

13th October 2023

Dear Parents

The news this week has been very upsetting. We try to create a safe haven at school for the children to protect them from the most traumatic news, while sensitively praying for any countries in conflict. Praying for peace is all we can do.

This week has been another busy one with plenty of sickness including Covid going around. Attendance is still good however at 96.7% (nationally it is 93.1%).

I attended a phonics course on Monday with Mrs Duffy, our early reading leader and it was very useful to hear the latest information about phonics teaching from Read Write Inc (RWI). I look forward to sharing some of this information with Reception parents next week at our Literacy meeting.

Playtimes and the Playground – We had our OPAL audit in school on Wednesday and a development meeting on Friday. We have begun an action plan to develop our ideas. You'll be hearing more about this after half term. Please look on GoogleClassroom/Tapestry for a link to a pupil survey which I'd like completed by next Friday.

Show Racism the Red card – Friday 20th October – Sadly no one has contacted me about the racism their child has experienced in the playground (which was mentioned in the OPAL parental survey), so I am unable to do anything about this other than a general conversation about racism at assembly which I did today. I spoke about the racism my husband and his family have experienced as Black Caribbean people. We will have an opportunity to show racism the red card by wearing red next Friday. This could be red from head to toe, or a small item such as a hair ribbon or red pair of socks. If you don't have a complete red outfit, please wear own clothes. We want all children to love the skin you're in!
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d-diB65scQU>

Assemblies – On Monday Mrs Tottle-Nugent led an awards assembly as we had missed Friday's due to the hall being used for the flu vaccine.

On Tuesday Mrs Duffy spoke to the Infants about Black History Month, but that at St Monica's this is not relegated to one month a year, we celebrate all year round. Mrs Duffy introduced the children to Floella Benjamin the Trinidadian-British actress, singer, presenter, author and politician. We learnt that Floella and her family moved to England when she was a young girl and how she was the first presenter on TV to wear beads in her hair. She then read Floella's children's book 'Coming to England', where the children heard that it took a while for Floella to feel welcomed to the country. Mrs Duffy then went on to talk about how we welcome all new pupils to St Monica's.

On Tuesday at hymn practice, I spoke to the children about why we have a Black History Month in the UK. See if your child can tell you why. You can see some more information about British Black History and listen to the catchy song here <https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbbc/curations/black-history-month>. If you'd like a useful video which explains discrimination in a way children can understand, watch this video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6uXqJA-VfjI>. It is only through education that racism in all its forms can be eradicated.

One of our main school priorities this year is to continue to support children to exceed in maths. We are well above the national levels at the end of KS1 and KS2 but only marginally for our more able pupils. Mrs Hindle is continuing to hold regular assemblies about maths for our KS2 children. On Wednesday she celebrated the successes children had had with their times tables challenges and encouraged more children to practise with TT Rock Stars.

Creation Competition at St Monica's Church – Congratulations to Imelda Myers and Frances Sommerville who won the 7yrs and under competition and Ava Myers and Albie Farrell who won the 8-12yrs category! All the winners were given t-shirts with hedgehogs on, and many children from the 10.30am Mass were given pencils with seeds at the end which you plant and grow!

Harvest Festival – A total of £360.40 was raised for the St Monica's Food Bank. Thank you all!

Reception starting school September 2024 – If you have a child due to start school next September, the online portal to apply for a place can be found here www.eadmissions.org.uk. We have open afternoons when you can visit and find out more about the paperwork we need to apply for a place – check out our website and let your friends know too <https://www.st-monicas.enfield.sch.uk/admissions/>

The Friends' Quiz Night – I am looking forward to marking the quiz answers tonight (much easier than answering the questions!) Mr and Mrs Tottle-Nugent have written another excellent quiz and we're looking forward to a fun evening tonight. Doors open 7pm for a 7.30pm start.

Diary Dates

Friday 13th Oct 7.30pm – Friends Quiz Night – please see above

Thursday 19th 1pm – Nurses return to give remaining children their flu nasal spray vaccine

Thursday 19th 7pm – Literacy meeting for Reception parents

Friday 20th 9.15am – repeat of Literacy meeting for Reception parents

Friday 20th – Show racism the red card – children to wear something red or own clothes – see above

Thursday 2nd Nov 8pm – The Friends AGM via zoom - Information has been sent out today.

I hope you all have a lovely weekend.

Kind regards
Kate Baptiste
Headteacher