



English Martyrs School,
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Headteacher – Miss B Nugent

Mission Statement “We are special people on a journey, growing and learning together in search of excellence, as we follow in the footsteps of Jesus.”
Values : Love – Respect -Honesty

Dear Parents,

13th December 2023

I hope you were able to attend at least one of the Advent / Christmas performances which the children worked so hard to prepare for you. Their performances were amazing and their talent really shone through. May I remind parents that photographs and film of school events is for your personal use and should not be shared on social media. Sharing images with anyone online places some of our children at risk. Further, some parents may wish to minimise their children's online presence or protect their identity for cultural or religious reasons. Please help us to protect our children.

Pupils from Years 4,5 and 6 will continue their Advent preparations next week by attending Church to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Tuesday at 9.30am.

Well done to the children who joined English Martyrs Church Choir for the Carol Service on Saturday, their singing was amazing from first note to last. A beautiful event to prepare us for Christmas.

The children really enjoyed their Christmas lunch and some were very brave in trying new foods. There were some very clean plates at the end and some enjoyed extra helpings. *‘Spectacular’ ‘Delicious’ ‘Although I didn’t like the sprouts, I tried them!’*

Condolences – We were very sad to hear from Mrs Nolan, our midday meal supervisor, that her husband Trevor died unexpectedly on Monday following a short illness. Our thoughts and prayers are with Mrs Nolan / Miss Debbie and her sons Sam and Thomas. (all three have been pupils at English Martyrs) Please keep the family in your prayers.

Relationship, Health and Sex Education Consultation - You will receive a text tomorrow about a letter on the school website regarding the RHSE Consultation. The letter will have a link to information and training for parents about RHSE content. This consultation will be open until January 19th and we would encourage you to participate.

Lunchtime Carol Singing - Years 4, 5 & 6 went carol singing in various locations last week. Year 4 sang at 125 Old Broad Street and raised £87, Year 5 sang at Spitalfields to raise funds for Providence Row homeless charity and raised £385 and Year 6 sang at Whitechapel station for The Passage homeless shelter and contributed to their £1,175 collection.

Collection boxes for tinned and packed foods and toiletries have been placed in the school lobby for your kind donations which will be delivered to various charities over the Christmas period. The School Council has asked all visitors to bring an item of food or toiletries along with them which will be donated to the homeless charities we are supporting this Christmas. Children have been learning how important it is to remember the poor at this time of year.

We appreciate you giving what you can and realise that some families may not be able to contribute as much as others but give their time and energies in other charitable ways.

Parent Fundraising Association - Thank you to the parents who have arranged the many fund raising events this term, thanks to their energy and enthusiasm and your support and generosity you have raised

the target of £10,000 to fund the cost of Music and Spanish lessons for this year. On behalf of teachers and pupils we thank you so much.

End of term assessments - Pupils have completed the Autumn assessments for Reading, Mathematics and Spelling, Grammar & Punctuation. These assessments are to ensure your child is on track to reach the expected standard by the end of the year. Teachers have already provided workshops about expectations for Key Stage 2 pupils. We would like more parents to attend, so the meetings will be repeated.

Year 3 and 4 parents meeting on Wednesday 17th January 3.00 pm.

Year 5 and 6 parents meeting on Thursday 18th January 3.00pm.

These meetings are extremely important - reaching the expected standard, especially in Upper Key Stage 2, can be hard for some children and the workshops will provide information and strategies for you so that you can support your child at home.

Cost of living help - Household budgets continue to be stretched as the cost of living increases and families struggle to afford everyday essentials. Tower Hamlets Council has produced a number of printed Cost of Living Help booklets which will be delivered to schools to hand on to families as required.

Booklets signpost residents to the help and support available in the borough, including information on financial support and council services, as well as third sector organisations that can offer assistance over a range of areas. Tower Hamlets have a dedicated [webpage](#) which has a range of information on the support available in the borough which students and parents can access.

The Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) programme - The (HAF) programme provides eligible children and young people with free enriching holiday activities and nutritious meals during the Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays. The Christmas HAF programme will run from **Wednesday 27th December 2023 to Friday 5 January 2024**.

We will have clubs delivering throughout the borough, and these spaces will be booked directly through the clubs. We will be announcing the clubs on the [HAF website](#).

The HAF programme funding is primarily for school aged children from Reception to Year 11 (inclusive) who receive benefits-related free school meals (FSM). For a child claiming benefits-related FSM the child will have received a unique HAF code in a letter from Tower Hamlets containing a unique HAF code which they can use to book a free space at a HAF holiday club.

Safeguarding your families during the holiday period - The safety and welfare of our families is key part of our Safeguarding commitment, especially when schools are closed. Parents can contact support services in Tower Hamlets through the following avenues.

Early Help Hub 020 7364 5006

MASH - Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub 020 7364 5606/5601//5358/7796

Child Protection Advice Line 020 7364 3444

We will also remind children of the Childline Helpline should they need to seek support or advice.

Childline - 0800 1111

Goodman's Fields Christmas Event - You and your family are invited to the Christmas Festival at Goodman's Fields on Friday 15th December 4.30 - 8.00 pm. Santa's Grotto, fun & games and more.

Online Safety - Please be vigilant regarding your child's safety when using the internet on all devices, old and new. Put parental controls and anti-virus software on devices, there are links to help on the school website and elsewhere.

We have a no blame policy at school and I would encourage you to be open about the darker aspects of the internet. Teach your children to 'click off' from any abusive, violent or sexual images and tell you or a trusted adult immediately. We try to teach moral resilience - that also means the children having the courage to resist the online behaviour of peers older or younger; not always easy for children and young people but your vigilance will keep your children safe from harm.

Spring term - School will open for pupils on Tuesday 9th January, I hope all families will have returned from their travels in time.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas, hoping you relax and enjoy special time with your families. As we welcome Christ this Christmas may our faith be strengthened and trust that we all return to school refreshed and energised for the year ahead.

God bless,

Miss Nugent