

March 25

Dear Parents and Carers,

Well, it seems the sun has finally started to make an appearance and isn't it lovely to be able to get out and about in the warmer – and drier(!) – weather. We have some wonderful outdoor events booked in for the children in the coming months, and the outside areas that have been developed over the last few years are providing excellent spaces for our children to access outdoor learning; improve physical strength and dexterity; and sometimes to just run off the boundless energy that we envy in our children. I am delighted that the school has recently been awarded the RHS Gardening Level 1 Award and I would like to say a huge thank-you and well done to Mrs Cox and her team of enthusiastic gardeners for achieving this award – we are very proud of you and love seeing all that you grow. Winning this award has led me to think about ways in which we can purchase items to benefit the pupils of our school and I have decided to include a 'Wish List' in each newsletter just in case any parents are able to donate the items we need. Please don't feel you have to donate, I know that things are tricky for many at the moment (not just schools!), but if some families have the items at home that they don't use, or are happy to buy an extra packet of seeds when they are at the shop, then all would be gratefully received. You will see the first 'Wish List' included later within this letter.



There was lots of excitement in school last week for the cereal box collection for the Swindon Night Shelter. The BBC Wiltshire Sound video of the domino line of cereal boxes has been shared on Facebook and the comments below are just some of the comments posted:

"Fantastic work from all the children and staff and a great cause"

"Well done Holy Cross children. This is awesome"

"This is heart-warming. Well done Holy Cross"

"Wonderful for the children and the recipients".

We also received a lovely email from a member for the public who took the time to write:

Just seen your amazing challenge to support the local night shelter and wanted to say WELL DONE!

What a valuable life lesson you've given to your pupils!

Best wishes

Janet King

(retired primary teacher)

Kindness and compassion go a long way and the children, the families and the staff of Holy Cross Catholic Primary School show this in so many ways and make me proud every single day. Thank you for all that you are and all that you do for the pupils of Holy Cross Catholic Primary School.



Mrs Dowdeswell

Learn, Grow, Love, Live

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Class Assemblies

I am so pleased to advise that class assemblies have returned! Some classes have already held theirs and the children of Ash and Oak ran their café this week where parents were served with goodies such as cake and pizza and children performed a story with actions. It is so important for our pupils to develop their skills and confidence when speaking to a group and performing to a crowd and we are so thankful that parents attend these events as it means such a lot to everyone involved. Please keep an eye out for the date of your child's class assembly (for Y6 this will be the end of year production instead) and we would love to see you there – some dates are in the 'Diary Dates' section at the end of this letter 😊

Wyvern Dance Festival



Well done to the Indian dancers who performed at the Junior Dance Festival at The Wyvern. The dancers looked amazing and danced beautifully. Many were nervous beforehand but nerves soon disappeared once the dancing started and all of the children said how much they enjoyed the experience. Thank you to Sheila D'Costa for running the weekly dance classes. The choir also performed at The Junior Voice Festival at The Wyvern last week and all sang wonderfully and enjoyed being part of a larger team of children sharing the joy of song. Thank you to Mr Forrester for running the choir and to all staff members who accompany the children on these trips.

Parents' Evenings

Parents' Evenings will be held on Tues 25th and Thurs 27st March for most classes. Slots are now open on ParentPay and we ask that every parent book a meeting to discuss your child's progress. We look forward to sharing with you the amazing work your child has completed. Please ensure you arrive on time for your slot and the prefects will be on duty to accompany parents to the classrooms and provide help and support if needed.



Wind Instrument Roadshow

To finish off our Mental Wellbeing Day, the children enjoyed listening to a wind instrument roadshow. The children amazed everybody with their knowledge of the different instruments and it remains a joy to see how many of our pupils take lessons to learn various instruments. The music lessons available at school include: guitar, piano, drums and ukulele and please ask at the office if you would be interested in your child learning an instrument.

MODESHIFT Good Travel Plan Certificate

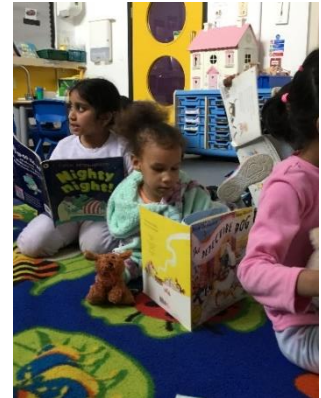


I am delighted to advise that the school has been awarded the MODESHIFT Good Travel Plan certificate. Thank you to all those parents who continue to support the safety of the children by travelling and parking safely. We have been informed that the traffic enforcement officers will continue to patrol outside of the school.

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World Book Day and National Storytelling Week

The pupils enjoyed celebrating World Book Day and National Storytelling Week. 'Bedtime Stories' was a lovely opportunity for children to bring in their own favourite story book and we had a cosy time snuggling down to read our beloved stories and share why we liked them so much. For National Storytelling Week, the children learnt a story off-by-heart and performed these to the rest of the school.



Steam Museum and Parent Helpers



The children in Pine and Elm enjoyed their visit to STEAM recently. They learnt lots about transport and Isambard Kingdom Brunel and how important this man was to the development of the railways. We received so many compliments from the staff of STEAM on how well behaved and knowledgeable the children were and how keen they were to learn all about IKB.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to the parents who volunteered to accompany the children on this trip – and, indeed, all trips. Without your help, these trips would not be possible and we are so very grateful to you for giving up your own time to support us in this way. From school trips, listening to children read, accompanying the children when they go to their swimming lessons, weekly trips to church - the list goes on and we are so very thankful to each and every one of you.

Maths Week

The children had a wonderful time practising their maths skills during Maths Week. Thank you to all those parents who attended the sessions where you were invited in to support your child(ren) in their maths learning. Feedback from the pupils show that they found the week a lot of fun (which, let's be honest, isn't always associated with maths!) and several parents said how useful they found the sessions in being able to support their children at home.



Goodbyes

It is always sad when we say goodbye to a member of staff, and Jayne Rutherford is going to be greatly missed when she leaves us at the end of this term. Not only is Jayne a fantastic teacher, but also a valued colleague and wonderful friend. Jayne has decided it is time to enjoy more time with her own family and visit the many places and countries she has wanted to for a long while. I know you will all join me in wishing Jayne all the very best for the future and to wish her every happiness.

The children in Ash Class will continue to be taught by Mrs Nichols.



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Catholic Life of the School

Easter Gardens



It is that time of the year when we invite the children to bring in an Easter Garden from home, should they wish. The gardens can be made from any materials and it is always a highlight in the year when we see the fantastic creativity of our pupils (and parents) in the design and construction of the Easter Gardens. This is a lovely opportunity for you to share with your child as you sit and create the garden together and we look forward to receiving the gardens from next week onwards. Here is the link to the Easter Gardens from last year that appear on our website: https://www.holycross.swindon.sch.uk/galleries/2023_2024/104/index.php

RE Lessons – Other Faiths: Ramadan

Thank you so much to Fatima Bibi, a member of our kitchen team, for speaking to our pupils in Year 6 about her own Muslim faith during RE lessons. The children enjoyed hearing all about the holy month of Ramadan and this fully supports our 'learning about other faiths' curriculum.

We also have an exciting celebration of Holi planned for later in the year!



Easter Windows



The children will be creating Easter windows on the last day of term and you will be invited to view these when you pick up your child(ren) on the last day of term. This is the first time we have done this, and we are very excited to see their creations and we hope you take joy from these too.



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Wish List



These are some items we would love to be able to have in school to support the children in their learning and we would be so grateful for any donations of the following:

- Plastic plant pots (all sizes);
- Packets of seeds: sunflowers, tomatoes, runner beans, broad beans, peppers, cress, lettuce/salad leaves;
- Seed potatoes;
- Herbs: lavender, thyme, rosemary, parsley;
- Watering cans – small;
- Gardening gloves: aged 5-7 and aged 7-11;
- Child-sized trowels;
- Child-sized garden forks;
- Plastic greenhouse (if anyone is getting rid of one!).

If you are happy and able to provide any of the above, please feel free to drop them at the office. The children and staff of our school would be so grateful.



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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 time and again 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):

Lydiard Park



Lydiard Park is a wonderful place to spend a few hours and provides lots of space for children to run around, play football or walk amongst the trees. There is a play park that will help the children burn off their energy and a couple of cafes where you can buy drinks and snacks. Other than the cost of parking, Lydiard Park is free. More information can be found here: <https://www.lydiardpark.org.uk/>



Ashmolean Museum, Oxford



An amazing museum that is free to visit – we are incredibly lucky to have this so close to Swindon. Oxford can be easily reached by car, bus or train and the museum is right in the centre and so easy to find. The museum is extremely popular and can get very busy; therefore, they recommend you book tickets in advance to guarantee entry. Their One World Family Festival is on over half term. Well worth a visit at any time of the year.

<https://www.ashmolean.org/>.

Lechlade



Lechlade is a short drive outside Swindon and is a very picturesque place to visit. You can walk along the Thames Path to St John's Lock and watch the boats go through one of the shallowest locks on the river. The Lock Keeper is often there and will happily explain how the lock works whilst you watch the water levels rise and fall. The lock is named after a priory dedicated to St John the Baptist and is home to 'Father Thames',



the famous statue made in 1851 for the Great Exhibition in the Crystal Palace at Hyde Park. If it has been raining, it can often be a little muddy and so wellington boots are a good idea.



MUSEUM & ART
SWINDON

<https://www.museumartswindon.com/> A couple of weeks ago, some of the teachers visited the new Museum & Art Swindon and were very impressed with the events on offer for children. Please do have a look!

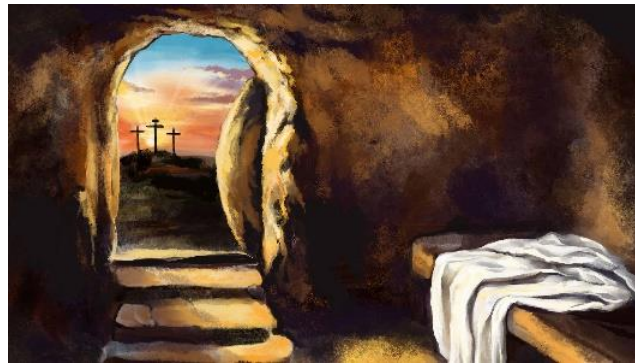
I hope you manage to visit one or more of these places as a family 😊

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Diary Dates

| | |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| Tuesday 25 th March | Parents Evening |
| Thursday 27 th March | Parents Evening |
| Wednesday 2 nd April | Whole School Class Photographs |
| Thursday 3 rd April | Year 3 Willow Class Assembly |
| Friday 4 th April | Easter Celebrations with Fr. Lucas |
| Mon 7 th Apr – Mon 21 st Apr | Half Term holidays |
| Monday 5 th May | Teachers Training Day – school closed to pupils |
| Friday 9 th May | Year 3 Trip to Avebury |
| Monday 12 th May – 16 th May | Year 6 SATS Assessments week |
| Wednesday May 14 th | Cricket Taster Day |
| Friday 16 th May | Aspen Class Assembly |



“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.” John 3:16

For those families who need some help, please see the following pages which outline help and support that is on offer. Please reach out if you need to.

On behalf of myself and the staff, I wish all of our families a happy and peaceful Easter.

Mrs Dowdeswell

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Welcome to our Food Pantries!

Our pantries enable you and your household to access to nutritious food for a fraction of what these items would cost at a supermarket. You can pick up fresh fruit, vegetables, salad, bread, cake, chilled and a frozen item (depending on availability) for **FREE**. All you need to do is pay the six-month membership fee and then exchange cash for points if you would like to, for all the other store cupboard items (**these are approx. 2/3 cheaper or more than the supermarket!**).

How it will work

Membership

Each household will pay £1 per person, per household for a six-month registration period. (e.g., 4 members in a household will cost £4 for 6 months) and complete a very short registration form. Proof of income or benefit will be required. Max £22,000 income per household, but chat to us if you are struggling and don't fit these criteria or have no access to any funds (Organisations across Swindon can also refer).

Weekly point system

Once you become a member, this allows you to exchange cash for points when you visit (£1 equals 4 points) in addition to the free items. Members enter the shopping area and choose items to the value of the points purchased. The items are then taken to the till and any unused points will be carried over to the next visit. By offering a points credit system, it allows member to purchase points in bulk when paid (maximum £20) and then return to shop throughout the month when required.

The funds raised will allow us to reinvest in a consistent supply of foods we normally struggle to provide such as coffee, sugar, toiletries, cheese etc. All items will be subject to availability.

Registration forms are available on the day.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

email: admin@swindonnightshester.org.uk

Tel: 01793 613166

Registered Charity: 1187554

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SWINDON Night Shelter

FOOD PANTRIES

AMBIENT, FRESH, CHILLED AND FROZEN FOOD
AT A FRACTION OF THE COST

TUESDAYS 2.15PM TO 4.00PM @
THE HAVEN
QUEENS DRIVE
SWINDON
SN3 1AR

WEDNESDAYS 2.00PM TO 4.30PM @
PARK NORTH VILLAGE HALL,
LYNDHURST CRESCENT,
PARK NORTH,
SWINDON
SN3 2RW

FRIDAYS 1.30PM TO 4.00PM @
CHIPPENHAM CLOSE COMMUNITY CENTRE,
CHIPPENHAM CLOSE,
PENHILL,
SN2 5DB

 www.swindonnightshelter.org.uk

 www.facebook.com/swindonnightshelter

[@swindonnightshelter](https://www.instagram.com/swindonnightshelter)

Reg. Char. No. 1187554
The Haven, Queens Drive, SN3 1AR
01793 613166



Help with food

Free food is available from these outlets:

Big Breakfast+ at the Pilgrim Centre Swindon. Free breakfast between 07.30 and 9.00am for anyone who is hungry. No referral necessary.

FoodCycle Swindon at the Pinetrees Community Centre, SN2 1QR. Free hot meals every Thursday, 6.30pm. No referral necessary.

Gorse Hill Community Fridge - open on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 11am to 2pm. The aim of the fridge is to reduce food waste and to prevent good food from being thrown into landfill. It is also helps reduce food poverty in local communities. Food is donated by local supermarkets and is free to everyone!

<https://www.swindonfoodcollective.org/useful-information/#:~:text=FoodCycle%20Swindon%20at%20the%20Pinetrees,Thursdays%20from%2011am%20to%202pm.>

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