-on experience of dissecting a flower in Science and the creative process of crafting engaging quizzes on Scratch.

# Kestrels Class Spring 1 Newsletter



It has been busy and enjoyable half term in Kestrels class. All the children completed their assessments, and the results show really pleasing progress.

## English

During our English lessons, we have been reading "I Am not a Label", by Cerrie Burnell. The children read about disabled role models and discussed their unique lives. They were also tasked with writing a formal letter of application where they were able to demonstrate use of persuasive language.

## Ash Wednesday Liturgy

On Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> February, we shared a special afternoon. We attended Ash Wednesday Liturgy to mark the start of the holy season of Lent. In Kestrels, children received 2024 Lenten Calendars to support them in their preparations for Easter.

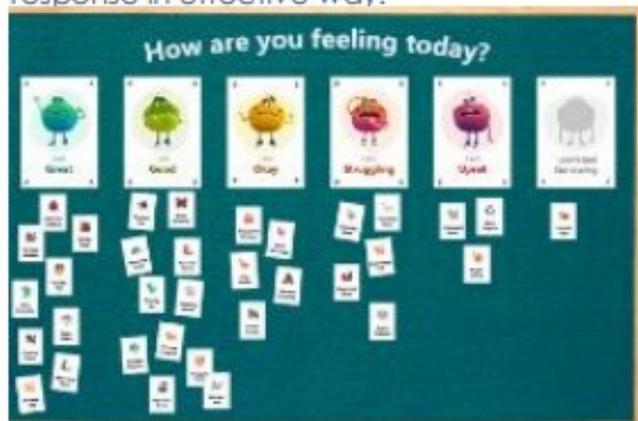
## RE

In RE, we have been learning about Sacraments as seven meeting points with God and we were talking about what happens at Holly Mass.



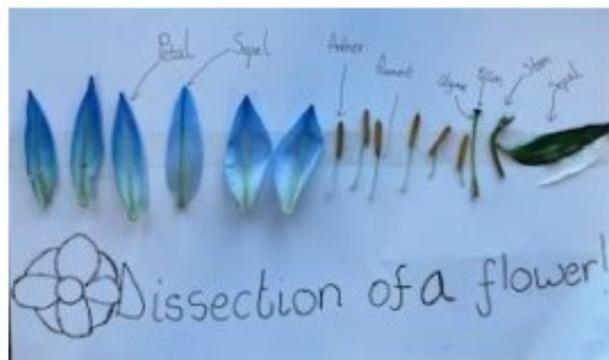
## Emotion Coaching

As a part of our emotion coaching approach, we have introduced the TEAMS emotions board to help children to recognise their feelings and emotions and help them to respond in an effective way.



## Science

This term, we have been learning about the plants and animals' life cycles and writing biography of famous Scientist. The children enjoyed learning about structure of the flower and dissection activity.





## *St Laurence SEND Newsletter*



Welcome to the St Laurence SEND Newsletter!

In this newsletter this half term:

- Link to the Cambridge County Council Transformation News
- Results from Parent Questionnaire
- Dr. P Knightsmith – Pooky Ponders
- EIFA Support Sessions

## Cambridge County Council Transformation News

Cambridge County Council have released their SEND Transformation News SWAY. This is an update for Parents & Carers, Schools and Professionals in the SEND System. It aims to update everyone involved in SEND about the work taking place in Cambridge.

The link is : <https://sway.cloud.microsoft/zGbjGUEkm5WcVLii?ref=Link&loc=play>

The News Sway contains lots of useful information and a link to a parent survey to feedback to the Local Authority.

## St Laurence Parent Questionnaire for SEND

Thank you to the parents who completed the SEND questionnaire last month. The results will be fed back to the Governing Body and used to inform some of the actions in the SENCo action plan.

Results show that the majority of parents understand how the school provides for children with SEN and that the policy and website contain useful information for pupils. Parents know who to raise concerns with and feel that these are quickly addressed.

Areas to improve upon include access to extra-curricular activities and visits and listening to how children feel about their learning in school.



### Pooky Ponders!

Dr Pooky Knightsmith has an informal but informative podcast called "Pooky Ponders", in which she explores questions related to mental health and special needs. Sometimes it's deep, sometimes it's funny, it will always make you think

<https://www.buzzsprout.com/1183931>

## Education Inclusion Family Advisor (EIFA)

Amanda Gilbert is the school's Education Inclusion Family Advisor (EIFA). EIFA's offer families offer information, advice and support on any issue affecting your family life

The EIFA team are currently offering a range of online workshops. They welcome any parent/carer with children in primary schools.

- **Digital/internet safety 27 February 2024 (12:00-13:00)** A workshop that considers why children and young people use digital technology and explains how we can keep them safe. Also, we will explore strategies to create and maintain digital boundaries and avoiding screen time battles.
- **Supporting your child with feelings of worry - Tuesday 5 March 2024 (12:00 - 13:30)** A workshop that explores the definition of anxiety, its purpose and how it may affect children including advice around supporting children to understand how they are feeling and some strategies that may help them to manage these feelings.
- **Supporting your child with feelings of anger – Tuesday 12 March 2024 (12:00 - 13:30)** A workshop that explores angry feelings including what is happening in our brain when we feel angry, how to explain this to children and some useful strategies to use when we have this difficult feeling.
- **Sleep -Tuesday 19 March 2024 (12:00-13:00)** A workshop that explores some common sleep difficulties, looks at sleep hygiene, bedtime routines and suggests some strategies that may help support your child to get a good night sleep.

To book a place on any of the workshops, please use the link: [Parenting Courses](#)

## Contact Us



If you have any questions or concerns, or would just like to talk please contact the school

**Mrs V Harvey Working Days:**

**Mon-Fri**

[office@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:office@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk)<sup>1</sup>

[senco@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk](mailto:senco@stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk)<sup>2</sup>

01223 712227

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Visit us on the web at <https://www.stlaurence.cambs.sch.uk/>

## Pancake Races with the Mini Vinnies!

Luckily rain didn't stop play for the Pancake Races this year as we were able to run the KS2 races in the morning and host the EYFS and KS1 races in the hall.

The Mini Vinnies did a great job of demonstrating and organising the races and a lot of enjoyment was had!

The event raised an impressive £235 for Mary Meals and was a great way to start our Lenten alms giving.

Thank you to all the families that contributed donations and a special "Thank You" to Mrs Quail who supported the Mini Vinnies.



# Lent and Holy Week 2024

Ash  
Wednesday

FEB  
14



*There are 5 Sundays of Lent:*

FEB  
18

First

FEB  
25

Second

MAR  
3

Third

MAR  
10

Fourth

MAR  
17

Fifth

Palm  
Sunday

MAR  
24

Holy  
Thursday

MAR  
28

Good  
Friday

MAR  
29

Holy  
Saturday

MAR  
30



Easter  
Sunday

MAR  
31

Prayer

Sacrifice

Fasting

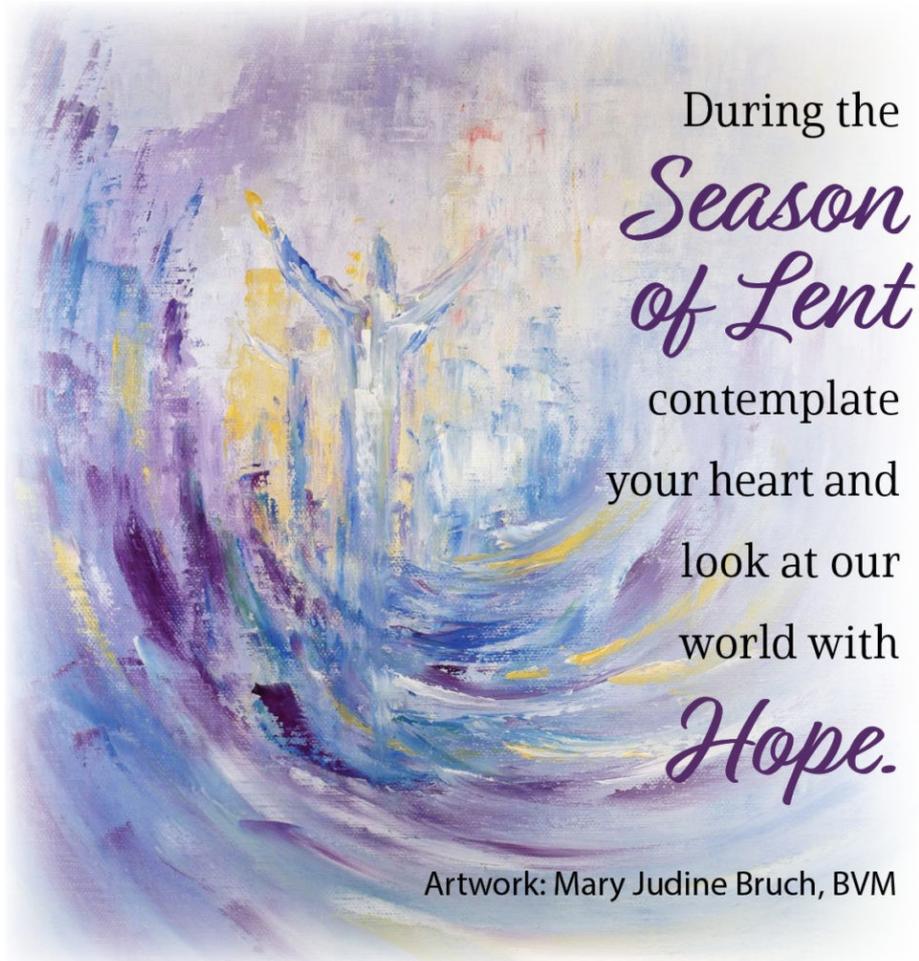
Reconciliation

Penance

Almsgiving

# Lent

*“Because of the increase of iniquity, the love of many will grow cold” (Mt 24: 12)*



During the  
*Season  
of Lent*  
contemplate  
your heart and  
look at our  
world with  
*Hope.*

Artwork: Mary Judine Bruch, BVM

# **WARNING**

**WE WILL NOT  
TOLERATE PHYSICAL  
OR VERBAL  
ABUSE TOWARDS  
OUR STAFF**

Sadly, a minority of parents continue to be abusive and threatening towards our staff team. This will not be tolerated.

We have taken advice from Cambridgeshire Police and they have advised us to report this type of incident as a crime, each time it happens.

***If you demand to see a member of staff, refuse to leave the school when asked or verbally/physically threaten a member of staff, you will be reported to the police.***