

May 24

Dear Holy Cross families,

At long last the sun has made an appearance – phew, it seemed a long time coming this year! I hope you all managed to get out and about at the weekend to enjoy the sunshine and that your children were able to run around and enjoy some fresh air. We are delighted to have had the outdoor gym equipment fitted during the Easter holidays and as predicted, it is proving to be a big hit with the children of KS2. Being outdoors and being physically active has such a positive effect on our mental wellbeing and we are extremely fortunate to have such wonderful outdoor facilities at our school.



You might have noticed that we are developing a gardening area outside of the Y2 classrooms. If you have any unwanted gardening equipment that is in good condition (and suitable for children to use), please do let us know and we can say whether it would be useful for our gardeners. They will soon be planting beans and other vegetables which we hope to be able to use for our school dinners. The children are getting very excited at the prospect of growing their own vegetables 😊

The children are currently learning about Pentecost as we prepare for one of the most important feast days of the year that concludes the Easter season and celebrates the beginning of the Church.



¹ When the time for Pentecost was fulfilled, they were all in one place together. ² And suddenly there came from the sky a noise like a strong driving wind, and it filled the entire house in which they were. ³ Then there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each one of them. ⁴ And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them to proclaim. Acts 2:1-4

We look forward to 17th May, when Father Lucas and Y3 will lead the Pentecost Mass in school.

The children in KS2 continue to attend Mass at Holy Rood Church on a Thursday morning. If you are able to assist with walking the children to church, please speak to your child's class teacher – we are always grateful to all volunteers who help with this.

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Attendance

As you know, the government has introduced statutory guidance to improve attendance across all schools in the UK. Being in school and arriving on time is essential if your child is to receive the best education they deserve. I am pleased to say that nearly all of our families understand this and ensure their son/daughter is in school and arrives ready to start their school day at 8:45am. Thank you so much to those parents who ensure this happens every day – please know that you are doing the absolute best for your child and also teaching them the important life skill of being punctual.

Unfortunately, we still have some families who book holidays and trips abroad during term time. Please do not disadvantage your child by allowing them to miss school in this way – I am unable to authorise these absences and a fine will be charged by Swindon Borough Council. Children need to be in school by 8:45am so that they do not miss out on the initial part of their first lesson. Being late causes additional work in the office at what is already a busy time of the day; is disruptive for the teacher and children for whom the lesson has already begun; and often causes upset to the child who has to walk into class late.

As always, I thank you for supporting the school in this matter.

Days off school add up to lost learning

175 Non School Days a year

175 days to spend on family time, visits, holidays, shopping, household jobs and other appointments

0 DAYS ABSENCE (190 SCHOOL DAYS) 100% EXCELLENT ATTENDANCE Best chance of success	6 DAYS ABSENCE OR MORE 96.99% SATISFACTORY ATTENDANCE Harder to make good progress	15 DAYS ABSENCE OR MORE 92.99% REQUIRES IMPROVEMENT Less chance of success	19 DAYS ABSENCE OR MORE BELOW 90% CAUSE FOR CONCERN Serious concern possible Court Action
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Football

Huge well done to the boys' football team who finished the league in second place (although Mrs Dowdeswell and Mr Pidgeon believe they should have won it!). Their hard work and commitment to training really paid off and they have won game after game. They have an excellent team spirit and have really enjoyed both the home and away games. Huge thank you to Mr Pidgeon and the rest of the staff who have accompanied the boys to the games held across Swindon.



We were incredibly privileged to welcome Harrison Minturn and Shane Hewlett from STFC to the school last week. Harrison is a professional footballer for the first team and Shane is the Assistant Head of Foundation. Both took time out of their busy training schedule to come and talk to some of the children of our school. The children asked all about Harrison's life as a professional footballer and Shane said that during all his visits to primary schools, the Y5 children had asked some of the best questions he had heard.

The children enjoyed playing football and netball with Harrison and he in turn signed autographs for the children.



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Y6 SATS

This week sees the beginning of the KS2 SATs for Year 6 pupils. The children and staff have worked so hard in preparation for these tests, but it is important to keep in mind that this can be a stressful time for these children. If you feel that your child is becoming worried or anxious, please do tell their class teacher as soon as possible so that we can offer additional support to your child.

I was delighted to share breakfast with them this morning and tell them just how proud I was of each and every one of them – regardless of any test score. The letter on the back of this newsletter was given to each child and I would be so grateful if you could reiterate the words and sentiment it offers.

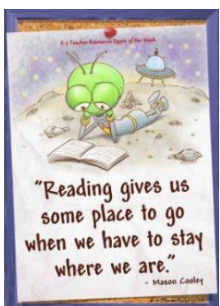
Year 6 PGL Trip

Once SATs are finished, it will soon be time for the Y6 residential to PGL. Many thanks to all those parents who have paid in full for this trip and I would be grateful if any outstanding monies/voluntary contributions are made as soon as possible. Further details of this trip will be sent separately, but I know the children will have an amazing time!

PFA

As you know, we run lots of extra-curricular activities at the school as we know the children enjoy these and benefit massively from attending and sharing fun times with their families. The summer fayre is one of the bigger events that we organise and we will need help to be able to run all of the stalls we have planned. If you are willing to help at the fayre, please could you email admin@holycross.swindon.sch.uk. We hugely appreciate your help and support.

Library



We are incredibly lucky to have two wonderful libraries in our school and I know the children all love to visit and select a book to take home and read. Please snuggle up and share the book at home with your child(ren). Also, please do enrol your child for the Summer Reading Challenge once details are announced. This is a scheme run by the library service and is a great way to keep your child

reading over the summer. A love of reading is one of the best gifts we can give to a child. 😊



Sponsored Walk

This year the sponsored walk will raise money to help us build our school garden. The children will raise as much money as they can through donations from family and friends and will come to school on that day in something colourful. Altogether they will resemble the many colours you would see in a garden of flowers, fruits and vegetables and will walk to raise money to build a school garden of our own. This removes the need for expensive costumes and will allow money to instead be donated to the garden fund. 🌸🌻🍓🍌

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Y5 Sleepover

Following the success of the Y6 sleepovers in previous years, we have decided to hold a sleepover for the Y5 pupils. This is a great opportunity for the children in Y5 to have the experience of sleeping away from home for a night before they go to the Y6 residential. Further information on this will follow shortly, but we strongly encourage children to attend as it is a great way to build confidence and independence. They will have a fantastic time (although, as any parent who had hosted a sleepover will understand, I cannot guarantee they will get much sleep!!).

Cultural Capital

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.

In school, we work 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 proved to have a huge impact on a child's learning. Here are some ideas of places to visit in and around Swindon which you might enjoy with your

child(ren).

Barbury Castle



Barbury Castle is an ancient iron-age hill fort that lies just outside of Chiseldon, Swindon. It is a great place for children to run off energy and especially good for kite-flying on a breezy day. There are some lovely spaces to enjoy a picnic and some great walks along the ridgeway path.

https://www.swindon.gov.uk/directory_record/8463/barbury_castle

Cotswold Country Park and Beach

This is a great day out and there is so much for the children to enjoy. From playing on the beach to swimming in the lagoon or playing on the adventure playground, this is a good day out for all the family. There are food outlets and water inflatables too. Please do visit the website for prices.

<https://www.cotswoldcountryparkandbeach.com/>



We hope you manage to get to visit some of the lovely places in and around our town during the coming half term break.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the staff for all they do for the pupils of Holy Cross Catholic Primary School and, as always, a thank you to our families for the ongoing support you show to the children and staff of our amazing school.

Mrs Dowdeswell

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DATES TO REMEMBER

Week beginning 13th May
Week commencing 3rd June
Monday 3rd June – 5th June
Friday 7th June
Week commencing 10th June
Thursday, 20th June
Wednesday, 3rd July
Friday, 5th July
Tuesday 9th July & 11th July
Wednesday, 17th July
Friday, 19th July
Thursday, 25th July
Thursday, 25th July

KS2 SATs
Year 4 multiplication tests
Year 6 residential trip to PGL
Y5 trip to Cotswold Wildlife Park
KS1 SATs
Sports Day
STFC Curriculum Day for Year 3, 4 and 5
Year 5 sleepover
Move-up day – classes meet their new teacher
Summer fayre
Sponsored Walk
End of year Mass
Last day of school. *We shall finish for all children at 1:15pm.*

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May 24



Dear Year 6,

Please remember, SATs are an opportunity to show all that you have learnt throughout your time at Holy Cross Catholic Primary School. But please know, that I am so very proud of you regardless of any score that you might or might not achieve; any answer you might or might not give; and any calculation you might or might not make. Do your very best and know that at every level, you are simply brilliant!

Mrs Dowdeswell

SATs don't measure sports
SATs don't measure art,
SATs don't measure music,
Or the kindness in your heart.

SATs don't see your beauty,
SATs don't know your worth,
SATs don't see the reasons,
You were put upon this earth.

SATs don't see your magic,
How you make others smile,
SATs don't time how quickly,
You can run a mile.

SATs don't hear your laughter,
Or see you've come this far,
SATs are just a tiny glimpse,
Of who you really are.

So sitting at your table,
With a pencil and your test,
Remember SATs aren't who you are,
Remember **you're the best!**

Father in Heaven

Be with me as I take these tests.

Keep my mind alert and my memory sharp.

Calm my nerves and help me concentrate.

I know that you walk with me, guide my path and inspire my heart,

Thank you for your kindness and care for me.

Amen

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