



Attendance target: 95% Actual Attendance: <sup>↑</sup>93.3%



# St Laurence Catholic Primary School

Spring 2 Newsletter - March 2024

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

*Ten:Ten Newsletter*



**Pope Francis**   
@Pontifex

Prayer is the foundation of our evangelization efforts because, as Pope Francis reminds us, **“when evangelizers rise from prayer, their hearts are more open; freed of self-absorption, they are desirous of doing good and sharing their lives with others”** (Evangelii Gaudium, 282).

Dear Parents and Carers,

We have had a lovely term with all of our Lenten preparations, finished off with Y4's wonderful Passion Play. Thank you to Miss Corcoran and her team for preparing the children so well and thank you to those parents, carers and friends of St. Laurence who came to watch the play and support our performers.

All of our fundraising, this Lent, has been for Mary's Meals, our chosen charity. At the last count, and we're still counting, you and your children have helped us to raise more than £500 which is an impressive sum. Thank you for your generosity, especially in these challenging times when finances are stretched for so many.

We have also had some staff changes in UKS2. Mrs Tilley has returned to New Zealand but Mrs Watson (previously in Kingfishers) has very kindly agreed to return to our school and to work on OWls. We warmly welcome her back.

Enjoy the Easter 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 Watson

**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**

**Easter Break**

**Monday 1st April -  
Thursday 11th April**

**PD Day**

**Friday 12th April**

**Pupils return**

**Monday 15th April**

**Administrative Officer**  
Mrs Rokitnicka

**Administrative Assistant**  
Miss Tu

**Caretaker**  
Mr. Tapp



# ATTENDANCE

Why is attendance so important?

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

TRAUMA  
INFORMED  
SCHOOLS  
TRUK Award winning school



**EVERY SCHOOL DAY COUNTS!**

89% and below  
Drastic effect on  
academic achievement



95% - 90%  
Cause for concern



100% - 96%  
Excellent







## Spring term in Wrens

What a lovely time of year!



Wrens have been learning about how the natural world changes and grows during early spring. We have also reflected on how we all grow and change during Lent, as we grow closer to Jesus through our prayers and actions in the lead up to Easter.

## Growing and Changing



We all enjoyed our class trip to the University Botanic Garden. We learnt about many different types of trees and explored the natural habitats of both the UK and tropical countries.



We have also written our own Lenten pledges and renewed these each week as we move closer to Jesus through our actions and prayers.





## 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.



Kingfisher class have been working hard this half term. In English, they have learnt how to write a story from another culture. They started by learning about the culture of Trinidad and were interested to find out about the really hot peppers they have there. Lots of children wrote about a child accidentally eating a pepper instead of the delicious street food they were searching for. Oh no!

They have also enjoyed reading the book 'The Rhythm of the Rain' by Grahame Baker-Smith which describes the water cycle using very poetic language. We were glad, however, that there was no sign of rain for our school trip to Anglesey Abbey. After learning about plants in science, the children enjoyed exploring the beautiful winter garden and spotting signs of spring, including lots of ladybirds! They had a fantastic time playing in the woodland play area and den building in the woods. They were so cheerful and enthusiastic all day and we were so proud of them.

In other news, Kingfishers have also worked hard on their art and D.T this term. They created beautiful paintings of a boat out on the stormy sea and also designed and sewed their very own pencil cases.

Finally, after writing their lenten promises at the start of Lent, the children have done some great thinking about how they can make positive changes in their own lives. They have continued their learning about God's forgiveness and have written some lovely prayers using language of reconciliation. The children reflected beautifully on the story of the Last Supper and continue to grow in love during Holy Week as we prepare for Easter.





### English and Science lessons

This half term, Quails had exciting science lessons. We learnt that all plants are different and, therefore, need different things to thrive. All the children had the opportunity to choose which flower they wanted to grow and they have been very excited watching them germinate. In English, as we were learning how to write advanced instructional texts, they used the experience of planting their seeds to write their own instructions on how to grow a plant.

### Science week

Quails class really enjoyed their VR workshop during the science week. They had fun interacting with insects and reinforcing what they had already learnt about a butterfly life cycle and pollination. At the end, they could explore a virtual museum and got to know more interesting facts about animals.



### Geography and History

In geography, children were very excited to learn about the South West of England. We talked about its natural beauty, interesting places to visit, the local food and tourism besides learning about erosion and how it shaped the Jurassic coast. In the last lesson, the children created leaflets to show all the information they have learnt. In history, we continued our topic Anglo-Saxons and Vikings. Everyone was curious to know more about these two people that were part of the British history. I was very proud and impressed to see how much they remember about all the lessons.

### Passion Play

For Year 4s, in particular, this was a very special half term as they were in charge of performing the Passion Play. With the help and dedication of Ms. Corcoran, the children rehearsed every week and are almost ready to perform the play for parents and the rest of the school. They have all put a lot of effort and hard work into it, so we hope everyone will enjoy it!

Have a restful Easter Break!

## Swallow Class



Here are some of the highlights from Swallow Class this term.

### Science

The children had great fun during science week. They enjoyed getting dressed up as a scientist and talking about all the different careers you can have in science. Swallow class also enjoyed getting up close with some fascinating garden invertebrates during their VR workshop. They were able to meet some incredible beetles and insects and view the world from their perspective.

### Reading

We have all loved our class book this term, Operation Gadgetman by Malorie Blackman. For World Book Day, the children loved getting into the role of the characters from the book. Just like the book, the children wrote coded letters and learned to write with invisible ink and take fingerprints.

### Music and Geography

The children have enjoyed learning all about the South West of England. We have learnt about its natural beauty, interesting places to visit, the local food and tourism. They particularly liked learning about the Jurassic coast and Mary Anning, the fossil hunter, and learning to sing Sea Shanties.

### RE

The period of Lent is always a special time at St Laurence. The Year 3s have been very excited getting ready for their first Lenten Activities and the Year 4s have been stars at practising for the Passion Play.



Dress as a Scientist Day



Doves class enjoyed World Book Day this half-term! Everyone had a good go at dressing up – see below. We focused our activities around our class book, Operation Gadgetman. This is a spy/detective story by Malorie Blackman that is both well-written and engaging. During the day we made our own spy-kits containing Fake Detective IDs, Secret Agent Cards, fingerprints, disguises, pea-shooters and bombs! We really enjoyed having adults join us at the end of the day to listen in on a reading lesson and to share this great story, although we asked them to leave before we set our bombs off!







## Magpies

Magpies have been busy getting their Lenten activities ready. We have been looking at the stations of the cross in RE and the pupils were fantastic at remembering the stations and some have written a prayer based on the themes, such as forgiveness.

Magpies have been enjoying the swimming sessions and every child has improved, especially in their confidence and this will keep them safe. In the last session the pupils were using their knowledge and skills to swim lengths of the whole pool, which was a challenge for them.

Finally, as we studied life cycles in science and Miss Ward has an allotment, the class have been growing their own tomatoes and potatoes. The class will also get the chance to grow peppers and strawberries as well.





Owls class have been working on biography writing for the last two weeks. They have been writing a biography about Mae Jemison, the first black female astronaut to orbit the moon in the space shuttle challenger. We have been working on editing and improving our work.

In science we have been learning about forces and are making parachutes to test whether the size of the parachute makes a difference to the speed at which it descends.



# Kestrels' Spring Newsletter

It has been short but very busy half term in Kestrel's class. Not only children have successfully completed assessment week but also had two days when they had an opportunity to dress up and enjoy learning.

On World Book Day, they came to school dressed up as their favourite book character and were sharing tips for enjoying reading. They were even making their own mini books about reading for pleasure.



Science week this term was an amazing opportunity for the children to learn about different roles in the STEM field. They dressed up as scientists working in different fields, really showing off



their creative sides!

They also took part in a VR session, where they were able to explore the entire solar system, in the virtual world.

In our science lessons, the children have been learning about forces. The class applied everything they had learned about gravity, air resistance and surface area and created their very own parachutes, which they were able to test out.

With Easter fast approaching, the children have been reflecting on the themes of 'Giving, praying and fasting'. On Fridays, they took part in collective worship, completing the Stations of the Cross, and created this prayer garden.



The children all made a Lenten Promise and have been busy preparing their Lenten activities, to raise money for the Mary's Meals charity.

**Wishing you a blessed Easter Break!**





Mrs Harvey asks that you check your Parent Mail as there have been a few SEND related emails sent out to parents, with various offers, in recent weeks.





## The Season of Lent

The season of Lent at St Laurence is always a special time, and as we approach the Easter break the days are getting longer, the school grounds are covered in daffodils and there is an anticipation for the Summer term ahead.

We started our Lent preparation with our annual Pancake Race organised by the Mini Vinnies. Despite a wet day the children were unperturbed and kept the enthusiasm going for all of the races, having to finally concede to finish in the hall for our Reception races.

We welcomed Fr Simon to school who led our Ash Wednesday service, and we are lucky to have Fr Simon back at the end of our term to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation, the first in school for our First Communion candidates.

Our main Lenten fundraising takes place in the last week of term, where every KS2 class takes responsibility to create fundraising stalls. The Mini Vinnies got ahead of the game with a toy sale and flower stall, just in time for Mother's Day. This, alongside the Pancake races have raised just over £300 for Mary's Meals which is our chosen charity this Lent.



We will end our term with our Passion Play, an event which sets the tone of Holy Week perfectly. Miss Corcoran our LKS2 lead, starts the children's preparation with the Stations of Cross (using our lovely outdoor stations) and then leads the children through the meditative performance. The play has an enormous impact on the school community and parents alike and it is the perfect start to our Holy Week.



A Happy a Holy Easter to everyone in the Trust from St Laurence!

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

# *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



DIOTN





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