Unique and Valued by God

The St Mark's Newsletter

4th December 2020

'A school where children develop the passion to learn, the skills and knowledge to succeed and the confidence to take Christian values into our diverse society.'

Dear Parents and Carers, Pupils, Staff and Governors

We are very much looking forward to welcoming back our Sycamore Class on Monday, who have been in self-isolation for the past two weeks. Please continue to be vigilant and careful. Maintain your distance when you are waiting to enter the school gates and also please wear a face mask on site to help to protect yourself and others around you. None of us want to be affected over the Christmas period.

Winter Top Up Fund

Thanks to Marcus Rashford's campaign for children on Free School Meals, vouchers for the two weeks of the Christmas break will be distributed before the end of term to all families who receive Free School Meals. See details on page 6 and guidance on further benefits.

Operation Christmas Child

In previous years, we have sent over 100 shoeboxes to children in other countries and last year we managed to send 60 boxes. It would be great if we could send a similar number this year. It's a great activity to do as a family. Try to complete a box this weekend to hand in by Thursday 10th December (see page 7). More leaflets are available from the school office.

Performances

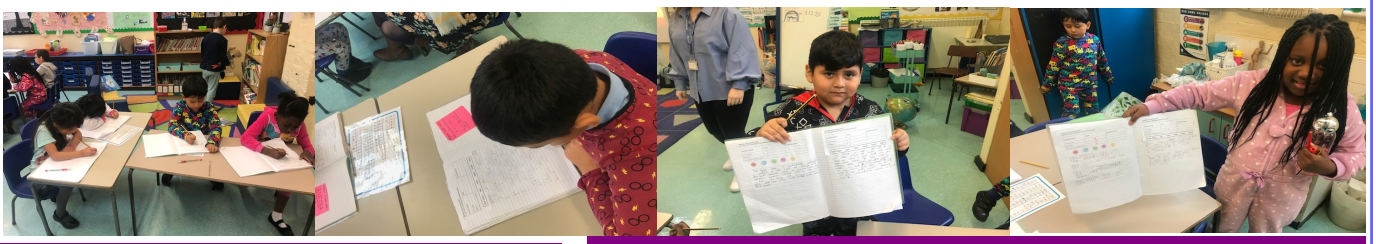
All of our Christmas performances will be shared with you remotely this year on either Google Classroom or Tapestry (EYFS). We will share further information with you next week.

School Dates and News

Please see the dates on Page 2 to remind you of what is happening and when. 11th December is a busy day! Don't forget your Christmas jumper. This newsletter contains lots of information, so please take note of all of the details. Many thanks for your helpful parental feedback—see pages 3-5.

Excellent writing in Oak Class

This week children in Year 2 have immersed themselves in the story of the Polar Express. They watched parts of the film and wore their pyjamas like the children in the film. They also received hot chocolate in order to be able to use all of their senses when it came to writing a diary entry in the role of the main character.



VALUE OF THE WEEK

Flourishing Individuals—Preparing for the future

BIBLE VERSE

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you Psalm 32:8

Attendance Update

Nursery — 99.5%
Reception — 95.29%
Year 1— 95.11%
Year 2— 92.59%
Year 3— 95.83%
Year 4— 91.2%
Year 5— 0
Year 6— 90.27%

WELL DONE!
94.19%
Overall Attendance:
Well done to Nursery for achieving almost 100% this week. Lets all work hard to achieve our school target of 96%

School News

School Christmas Dinner

Christmas dinner will be on **Friday 11th December 2020**. Please ensure that you have made the payment in ParentPay. **If you did not submit a form, please ensure you provide a packed lunch for your child as meals have been pre-ordered.** (Christmas dinner is free for children in Reception, Y1, Y2 who have pre-ordered and pupils with Free School Meals)

Save the Children CHRISTMAS JUMPER DAY

Wear a Christmas Jumper on Friday 11th December to support Christmas Jumper Day! No need to buy, Christmas colours or accessories will do! Please bring in a £1 donation for our Save the Children collection

KEY SCHOOL DATES

DATE	DETAILS
Thursday 10th Dec 2020	Last day for Shoe Box Gifts to be handed in
Friday 11th Dec 2020	EY Nativity performance available from today
Friday 11th Dec 2020	School Christmas Lunch (for those who have ordered)
Friday 11th Dec 2020	Christmas Jumper Day
Wednesday 16th Dec 2020	KS 1 Nativity Performance available from today
Thursday 17th Dec 2020	St Mark's Carol Service available from today
Thursday 17th Dec 2020	Willow and Sycamore Class Strings performance available from today
Thursday 17th Dec 2020	LAST DAY OF SCHOOL (normal finish time)
Mon 4th Jan 2021	Inset Day—SCHOOL CLOSED for Pupils
Tue 5th Jan 2021	Children return to school

SOME FEEDBACK FROM OUR RETURN TO SCHOOL SURVEY

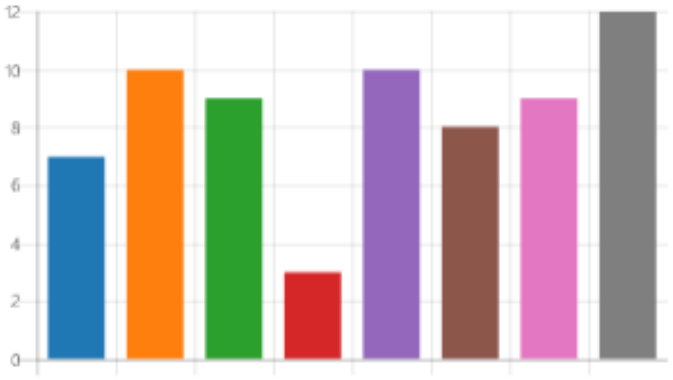
Dear Parents and Carers,

Many thanks for the feedback that you provided for us in the St Mark's return to school survey . Please see a summary of the survey and some of the comments and responses that were raised. Your feedback is very valuable, as we are always looking for ways in which we can improve the school even more.

2. What year group is your child/children in? (if you have more than one child please select all years that apply)

More Details

Nursery	7
Reception	10
Year 1	9
Year 2	3
Year 3	10
Year 4	8
Year 5	9
Year 6	12



3. How have you found the arrangements at the beginning and end of the school day?

More Details Insights

Very good	24
Good	25
Fair	4
Poor	1
Other	0

4. How has your child coped with returning back to school?

More Details Insights

Very well	33
Well	18
Not so well	3
Extremely not well	0

5. How safe does your child feel now that school has re-opened

More Details Insights

Very safe	24
Somewhat safe	21
Neither safe nor unsafe	9
Somewhat unsafe	0
Very unsafe	0

SOME FEEDBACK FROM OUR RETURN TO SCHOOL SURVEY

6. Has your child/children settled into their new class

More Details

Yes	51
No	1
Other	2

8. Are you provided with enough information from the school

More Details Insights

Yes	53
No	0
Other	1

10. Do you feel confident to approach the school to express any concerns

More Details Insights

Yes	47
No	6
Other	1

12. How confident are you with using Google Classroom?

More Details

Extremely confident	19
Somewhat confident	25
Neutral	6
Somewhat not confident	1
Extremely not confident	3

14. Do you feel that you can support and are actively involved in your child's learning outside of school hours?

More Details Insights

Yes	48
No	4
Other	2

SOME FEEDBACK FROM OUR RETURN TO SCHOOL SURVEY

Some parental questions from the survey	School responses
It is sometimes hard to support my child as I am not familiar with the topic. But I try to Google what I don't know. Also my child has additional needs	Please have a look on our school website to see some recommended website addresses. Some of them provide some helpful background information for parents. Also please speak to Mrs Moses, our school Inclusion Manager.
The traffic after school needs to be sorted before a child gets seriously injured.	We are currently working with Lambeth Council to try to improve this, but please can we urge parents to park responsibly and avoid parking on the yellow zigzag lines, to help to keep our children safe.
I would like to be able to ask his teacher how he's getting on but completely understand why I can't at the moment	Hopefully you were able to catch up during parents evening, but we are very sad that the current situation has limited the communication between teachers and parents. Please continue to email any queries that you may have.
Overall things have gone well so far. The teachers are good and takes good care of the kids. My child is very happy to be in the school and seem to like the teachers too. What needs to be improved is strict adherence to social distancing protocol on the part of parents especially during the pickup hours .	This is a really important point and we continue to regularly remind parents at the gate to maintain their distance whilst waiting and to also wear a mask whilst lining up and when they enter the school premises.
Can you allow the use of masks in the classroom when lecture is not on	This is currently not advised within Primary Schools
It has been good. Collecting lunch vouchers outside term times hasn't always worked, didn't get the voucher that was meant to be sent in the recent half term.	We received notification about the FSM vouchers at 12.00pm on the last day of term, which made it extremely difficult for schools to source and disseminate the vouchers to all of their families, especially those who were absent. More notice has been given for the Christmas holidays however for future reference, please ensure you contact the office to resolve such issues.
Some of us need to leave our children earlier than 8.55 to get to work.	8.55am was the previous start time for all pupils before we staggered the start of the day. If you would like to drop your children off before, please speak to a member of the office staff about spaces in breakfast club, which take children from 8.00am

Mrs Eade will send through feedback to your responses from the survey on the Health and Relationship Education Policy and scheme of work in the next newsletter.

support for residents

Lambeth

Marcus Rashford Food Vouchers
Lambeth Council has been awarded funding from Central Government to support families over Christmas following Marcus Rashford's free school meals campaign. Families with children receiving free school meals will receive £20 vouchers which includes £15 allocation for food and £5 towards bills. These vouchers will be awarded to families for spend during the build-up to Christmas and during the February half term. For further information see: **gov.uk/government/news/new-winter-package-to-provide-further-support-for-children-and-families**

Covid-19 Advice and Emergency Support Scheme Information on a range of support available through Lambeth Council, including the Emergency Support Scheme for people facing financial hardship and crisis: **lambeth.gov.uk/coronavirus-covid-19** and **lambeth.gov.uk/apply-for-emergency-support**

Opportunity Lambeth Provider of a range of support services for unemployed Lambeth residents, and access to job opportunities through the Opportunity Lambeth jobs portal: **opportunity.lambeth.gov.uk**

Find emergency food, advice and other support: lambethlarder.org

Financial advice and support

Want support to stop smoking and save money? FREE support available through Lambeth Stop Smoking Service. Call **0800 856 3409** or **0203 049 3409**, or email **gst-tr.stopsmokinglambeth@nhs.net**

Get support and advice over the phone or via email The **MyCommunity Gateway** service, powered by AgeUK Lambeth, can help you with social support, advice and connect you with local services that can help you with whatever challenge you are facing. You can ask for help for you or for someone you know. The service is for anyone who is over 18 and a resident of Lambeth.
Call **MyCommunity Gateway helpline on 0333 360 3700**, Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm.
Email: **mycommunity@ageuklambeth.org**

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See if you are eligible for Healthy Start food vouchers

Pregnant? Children under four?

Don't miss out on Healthy Start food vouchers worth over £900* per child.

You can get Healthy Start vouchers if you are at least ten weeks pregnant or have a child under four years old. Your family must also get one of the following:

- **Income Support**
- **Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance**
- **Income-related Employment and Support Allowance**
- **Child Tax Credit**
  (with a family income of £16,190 or less per year)
- **Universal Credit**
  (with a family take home pay of £408 or less per month)

You also qualify if you are under 18 and pregnant, even if you don't receive any of the above benefits.

Worth up to £6.20 per week** to spend on milk, fruit and veg, and infant formula milk.

Sign up online today healthystart.nhs.uk
These weekly payments will increase from £3.10 to £4.25 from April 2021. Please follow this **link** to a video of Lambeth's Cabinet Member for Children and Families, Cllr Ed Davie explaining this brilliant initiative.

LAMBETH LARDER
Connecting people, food & support

Operation Christmas Child

Each year we support Samaritan's Purse Operation Christmas Child appeal when we send shoeboxes containing Christmas girts to less fortunate children throughout the world. We were in two minds about whether to support it this year due to the current pandemic, but we felt that in times such as these we need to continue to think about those less fortunate than ourselves and provide hope and support to others. This is a lovely family activity to do over the half term. Your child will have been given an information leaflet with details about filling a shoebox. Ideas for what can be included in the shoebox are below. Please do not spend too much and make sure boxes are returned to the school office by

Thursday 10th December 2020.

Toys

- Doll
- Stuffed animal or toy
- Small musical instrument (such as a harmonica or recorder)
- Small foam football or tennis ball
- Finger puppets
- Slinky
- Etch A Sketch
- Skipping rope
- Play-doh (you could add plastic cookie cutters as non-sharp utensils to use with it)
- Small puzzles
- Costume items to play dress-up, such as crowns and costume jewellery
- Plastic toys and toy figures
- Yo-yo
- Small Frisbee
- Small kite

School Supplies

- Pencils
- Small manual pencil sharpener
- Ruler
- Eraser
- Coloured pencils
- Pencil Case
- Crayons
- Felt Pens
- Colouring pads
- Colouring books
- Picture book
- Notebooks
- Glue stick (Do not include liquid glue)
- Small adhesive tape
- Watercolour paint set (Finger paint palette, paint brushes, paper)
- Chalkboard and chalk
- Geometry set
- Pre-inked Stampers

Hygiene Items

- Comb
- Hairbrush
- Toothbrush
- Flannel
- Bar soap (packaged and/or in a container)
- Reusable plastic containers: cup, water bottle, plate, bowl, blunt-edged utensils (Consider filling an empty container with non-liquid items such as hair bows, bracelets, sunglasses, or flannel to make use of the space)

Other

- Hat/scarf/mittens
- Sunglasses
- Small bag/purse
- Hair bows or clips
- Friendship bracelets (woven with yarn or embroidery thread)
- Make-it-yourself craft items or kit
- Binoculars
- A personal note and photo

Visit https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-Christmas-child/ For more details

ST MARK'S TREES

Nursery

Cedar Class

Reception

Ebony Class

Year 1

Juniper Class

Year 2

Oak Class

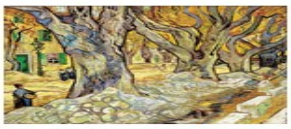
Year 3

Olive Class

Year 4

Palm Class

Year 5



Sycamore Class

Year 6

Willow Class

Ebony Tree

- There are three main species of ebony tree: Ceylon, Gabon and Makassar.
- They are evergreen, which means that they do not lose all of their leaves at once.
- They grow in Sri Lanka, India, Western Africa and Indonesia.
- They reach between 20 and 30 meters tall.
- The bark of the ebony tree is very dark grey and scaly!
- Ebony wood is very precious. Pharaohs used to be buried with it.
- It is often used to make violins and the black keys on pianos.
- They can live for hundreds of years and don't mature until they are 200 years old.

"The men of Dedan were thy merchants; many isles were the merchandise of thine hand: they brought thee for a present horns of ivory and ebony."
Ezekiel 27.15

School News

ACTS OF KINDNESS?

Get inspired by these suggested acts of kindness, use these as a starter to think of your own ideas. It is also important to be kind to yourself as well as friends, family, your community, and the environment.

Remember to fill in your calendar when you have done a kind act, by ticking the box or colouring in the snowflake on the day on the calendar.

As the COVID-19 situation is ever changing, parents and teachers must ensure these ideas can be done safely and following government guidelines for your area.

Kind act suggestions:

- Do something helpful for a friend or family member.
- Tell a school friend or sibling, three things you like about them.
- Call, write or video chat with a friend or relative you have not seen for a while.
- Invite someone new from your class or bubble to play with you at break time or in the park.
- Take five minutes to learn a new coping skill, for example, breathing with colour.
  https://firstaidchampions.redcross.org.uk/primary/kindness_and_coping/coping_skills/
- Donate any unwanted books, clothes or toys to a charity shop. Or perhaps you could do a toy exchange with a friend.
- Share your kindness by encouraging others to be kind to each other.
- Be kind to your body and mind. Take a walk and note down something that flies, something that is furry and something that is green. Noticing things around you is a good way to be in the present moment.
- Write or draw all the things you like doing that help you to be kind to yourself, such as listening to music, making something or playing.
- Think of three kind words to describe yourself.
- Look at old photos together with your family and think about happy times.
- Do some mindful colouring to help you relax and focus using the downloadable The Snowman and The Snowdog templates.
- Make sure you look after yourself. You can do this by getting plenty of sleep, exercising and eating healthy things.
- Think about being kind to the earth and climate. Use scrap paper to draw on and put used paper in the recycling bin.
- Make and share homemade gifts with friends and family.

Start your calendar by writing a list of the all the people you want to be kind to, whilst thinking "how can I be kind to them? Or what help do they need right now?" Think about one friend or family member you can be kind to and what things they might like.

In partnership with

BritishRedCross

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School News

LSP Lambeth Schools Partnership

AIM HIGH

RAISING THE GAME

An education event for parents hosted by the Right Honourable Stuart Lawrence

WHAT ARE THE SESSIONS?

These online sessions are for Lambeth parents / carers with specific focus on Black Caribbean parents / carers. The Rt Hon Stuart Lawrence will facilitate questions and discussion with parents around the session's theme: providing career advice, helpful tips and practical advice to support their children in their educational, post-education and professional journeys.

The theme of each session will be the same as the Aim High events for pupils taking place in the 2020-21 school year. This session will focus on Law. Jazmin Cole a Trainee solicitor from Freeth's law firm will be the guest speaker.

There will be a Q&A and discussion section as part of each event.

WHY ARE WE DOING THEM?

These events are being run as part of the Lambeth School Partnership's Raising the Game initiative. Aim High sessions have been run for pupils in year 2 to year 10 over the last two years. Now the initiative also wants a similar opportunity for parents / carers so that they can be empowered to more effectively impact their children's success and achievement.

REQUEST A LINK TO THE EVENT FROM YOUR SCHOOL

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE RAISING THE GAME INITIATIVE AND ITS AIM HIGH EVENTS CAN BE FOUND HERE: HTTPS://LAMBETHSCHOOLSPARTNERSHIP.UK/PAGE/14044