

ST MARGARET CLITHEROW ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Monkswood Lane (off Monkswood Way) Stevenage Herts SG2 8QJ

Headteacher:
Carmela Puccio BA (Hons)



Tel: 01438 352863
Website: www.clitherow.herts.sch.uk
Email: admin@clitherow.herts.sch.uk

Thursday 28th March 2024

Dear Parents and Carers

This half term has been short; yet we've still managed to achieve so much! The 'highlights this term' shows how much we've squeezed into 4 weeks and 4 days.

Holy Week has arrived, and our Lenten preparations are almost complete. Throughout Lent the children have engaged in almsgiving within the school and at home. A whole school sponsored walk/run took place in the Stevenage Football Stadium this half term. Some of our children completed 17 laps in 30 minutes – we clearly have some talented distance runners! This was a special experience for many of our children (and staff!) and we thank the football stadium for allowing us to visit throughout the day. Thank you also to our PSFA team for giving us their time to support us. A huge thank you for your generosity and kindness this Lenten season. Your charitable efforts will be split between the Catholic Children's Society of Westminster, Father Kakuba's Ugandan Kanyike Project (<https://www.kanyikeproject.org.uk/about-us>) and CAFOD. A special thank you must go to some of our Year 5 children who pitched an idea to me for an additional fundraising event this half term. They organised items for sale and advertised the event themselves. In total they raised £171 to share between our Lenten charities. Thank you also to their families for supporting the sales.

Environmental Champions

We were delighted to be awarded with the Stevenage School Parliament Environmental Champions trophy this half term. We were awarded the trophy following our school's efforts during February's Go Green month. We are incredibly proud of our Youth Leadership Team and Eco-Committee for driving the events throughout the month. A personal highlight was the Sculpture Day where the children worked in mixed classes to create the fantastic under the sea creatures you hopefully saw in the library this week. It was heart-warming to see the children working together to create a very important message. Please visit <https://www.clitherow.herts.sch.uk/curriculum.html> and click on Roles and Responsibilities to access our Go Green month video showcasing the work of our children. They are great stewards of creation campaigning for change.



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Staffing update

This term we say farewell to our part-time Year 5 teacher, Mrs Moore. Mrs Moore is relocating out of Hertfordshire. We also say goodbye to Mrs Undrell this week as she has secured a permanent teaching position elsewhere. I am sure you will join with me in wishing Mrs Moore and Mrs Undrell well with their future and thank them for their contributions to the school since joining us. Towards the end of this half term, we welcomed back Miss Marron on a part time basis following her maternity leave. I would like to also welcome Miss Sulman to our team here at St. Margaret Clitherow. Miss Sulman joins us as our new SEN Teaching Assistant.

Year 3 and 4 Performers!

Last week, our Year 3 and 4 children led us in their powerful performance of 'Good News' retelling the Easter Story. My goodness they did an amazing job! They allowed us to reflect on Easter's poignant messages during their production. Well done Year 3 and 4, we were incredibly proud of you all. Huge thank you to Ms Coleman, Mrs Howard, Mrs Newham and the rest of the Year 3 and 4 team for preparing the children so well.

Some other highlights this term:

- Introduction of 'The Meadow' – Nursery's new extended outdoor space
- Celebrated World Book Day
- Whole School Lenten Mass and confession for Year 4 - 6
- Year 5 Maths Challenge
- Year 6 WWII Stevenage Museum visit
- RE advisor visit from the Diocese of Westminster
- Catholic Children's Society assembly
- Year 6 trip to Hazard Alley in Milton Keynes
- Nursery and Reception 'Peep at the Past' Stevenage Museum workshop in school
- Bridgebuilders Easter assembly
- Laura Noakes – author visit for Year 3 -6. Writing workshops for Year 4 and 5
- Year 4 Girls Football Festival
- Attendance at Stevenage Parliament
- Stevenage Foundation assembly
- Year 6 Easter Journey at Longmeadow Church
- Year 6 (they've been very busy this half term!) invited to The Saint John Henry Newman School to watch Legally Blonde
- Netball and football league matches
- Reception visit to Stevenage Library



Attendance and Lateness

Our school target for attendance is set by the Local Authority at 96%. Our current whole school attendance figure since September is 96.3%. The attendance figure includes unauthorised absences, absences related to illness, medical appointments, and lateness. We must all work together to ensure children are in school



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providing they are well enough. It should come as no surprise that there is a strong link between high levels of attendance and high attainment. Some parents have received attendance letters this term if their child's attendance is a cause for concern.

Please be reminded that your child's school day begins at 8:45am. As soon as the children enter the school building, their learning journey begins and every second counts. If your child arrives at 9am, they are missing key learning opportunities each day and over the weeks and months, the time soon adds up. They lose 1 hour and 15 minutes of learning each week!

Can I also remind you of the end of day timings. Nursery – Year 2 finish at 3:15pm and Year 3 – 6 finish at 3:20pm. A late pick up has an impact on staff who must wait with the children until they are picked up when they should be attending meetings or training. Please also be reminded that after school clubs finish at 4:30pm. Again, please be respectful of the staff's time and collect on time.

Parent consultations

It was lovely to see so many of you at our Parent Consultations yesterday. Along with the Governors, I enjoyed talking to you all about the achievements of your children and other important school matters. Please remember that no problem is ever too big or too small to be discussed! This is something that we always try to reinforce with the children. It is, however, just as true for all of us. Please do come in to talk to us if you have any concerns. Often an early chat prevents small worries from becoming big worries. Remember, we can't act if we don't know! In the first instance, a discussion with the class teacher may help, either via a telephone call after school or simply popping in at the end of the day. Longer appointments can be arranged via the office where necessary.

Summer Term School Trips

School trips have all been booked. As always, much of the expense in putting on such trips is the cost of the coach hire. With increasing fuel costs, the coach company prices have increased significantly this year. We always 'shop around' and we get the best quote for the trip. We rely heavily upon your donations to make these trips go ahead. Thank you for paying promptly! Please note that should sufficient funds not be available to cover the cost of a trip, visits may have to be cancelled. **Please help us by letting us know early if you anticipate a problem.** There are occasions when we may be able to offer assistance provided we know in advance – please pop into the office and ask to speak with me or call if this is the case.

Message from the Governors

It was a wonderful opportunity for governors to spend time in school during Wednesday's parent consultations. Thank you for taking the time to talk to us and share your views about our school.

We are currently looking for a Foundation Governor with a financial background to join the Governing Body. If you are interested, or know someone who may be interested, please make contact with Mrs Streeter in the school office.



Academies continues to be high on our agenda with the next phase of the process underway. We look forward to sharing more information with you in the summer term.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity to thank Miss Puccio and the whole team at St Margaret's for their continued hard work and dedication to our children, we really do have a fantastic school community, thank you.

We wish you and your families a peaceful Easter break and look forward to working with the in the summer term.

PSFA Update

The PSFA would like to say a massive thank you for this term's support! We have put on new events, the Leap Year Bake Sale, and held our past winners like the Mother's Day Market. The PSFA were thrilled to help support the Lenten sponsored walk; we are all extremely excited to be working alongside the school to make the children's journey a memorable one. This term alone we have raised a total of: £820.16. As a committee we are working towards buying several new Google Chrome Books for the children to use during school hours. All your volunteered support and help at events is therefore greatly appreciated. We were also very pleased to pay for the visit and workshop from Author Laura Noakes which the children thoroughly enjoyed. We would like to wish you all a wonderful Easter and we look forward to next term's events!



Profit from each event this term:

Leap Year Bake Sale: £152.00

Mother's Day Market: £438.16

Bags2School: £160.00

Uniform Sale: £70.00

Free School Meals

If your situation has changed, or you think you may be eligible for free school meals, please visit <https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/services/schools-and-education/at-school/free-school-meals/free-school-meals.aspx> The application takes a couple of minutes to complete. Please do notify the school if you are eligible. Even if your child is in a class (Reception – Year 2) that receives a Government funded free school meal, it is still worth making an application as the school receives additional funding.

I hope your holiday will be blessed with special family moments as we reflect on the joy of the Risen Christ at Easter. Wishing you all a holy Easter! We look forward to welcoming back all our children on Tuesday 16th April.

God Bless

Puccio

Miss Puccio
Headteacher



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KEY DATES

Please check the school website for any changes to dates

Thursday 28th March 2024

Finish for Easter holidays at 1:15pm

Easter Holidays: Friday 29th March to Friday 12th April 2024

Monday 15th April 2024

INSET day – no school for children

Tuesday 16th April 2024

Return to school: 8.45am

Thursday, 18th April 2024

Year 5 school trip to London

Tuesday, 23rd April 2024

Year 3 school trip to Celtic Harmony Camp

Friday, 24th May 2024

Finish for half term (3:15pm and 3:20pm)

Half term holidays Monday 27th May to Friday 31st May

Monday, 3rd June 2024

INSET day – no school for children

Tuesday, 4th June 2024

Return to school: 8:45am



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