

September 23

Dear Parents and Carers,

It is a delight to welcome you back after the summer break and I wish an especially warm welcome to our families and children who join us in Ash and Oak class; we are delighted to have you join our school and look forward to providing the very best education for your children. The start of a new school year is always an exciting time as we embark on a new year of learning, and I would like to say a huge thank you to the staff who worked so hard during the summer, preparing classrooms and planning exciting learning opportunities for the year ahead.



As we start this new school year, I am delighted and excited to be able to share the outcome of the Ofsted inspection held at the beginning of July. During an inspection, Ofsted grade five different areas: quality of education; behaviour and attitudes; personal development; leadership and management; and early years' provision. I am delighted to say that the school was graded **GOOD** in **all five** categories. This is a fantastic result and I would like to thank the staff, governors, volunteers, parents and children for their unwavering dedication and support. Once again, I am so proud to be the headteacher of this amazing school and to be a part of the community we serve, and I look forward to working alongside each and every one of you to continue to provide the excellent education our children deserve.



*“Leaders provide clear vision and set high expectations. They ensure consistency across the school. Leaders’ focus on the educational outcomes of pupils is relentless. They want every child to be successful.” Ofsted, July 2023*

*Mrs Dowdeswell*



### **Feast of the Holy Cross**

A huge thank you to the children who represented the school at the Feast of the Cross Mass at Holy Rood Church on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> September and also to Year 6 who prepared Mass for the school on Friday 15<sup>th</sup>. Fr Lucas kindly came to celebrate Mass with us and it was a joyous occasion to start our new year.

### **Harvest**

Our Harvest Mass will be led by the Year 5 children at Holy Rood Church on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October at 5:30pm. This is an important celebration for the school and supports our Catholic Social Teaching principles for this term of Stewardship and Human Dignity. In school, the children will be learning the importance of looking after God’s world and treating His people with respect and dignity and all children are invited to attend with their families as we join together to celebrate. All children are asked to wear their school uniform to this event and Friday 13<sup>th</sup> October will be a non-uniform day so that parents can wash uniform etc ready for the Sunday. We have chosen the Swindon Food Collective as our charity again this year as they work tirelessly to help the families of Swindon, providing food parcels to those in need. Here is a link should you wish to find out more about the very worthwhile work they do, and also how to receive a donation should you need to: <https://www.swindonfoodcollective.org/>. See the final pages of this newsletter for all the information you need, including the items specifically requested by the food bank. Last year your generosity allowed us to donate over 30 crates of food and other household items – I wonder if we can match that this year?!



***Learn, Grow, Love, Live***

## School Uniform



The children have returned to school looking very smart in their new school uniform and I thank you for ensuring the children look their very best when representing the school.

A few reminders:

- School shoes and not trainers should be worn (unless a PE day).
- PE uniform consists of a plain white or white with the Holy Cross logo t-shirt and black shorts or jogging bottoms. Football strips or brightly coloured tops or leggings are not to be worn.
- For health and safety reasons, no jewellery should be worn, other than a watch and one pair of stud earrings. **No necklaces** – including scapulars are to be worn.
- Hair must not be highly stylised; long hair should be tied up; and no artificial colour should be in the hair. Some children have returned from the summer break with coloured weaves and/or dye in their hair or tram lines cut into the hair. Please refer to our uniform policy which states:

**Hair must always be neat and clean. Exceedingly long or short hair or hair which is artificially highly coloured or stylised will be commented upon and a change requested. For boys: hair should be no longer than meets the top of the collar and no shorter than a No 2 haircut in a standard style. For girls: long hair should be tied back e.g. pony tail, plaits. Hair decorations are not permitted.**

- Please do label all of your child's belonging so that lost property can be reunited with the rightful owner.

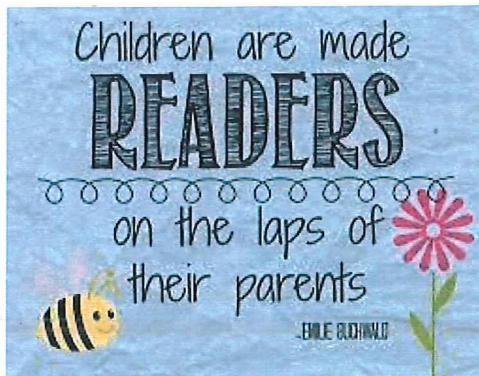
## Parents' Evenings

Parents' Evenings will take place on Tues 7<sup>th</sup> and Thurs 9<sup>th</sup> November. This is an important opportunity for you to see how your child has settled into their new class, meet their new teacher if you haven't already done so, and to see what your child is learning so that you can support them at home. Once the time slots have been opened, a PING will be sent. We look forward to seeing you all on these evenings and sharing some of the fantastic learning your children have done in class.

## Swimming – Year 5

We are pleased to be able offer swimming lessons to our Year 5 Alder class children from Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> September. Please ensure your child brings a swimming costume or trunks, a towel and a swimming hat for girls with long hair. Also, it is easier for girls to wear socks rather than tights on the days they swim as it is quicker when changing. Payment for swimming is made via ParentPay and children should participate in every lesson. A note from parents will be needed if a child is unable to swim on a particular week.






### Reading

Sharing a book with your child is such a precious gift of parenthood and one that is really only with us for a relatively short while. I know we all busy and that lives can be hectic, but please do remember to read with your child at every opportunity. This is one of my favourite lines from the recent Ofsted report: *“Pupils become confident, fluent readers with a love of reading. They enjoy talking about their favourite books and authors. ‘When you read, it takes you to somewhere else, somewhere different,’ is a typical comment from pupils.”* Ofsted, July 2023

**Let's work together to encourage our children to be great readers!**

### Clubs

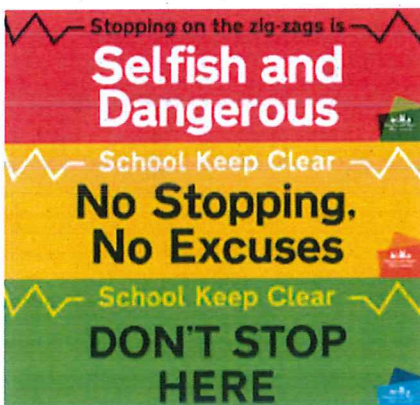
Clubs will be starting shortly and a separate letter shall come out telling you what clubs are available for your children to join. Many of our clubs are run by our staff on a voluntary basis and I once again thank them for all they do for the children of the school. 

### Website

<https://www.holycross.swindon.sch.uk/>

Please remember to regularly visit our website as all important information about the school is on there. We also have individual class pages so that you can see what your child has been doing in school and there is important information about your child's learning so that you can support them at home. Every class page has the details of learning for the current term so that you can share your child's learning experiences. Have a look at the one for your child's class and see what you can do at home to support your child – I promise you, you can have great fun and learn together 😊

### Parking



We are pleased to advise that the police and local traffic enforcement officers will continue to work with the school and our parents to ensure that there is no illegal or dangerous parking outside the school. We are extremely lucky to have the arrangement with STFC for parents to use the County Ground car park during school drop-off and pick-up times and we urge all parents to use this and NOT park outside of the school. The police and the traffic enforcement officers have agreed to attend on a regular basis and several parking fines have already been issued to parents who have parked illegally. I know that you all agree that the safety of our children is paramount and we thank you for helping us to support the safety of our children by parking safely at all times.

### Volunteers

If you are interested in volunteering at the school, please do speak to Mrs Fernandes in the office, or email [admin@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:admin@holycross.swindon.sch.uk). We are so grateful to our existing volunteers who come into school to listen to children read, help with DT, accompany the children swimming, help in the lunch hall and so much more. This can be extremely rewarding for you and also helps the children of our school in so many ways. We would be very happy to hear from you if you feel you would be able to give a few hours to help our school community. Thank you so much.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER - MAKE A DIFFERENCE



### Definition of cultural capital:

- The values, knowledge or ideas that parents can pass on to their children, which can then influence their success at school and later in life.

### Cultural Capital

In school, we work so hard to give the children as many first-hand experiences as we can; however, we would love for the children to experience more. The term 'cultural capital' refers to the real-life experiences children have with their families, and these experiences have been proven time and again to have a huge impact on a child's learning. Let me give you an example: if a child has gone on an autumn walk and picked conkers, acorns and sycamore seeds (helicopters); seen the leaves change colour and fall; seen

that some leaves change colour but others do not; heard the rustle as they walk through them; felt the change in temperature and moisture in the air – they will be able to draw upon this when they are reading or writing about autumn or the changes in seasons. Whilst you might say that this could be learnt from a book or online, the chance to experience it first-hand allows the children to see, touch, smell, and hear the effects of autumn and this is what cultural capital is all about. During the recent TD Day, we discussed ways in which we could promote and highlight such opportunities for our families, and staff came up with the idea of including some useful places to visit within the newsletter. I thought this was an excellent idea and so here are the first few ideas:



### Coate Water Country Park

As headteacher, I have a 'challenge' that runs alongside a theme for each of my assemblies. Earlier in the year, the theme was the wildlife that I had photographed whilst at Coate Water. During a visit, I wonder if your child could show you the following: a heron, a cormorant, a young swan, a black swan (yes, there is one there!), a squirrel and a robin. You could make up an 'eye spy' list to see how many they can cross off. The conkers are out now and children always have great

fun finding these and running through the leaves as they look for them. Could they use the internet or a book to find out what a conker is and why the leaves fall from the trees?

[https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20077/parks\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/487/coate\\_water\\_park](https://www.swindon.gov.uk/info/20077/parks_and_open_spaces/487/coate_water_park)

### Oh, I do like to be beside the seaside...

The current theme for my assembly is the seaside and we have learnt all about the following: promenades (prom); buckets, spades and sandcastles; rock pools; animals you might find at the seaside including jellyfish, seagulls, seals, crabs; and food you often find there – including sticks of rock, candy floss etc. Many of our children have never visited the beach and this would be a wonderful opportunity to help your child appreciate all that we are learning about during our Friday assemblies – I'm sure they will even sing you the song, if you ask them 🎵 The closest beaches to Swindon are Weston-Super-Mare and Bournemouth – autumn is a lovely time to visit a beach, so why don't you see if you could do a day trip during the October half term? 🍹



### Chedworth Roman Villa



Chedworth Roman Villa is a fantastic place to visit to find out all about the Romans. If your child is in Year 4, this is their topic this term and I know they would really enjoy a visit. There are so many hands-on things for children to do and they have special theme days during the October half term. Chedworth is owned by the National Trust and so there is an entry charge (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/gloucestershire-cotswolds/chedworth-roman-villa#place-prices>); however, there is no additional charge for the theme days.

I look forward to hearing from the children all about the exciting places they have been and how much they have learnt.

**Learn, Grow, Love, Live**

## **October - Black History Month**

6<sup>th</sup> October: School photos

9<sup>th</sup> October: Poetry Week

12<sup>th</sup> October: Nasal flu vaccinations

13<sup>th</sup> October: Non-uniform day

15<sup>th</sup> October: Harvest Festival at Holy Rood Church at 5:30pm – all families welcome

30<sup>th</sup> October: Anti-bullying workshops for all children.



## **November**

7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> November: Parents' Evenings

13<sup>th</sup> November: Anti-bullying Week

15<sup>th</sup> November: School disco (remember to buy your child's ticket before the deadline!) Details to follow.

17<sup>th</sup> November: Odd socks day

27<sup>th</sup> November: TD Day – school is closed to all pupils.

## **December**

1<sup>st</sup> December: Advent Service for pupils

6<sup>th</sup> December: Nativity performance at Holy Rood Church – parents invited. Times to follow.

8<sup>th</sup> December: KS2 to watch Snow White panto at the Wyvern.

13<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Fayre – all families invited.

15<sup>th</sup> December: Christmas Mass

*Lord Jesus,*

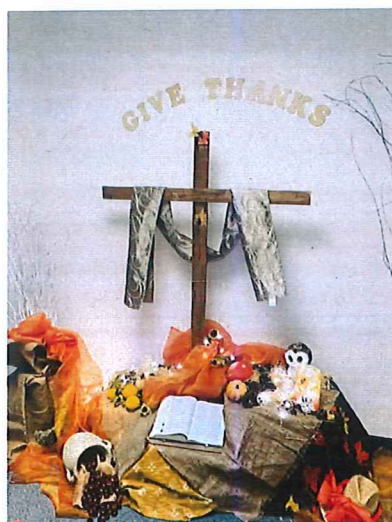
*We ask for Your help as we begin this new school year.*

*Allow us to experience Your presence in the many blessings You put before us.*

*Open our eyes to the new challenges and exciting opportunities that this new school year brings.*

*Open our hearts and minds to new friends and new teachers.*

*Amen.*



The prayer room at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School

## **Governors**

First of all, on behalf of the entire governing board, I would like to welcome all pupils and staff to a new school year at Holy Cross, whether you're returning, or joining Holy Cross for the first time, it is great to have you all in our school community.

Our opening message of the year cannot go without saying how delighted we all are with the results of our recent OFSTED inspection. Seeing Holy Cross upgraded to a GOOD rating across all measures is a fantastic result and recognises the hard work and dedication of all the staff and the leadership at Holy Cross who have worked tirelessly to improve our school for the good of our all our pupils. As a board we would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all the staff and pupils here at Holy Cross for the part they all played in this achievement.

The Governing Board now looks forward to the year ahead during which we will be focussing on a range of issues which affect the school. It is great to see the fruits of our efforts from last year to make improvements to the school grounds with the extension to the playground and the removal of the mound in the playing field; I hope you all agree that this is a huge improvement. Our thanks go out to the school Site Manager for all his work in making this possible as the additional space and will allow the school to make better use of the grounds for the benefit of our pupils.

Over the summer holiday, governors have held discussions with the Borough Council on the issue of road safety around our school, this is a safeguarding issue and something that we all take very seriously. As a result of these discussions, a new sign on Queens Drive has been installed to advise people that the pavement up to the school is not a cycle lane and we like to would remind everyone that cycling on the pavement and parking in the layby outside of the school is prohibited, not following these simple rules puts pupils, parents and carers at unnecessary risk. Parking arrangements are in place for parents to use the County Ground car park free of charge at drop off and pick up times and we urge you all to use this for the wellbeing of everyone. We will be continuing these discussions to identify other possible ways we may be able to improve road safety and we will continue to encourage both the Borough Council and the Police to enforce these rules and to issue fixed penalties where appropriate.

We would like to offer all the pupils and staff at Holy Cross our best wishes for the year ahead.

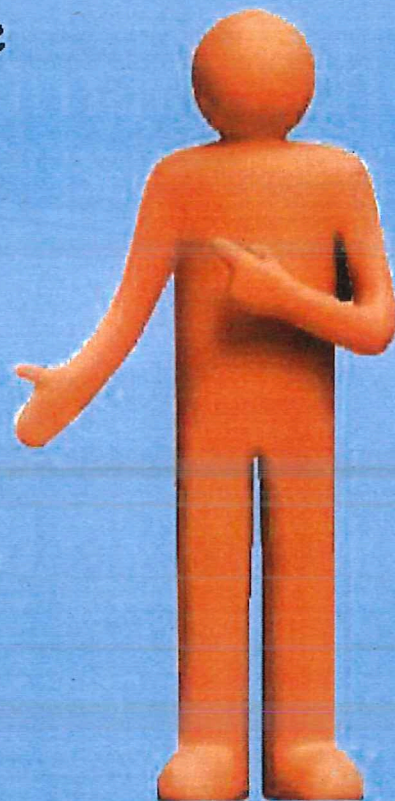
If you would be interested in joining the governing board, please contact Amelia Penfold on [apenfold@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:apenfold@holycross.swindon.sch.uk) and she will be happy to discuss this with you.

Alistair Flockhart  
Vice Chair of Governors

## Would you like someone else to make the Kid's Lunches Today?

- School meals could save you some **TIME** AND you don't have to look around in school bags for half eaten Sandwiches!

- Why not ask your school whether **you qualify**- or alternatively Call 01793 445500 or Email customerservices@swindon.gov.uk



You could be eligible for  
**Free School Meals!**



## **HARVEST SUNDAY** **15<sup>th</sup> October 2023 at 5:30pm**



At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School, we will be celebrating this year's Harvest time:

**Holy Rood Church**

**Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> October**

**5.30pm**

Children from Holy Cross will be leading the prayers, readings and singing.

Children are asked to **sit with their family** but wear school uniform to Church.

Children in **YEAR 5** will sit at the front of the Church.

Year 5 parents should join the main congregation.

There will be a second collection at the end of Mass and all monies collected will be donated to the Clifton Diocese Water Pump Project.

Click here to find out more:

**[Clifton Diocese Water Pump Project](#)**





At Holy Cross, we prepare for our Harvest Festival by collecting food for people in need in our town.

From **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October**, we are collecting for items for the Swindon Food Collective (Food Bank). We are asking for household goods and toiletries instead of food to help families protect themselves from infection and harm. The household goods and toiletries will be donated to Swindon Food Collective for distribution across the town.

Click here to find out more:

[Swindon's Local Food Bank](#)

## ITEMS NEEDED:

Regular sized Tins, Jars, Bottles, Cartons or Packets of the following:

- Potatoes;
- Meat;
- Fish;
- Tomatoes;
- Soup;
- Vegetables;
- Fruit;
- Puddings;
- Pasta Sauce;
- Cereals;
- Small Jars of Coffee;
- Tea;
- Small Bags of Sugar;
- Biscuits;
- 1L Bottles of Squash;
- Washing Up Liquid;
- Laundry Pods;
- 2 in 1 Shampoo & Conditioner;
- Male and Female Deodorants

*Worried about a Child?*

*Safeguarding and Child Protection*

*If you have a concern about the safety or well-being of a child please speak to one of our safeguarding team. In this school this is:*

Designated Safeguarding Lead



Contact details: Mrs S Dowdeswell  
[Head@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:Head@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Contact details: Mrs E O'Neill  
[oneill@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:oneill@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Contact details: Mrs G McDowall  
[gmcdownall@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:gmcdownall@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

Designated Safeguarding Lead



Contact details: Mrs T Moran  
[tmoran@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:tmoran@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



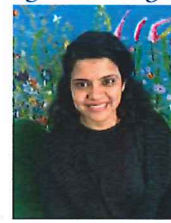
Contact details: Mr J Green  
[jgreen@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:jgreen@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Contact details: Mrs J Rutherford  
[jrutherford@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:jrutherford@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead



Contact details: Mrs M Silva  
[msilva@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:msilva@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

*Worried about the actions of an adult working/volunteering in the school?*

If your concern is about a member of staff, an adult volunteer or visitor please report to the Headteacher before leaving the site. If your concerns are about the Headteacher please contact the Chair of Governors as soon as possible.

Designated Safeguarding Lead



Contact details: Mrs S Dowdeswell  
[Head@holycross.swindon.sch.uk](mailto:Head@holycross.swindon.sch.uk)  
 01793 527679

Chair of Governors



Contact details: Mr P Kehoe  
[paul.kehoe@Clifftondiocese.com](mailto:paul.kehoe@Clifftondiocese.com)  
 07720 089526