



St. Mark's Catholic Primary School

Almond Croft, Great Barr, Birmingham, B42 1NU

Tel: 0121 357 9892 Email: enquiry@stmarkrc.bham.sch.uk Principal: Mrs. D. Linley



FRIDAY 20TH DECEMBER 2024

Dear Parents and Carers,

Firstly, thank you for your support this term and for your feedback. I would like to especially thank the team of parents and staff that worked incredibly hard to make the Christmas fayre possible and the school disco last Friday. We are very fortunate at St. Mark's to have a team of dedicated parents that put time and effort into creating memorable experiences for our children and community. Thank you!

In this Sunday's Gospel, John the Baptist prepares the people for the coming of Jesus. He tells them to share with others and to show mercy - to put people (not money or power) first; to feel for those who suffer and to do something to help. Our mission teams have taken action this half term to make a positive contribution to our community and as we step into the new year, help us always to show mercy to others.

I hope to see many of you in the new year, please make every effort to attend the parent events, workshops and assemblies as your presence in school is appreciated and valued. We look forward to seeing you in 2025!

Wishing you all a very happy and holy Christmas!

From Mrs. Linley and the St. Mark's family

Reception visit Warwick Castle

Reception were very lucky to get a first hand experience of life in a castle. We explored the clothing, food and décor from the past and enjoyed learning about how people defended their homes during an attack. This will prepare us for our topic next half term.



Christmas Disco

Last week, the whole school enjoyed a Christmas treat with a Christmas disco.

We enjoyed dancing with our friends and teachers and playing some fun party games.



A huge thank you to Mr Browne for being our DJ for the day—
we all had a great time!


ATTENDANCE UPDATE

Well done to **Year 2 & 4** for their attendance this term and to **Year 3** for having the least amount of lates.

Please can **Year 6** ensure they attend school everyday and that they arrive to school on time.

Gates open between **8.30 and 8.45am**.

Our target is **97%** we are currently at **95.0%**.

	So Far This Term	So Far This Term
	No. Of Lates %	Attendance %
RECEPTION	1.7%	96.4%
YEAR 1	1.4%	93.4%
YEAR 2	0.8%	96.5%
YEAR 3	0.5%	95.1%
YEAR 4	0.7%	96.5%
YEAR 5	1.7%	94.1%
YEAR 6	2.3%	92.5%

Dates for the diary:

Friday 20th December 2024—School closes for Christmas holidays

Monday 6th January 2025—Teacher Training Day (school closed to pupils)

Tuesday 7th January 2025—School re-opens for pupils

Monday 13th January 2025—Y1 Trip to Sudbury Museum (more information to follow next term)

My Happy Minds

At St. Mark's we value our Mental Health and ensure that it is seen as a priority for all. We teach the children how important our Mental Health is and how to look after it

This term, all of the children have been having weekly My Happy Mind lessons.

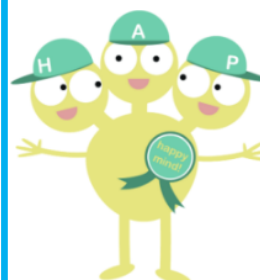
My Happy Minds is a resource used to teach children preventative habits that support positive mental health, resilience and self esteem.

This term we have focused on the unit "Meet Your Brain", where we have learnt: The different parts of our brain and how they help us. How to use Happy Breathing to help us when we feel sad, stressed or worried. What happens in our brain when we learn something new and how we can look after our brain.

We were also introduced to Team H-A-P.

Meet Team H-A-P

TEAM H-A-P represents the hippocampus, amygdala and prefrontal cortex. These are all parts of our brain. Ask your child what each part does.



Bambinelli Mass



On Thursday 19th December, we presented our Bambinelli's in Mass and Father Jibu blessed them. This tradition was instituted by Saint Pope John Paul II during his Papacy. It follows that on the Third Sunday of Advent, children and adults bring their Baby Jesus figures from their homes to St Peters Square where they are blessed by the Pope.

Now that Father Jibu has blessed our Bambinelli's, we will take them home to help us to prepare for Jesus. We will have our very own presence of Christ in our homes this Christmas.

As we have progressed through the season of Advent, the children have had many opportunities to reflect on the importance of "Staying Awake" and being ready to welcome our Lord, Jesus Christ, when He comes again; also, in sharing the joy of His first coming as a baby born in a stable in Bethlehem.

Children have planned, prepared and delivered Advent liturgies of their own, showing an increasing confidence in choosing items for their prayer focus, suitable music and appropriate scripture to support the theme, and then ensuring that their classmates engage in activities which help them to reflect well on what has been heard.



As I have observed these liturgies across the school, it was a joy to hear children volunteering to offer open prayers for their families, the school, the community and the wider world, particularly when they remembered those who may not be in a position to enjoy Christmas this year.

It was joyful, too, when all of our Key Stage 2 classes (Y3-6) joined with their counterparts across our MAC family of schools in the third annual MAC Carol Concert. We had the honour of opening the concert with a beautifully song rendition of "Love Shone Down"; we were very proud of how well they listened to the other schools' contributions, too!



The children have certainly been well prepared to welcome Jesus again into their hearts this Christmas, and we look forward to deepening their understanding of the season of Christmas when we return in January.