

# Our Lady Catholic Primary School

*A Catholic Academy*



March 2023

## NEWS from Mrs. Snowball

Where did the Spring term go? Despite being our shortest term, we managed to squeeze a lot in. January started with our class Masses which were all a lovely celebration with our families. February started with 'Feel good week' and then parent consultations and ended with the start of our Lenten Journey which was marked with class Ash Wednesday services led by our Chaplaincy team. We celebrated book week at the beginning of March – The children all looked fabulous in their 'word' costumes and lots of families enjoyed the PTA race night (thank you to the PTA!). We ended the term with a lovely celebration of our OLS community in our Mass led by Canon Norbert as well as the Year 6 Lenten games which all the children have enjoyed. We cannot wait to see what the Summer term brings (hopefully more sunshine).

Well done to all of our Mission Winners from this half term:

Year R: Elon & Mmasinachi

Year 1: Toni & Dante

Year 2: Kaylan & Michelle

Year 3: Mercy & Eli

Year 4: Nicholas & Nicole

Year 5: Norton & Mya

Year 6: Chikaima & Aidan

Staff winners: Mrs Fiorenza and Mrs Dazzo

### House points: As it stands so far...

Fisher - 3896

More – 3603

Campion – 3212

Alban – 3189

Well done to everyone who has earned house points this half term. Keep working hard!

### Lenten Games

Thank you to the Year 6 children for hosting a fantastic Lenten Games! Every child was able to visit the hall during the morning on March 30<sup>th</sup> to participate in raising money for the Kanyike Project by playing some Lenten Games! They raise £293.



### Our school rules

At Our Lady School we are:

Kind  
Respectful  
Safe  
Reflective



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## Community Mass and Governor Day

On March 21<sup>st</sup> we welcomed our Governors in to school to celebrate the success of the academic year so far! We started the day with Canon Norbert leading a community mass, in which sign language were and symbols used throughout. The Governors then spent the day in school watching lessons, speaking to pupils and exploring the books. Our Chair of Governors, Tony Gorton commented "What a joy and a privilege it was to be able to celebrate 'first-hand' the wonderful school community that you have created and nurtured through your dedicated and loving service to the children in your care at Our Lady."



## A secret project by Year 5

Year 5 have been working on a secret project this half term. They have been planning on spreading a little kindness around our local area. Keep an eye out for some happiness stones that should be appearing over the Easter holidays! They would love for you to snap a photo and upload it to our school Twitter/Facebook page using the hashtag #OLSpreadasmile



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## Book Week

We had a fantastic Book Week at OLS! We had a phonics and reading workshop, classes swapping teachers to hear others read and an amazing dress up as a word day!



## Year 4 History workshop

The Year 4 children participated in a whole day Anglo-Saxon workshop this half term. This workshop involved jewellery making, battle enactments and costume dress up!



## Some exciting news

Miss Neale has spent the last few weeks desperately trying to cover up some exciting news.... Her and her partner will be welcoming their first child in August.



## Key dates for parents for the half term ahead:

- 18<sup>th</sup> April - Summer term begins for pupils
- 21<sup>st</sup> April – Reception class assembly
- 21<sup>st</sup> April – Year 3 swimming lessons start
- 28<sup>th</sup> April – Year 3 class assembly
- 1<sup>st</sup> May – Bank Holiday – school closed
- 2<sup>nd</sup> May – INSET Day - School closed
- 8<sup>th</sup> May – Bank Holiday – School closed
- 9<sup>th</sup> May – KS2 SATs week
- 15<sup>th</sup> May – KS1 SATs begin
- 16<sup>th</sup> May – Kings Coronation Lunch
- 18<sup>th</sup> May – Herts Cricket day in school
- 19<sup>th</sup> May – School disco
- WB 29<sup>th</sup> May – Half term week

## Parent Governor opportunity

Parent Governors play a vital role in governing bodies, holding the unique position of having a parental viewpoint of the school. If you are interested in becoming a Parent Governor please arrange to see Mrs Snowball to hear more about the role.

Hear from our current Parent Governors:

"Being a Parent Governor is a fantastic opportunity to support our school and help it reach its full potential. It's so rewarding to see the work that goes into making our school so amazing and play a small part in enabling our children to have a nurturing and supportive educational experience."

"I'm absolutely delighted to have decided to get involved as a Governor at OLS. The role has definitely helped me (as probably all the other Governors would agree) understand the challenges that the School faces from a different perspective, and think critically about how we can help tackle them. We each bring our own baggage of experience and expertise, which goes to enrich the support we're able to give to the wider OLS community. We're there to help the School deliver at its best for our kids, so I feel very privilege to play a part in it. Personally, I would love to strengthen the link between the school and the parent/carer community as that would help us do our work as Governors even better!"

**'To inspire all to achieve their best every day'**

## **School Improvement Priorities**

As a school we are always striving to improve. At the beginning of the year we set ourselves some ambitious school priorities to better the education and care provided at Our Lady School. Governors, leaders and school staff have worked tirelessly towards our priorities and I would like to share some of the progress made to date:

**-To further embed our whole school approach to the implementation of the curriculum.**

Throughout the Spring term, school leaders have been monitoring teaching and learning across the curriculum. External review visits identified:

“Pupils can explain clearly how they are helped by their teacher to learn and remember mathematical ideas.”

“The curriculum is carefully sequenced and is helping pupils to build on and develop their understanding.”

“Teachers are choosing appropriate strategies to help embed pupils’ knowledge and understanding.”

**- To develop existing practice within Reading & Writing to include more emphasis on the use of ambitious vocabulary and sophisticated language.**

Early Years and Key Stage 1 children have continued to progress through the Little Wandle phonics program which is now embedded in our daily teaching practice. We welcomed parents to our workshop in February which was a great opportunity to share ideas about how you can support your child’s early reading and writing skills at home.

Our new Steps to Read programme has been implemented in Year 2 and Key Stage 2 which has been a great success. We are already seeing the impact of this in the children’s reading and writing.

Our focus on the use of ambitious vocabulary has brought the introduction of ‘word of the day’. Hearing the Year 5 children answer the register with a sentence using the word ‘distressed’ was a little concerning at first until I realised the context! The Year 6 team shared their writing books during Trust joint moderation and the work the children are producing has been identified as a real strength across our Trust schools.

**-To further develop the role of behaviour leads and mental health lead and ensure all staff are skilled in supporting children with social or emotional barriers to learning, especially our most vulnerable children.**

We have two fully trained behaviour leads in school, Mrs Hobbs and Miss McNabola. They have led staff training across the school on our therapeutic approach to behaviour management. Please see our updated behaviour policy which has been emailed to parents and is available on our school website. We have also provided a useful one page document which outlines the steps taken in school to address behaviour consistently.

Our annual mental health week (feel good week), regular RSHE lessons and weekly assemblies have reminded children and staff of the importance of keeping not only our bodies but also our minds healthy.

We continue to welcome new families to Our Lady School and the children have been excellent ambassadors in providing them with a warm, respectful and kind welcome. As a school we pride ourselves on providing a safe and caring environment that aspires to meet the needs of every pupil despite their background because we know that every child is a child of God and every child deserves the right to a safe, happy childhood and education.

**‘To inspire all to achieve their best every day’**