



St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Headteacher Mrs. D. Linley



Friday 16th October 2020

Dear Parents,

HIGH EXPECTATIONS IN SCHOOL

As we approach the end of the first half term of the school year following the National lockdown, we continue to review practice in school in order to best meet the needs of your children in all areas of school life. We have high expectations of children's wellbeing, learning, behaviour, curriculum and presentation. Having been back at school now for seven weeks, many children have settled in well to school life. We recognise that for some children, additional support, strategies or further action is needed in order for them to thrive during this Covid pandemic. Next Friday, you will not only receive a 'Pupil Progress Update' from your child's class teacher, but you will also receive further information on what action we have taken as a school and are taking next term to further support your child.

BEHAVIOUR

Our **behaviour expectations** of **ALL** children **remain high**; particularly during this Covid pandemic because we are encouraging children to keep a safe distance where possible and poor behaviour can often compromise this. Behaviour of children is not just important to the safety of each individual child but also to ALL children and staff. As explained to you in the parent presentation meetings at the start of the year, there will be gaps in all children's learning from lockdown, often poor behaviour in class can prevent children from fulfilling their potential. It is therefore important that we work together to combat and further improve behaviour related issues in school. Please ensure that you have read the updated behaviour policy addendum (please see our school website) and that your child understands the role their behaviour plays in relation to their own safety and the learning and safety of those around them.

PRESENTATION

I have noticed an increased number of children wearing earrings to school and trainers on days when P.E. is not being taught. There are also a number of hoodies being brought in to school instead of school jumpers. Our school logo is of a lion and we wear this badge with pride. A smart uniform instils pride, supports positive behaviour and discipline which often in turn supports effective teaching and learning. **Please ensure your child is prepared for school and is wearing the correct uniform (earrings, hoodies and trainers on days when your child is not doing P.E. is not allowed).** Presentation points will be gathered from all classes next week and the presentation scores will be recorded. Let's see who the smartest class will be...!

Many thanks,
Mrs. Linley and the St. Mark's Team

Spread The Word with those around you...



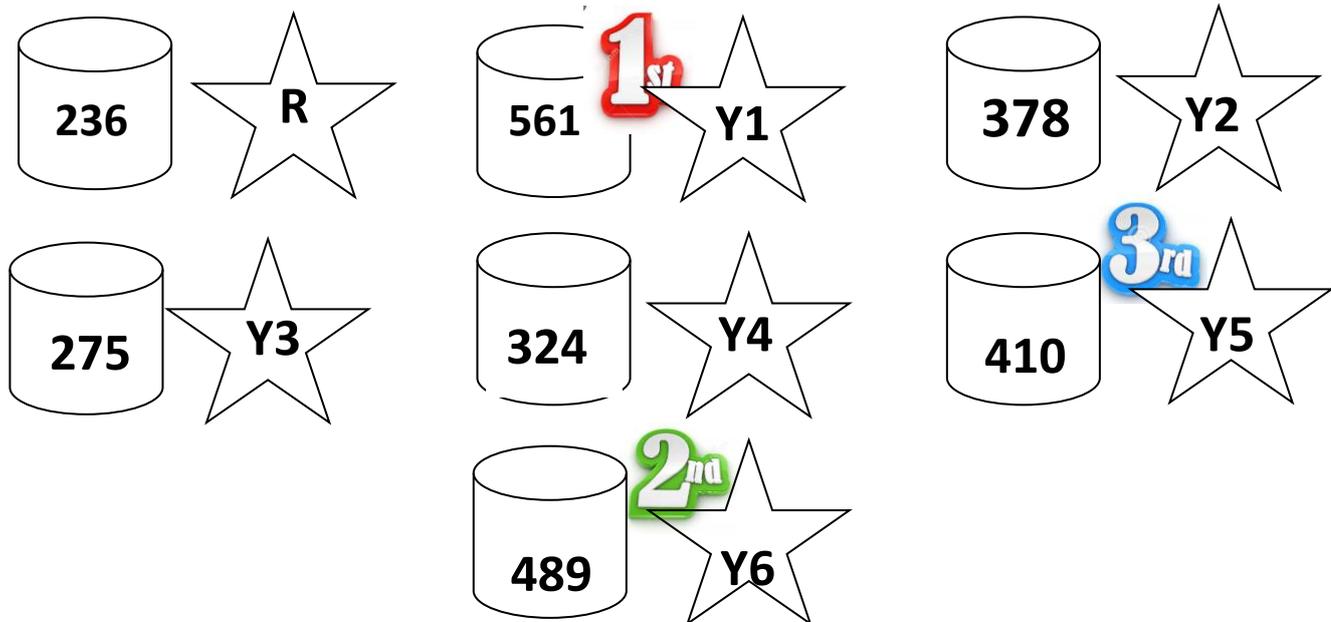
Please click on the following link to access this spiritual resource to share with your family and friends:

<https://www.paperturn-view.com/uk/wednesday-word/messenger?pid=MTA101634&v=7.7>

Message for Year 6 Parents Only

Secondary Transfer Letters Please ensure that you have completed your secondary transfer forms online by 31st October 2020. www.birmingham.gov.uk/schooladmissions.

STAR AWARDS – Well done to **YEAR 1** for earning the most stars this week!!



POP BAND AWARDS – The following children have achieved their **WHITE** pop band award:
 Moiz (Y6) Fionn (Y2) Hena (Y2) Jasdeep (Y2) Delphi (Y2) Kezzia (Y2)
 Ashnan (Y2) Ralph (Y2) Suriyah(Y2) Alex (Y2) Ava (Y2) Rose (Y2)
 Destiny (Y4) Christina (Y4)

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: All activities in school next week will be focused around Black History Month. In the past at St. Mark's, we have researched famous people in the world such as Rosa Parks and Barrack Obama. While it is important for children to learn about these inspiring people; this year, we have decided to focus more closely on the world around us and the achievements of Black British people. Links with people and countries from all over the world will still be made but with a focus on Britain. All classes will first explore why we celebrate Black History Month and its significance. Here is a list of the classes and the topics that will be researched next week:



Class	Inspirational British Black person and other areas of learning:
Reception	Denise Lewis
Y1	Benjamin Zephaniah
Y2	Lewis Hamilton
Y3	Trevor McDonald
Y4	Cyrille Regis
Y5	Nicola Adams
Y6	Chris Ofili – Windrush Generation, Notting Hill riots

On **Friday 23rd October**, all of the Key Stage 2 classes will be taking part in an important workshop on Racism. The workshop will allow pupils to empathize with how it feels to be left out and to be discriminated against based on ethnicity, culture and background. Children will also look at the psychological and emotional effects of racism. Children will then be engaged in discussion about groups of people who are discriminated against, how discrimination looks and why this might be. The workshop also covers the key differences between:

- Prejudice
- Discrimination
- Stereotype



Finally, we want our children at St. Mark's to be catalysts for change so that they can build a better, fairer society for the future. Please spend a few minutes (at least) at the end of each day speaking to your child about **WHAT** they are learning about in school and **WHY** they are learning about it.

REMINDER: Aim to be Punctual NOT Late!

We are still noticing a number of children are arriving late (after 9am). We have staggered the morning and end of day dismissal times to allow for children to be dropped off and collected as safely as possible. When children arrive late to school after the gates have closed, this means that children must enter through the school front entrance and be escorted to their classroom by a member of staff. This is not only disrupting your child's learning time but also other children in their class and it is taking staff away from important duties. Please remember that we have worked hard to put plans in place to limit the contact your child has outside of their bubble, this is made more difficult when children are late. Of course, we appreciate there are occasions whereby this cannot be helped but for some children this is beginning to become a regular occurrence. You will be notified if this applies to you in writing. Please be on time!



HARVEST:

This is an opportunity for us to give thanks for all that we have, and for those who help to grow and prepare our food. It is also a real opportunity for us to think about others who may not have enough to eat. Please support us with **gifts of tinned and packaged food** which would be greatly appreciated. All food produce will be donated to the Fireside Centre – which caters for the vulnerable and homeless people in our own city. Please be as generous as you possibly can. Donated food should be brought through the school gates and placed in a box under the canopy.



INSPIRATION DAY – FRIDAY 6TH NOVEMBER 2020:

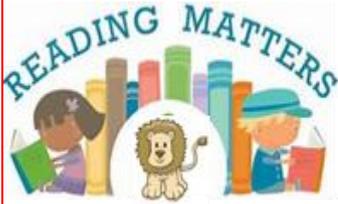
On this day, children will be involved in a fun action-packed day linked to their new curriculum topic. To help children get into character, we are asking your children to come in dressed as their respective topic. Please see below for a list of the topics and costume ideas for each class:

YEAR GROUP	TOPIC	COSTUME IDEAS
Reception 	'999, What's your emergency?'	Police Officer, Firefighter, Nurse, Teacher, Bus Driver, Post-person, Cleaner, Chef/Cook, Librarian, Doctor, Bin Collector, Caretaker, Vet
Year 1 	'My World and Me'	Person/Animal from 1 of the 7 continents of the world Map or Ocean
Year 2 	'Fire Fire!' Great Fire of London	Red, Orange or Yellow Clothing Firefighter People linked to the Great Fire of London
Year 3 	'Our Great Country'	UK Flag Colours clothing Monarchy Famous people from our country
Year 4 	'What's it like in Whitby?'	English Flag colours – Red, White and Blue Clothing Anything linked to the seaside
Year 5 	'The Wider World'	Explorer (Rainforest, Arctic, Desert) News Reporter
Year 6 	Physical Geography	Fish/Animal found by rivers, Mountain explorer, Expeditioner. Water Cycle (cloud), Climate (sun, rain, tornado, lightning, animals in extreme climate)

IMPORTANCE OF READING:

Read with a Child

It's the most important 20 minutes of your day



	Minutes read each day	Minutes read in a school year	Total words read
Child A	20 minutes	3,600 minutes	1,800,000 words
Child B	5 minutes	900 minutes	282,000 words
Child C	1 minute	180 minutes	8,000 words



The diagram above shows the impact reading has on your child's Literacy ability. We recognise that children have not been in school to read regularly to develop their reading skills, but now we must maximise every opportunity we can to ensure we close the gap in reading. We have provided Bug Club and Education City to support your child's reading ability at home. We appreciate that this is not the same as children reading a book from the school library. **However, children are still expected to read regularly at home for twenty minutes each night.** Please encourage and support your child with their reading. Fluency and expression are key reading skills and are only developed if children are heard reading aloud regularly at home. This will also develop your child's confidence in reading.

School Term Dates

Autumn Term 2020

Term Starts: Wednesday 2nd September 2020

Half Term: Monday 26th October 2020 to Friday 30 October 2020

Term Ends: Friday 18th December 2020

Spring Term 2021

Term Starts: Tuesday 5th January 2021

Half Term: Monday 15th February 2021 to Friday 19th February 2021

Term Ends: Thursday 1st April 2021

Summer Term 2021

Term Starts: Monday 19th April 2021

Half Term: Monday 31st May 2021 to Friday 4th June 2021

Term Ends: Wednesday 21st July 2021

Teacher Training Days:

Monday 19th October 2020

Monday 2nd November 2020

Monday 4th January 2021

