

# St Michael's

## Church of England Infant School



**February 2021 Newsletter**

This half term's value has been

**PATIENCE**

### **Dear Parents and Carers**

Our value this half term has been Patience. The children and the rest of our school community have certainly had to live out this value. With the constant changes that we have all had to embrace this half term, we feel incredibly proud of how well staff, parents and the children have adjusted. We have all had to show incredible flexibility and resilience and our ability to do this, is testimony to the strength of the relationships we all share here at St Michael's.

### **Remote Education**

We sent you our Parent and Pupil Zoom Acceptable Use Policy and 'Zoom Rocket Rules' for children and parents last week. Please take the time to read the policy as well as share the Rocket Rules with your child. So far, we have been very impressed by the children's behaviour and concentration and any issues have been easily rectified with gentle reminders about our expectations. We are all adapting to these new ways of learning so these frameworks are essential in getting the best out of them. We have tried to find the best timing option for the majority of our families, although we appreciate that not all parents and carers can attend the allocated sessions due to other commitments. I am sure you will understand that our scheduling of these sessions across the school is limited by a number of factors. We are currently not recording any zooms as GDPR and safeguarding compliance is a complex process and we do not feel that this is the right thing for our school at the moment.

We post all of the learning and links on our online communication platform, Tapestry but don't forget that you can also access the learning on our website. Our zoom sessions are set up in the office and the invitations are sent out on ParentMail. In order to support families with managing and organising the learning, we post an overview on a Friday and then the learning resources and links the day before. We feel that this provides the right balance between knowing in advance what the learning will be and not feeling too overwhelmed. We think that you are all doing an incredible job at being your child's new teacher! If it helps to release the pressure a little, we would like to reiterate that learning at Infant level should include a mixture of talk based, outdoor and practical learning. Every family's circumstances are different and you must plan the day according to what works for you. At the present time, we feel that we have the right balance between live zooms, pre-recorded videos, group sessions and learning plans. We base this on ongoing conversations, parent feedback, how well the children are able to engage, the age and stage of our children and our overall capacity. We will continue to monitor our provision and respond to any national changes. If we decide to make any further changes, we will update you as soon as possible.

## Lent



With Lent approaching, we are reminded that this is a period of reflection in the lead up to Easter. The season of Lent offers us an opportunity to discuss with the children, a balanced view of life, to let children know that there are times in life when they will be sad, while also reassuring them that, no matter what happens, God is always with them to help them get through tough times. To help children to understand what Lent is, we explain to them that it is a special time in the church year when we focus on spiritual things and do things that bring us closer to God.

The focus at Lent is often on "giving something up," usually a favourite food or perhaps a pleasurable activity. It is also important for children to understand why they are doing it and do it in the right spirit. It's important to explain that giving something up for Lent can give us an appreciation for all we have. It is also a nice idea to have the children do something positive related to what they are giving up. For instance, if they have given up sweets or chocolate for Lent, then they could take the money they would have spent and put it in a jar to be used for an organization, which helps others. If they have decided to give up watching television one day a week, then they could use the time they would have spent watching TV, helping someone.

## Well-being – Place2be



### Wheel of Well-being

Last week was Children's Mental Health week. The theme was 'Express yourself'! At school and at home, children were able to access a variety of activities, which focused on staying healthy in body and mind. We shared the 'Wheel of Well-being' as this helps to highlight all of the different areas in children's lives that need to be taken care of in order to feel positive and healthy.

Place2be is a children's mental health charity that has many high quality resources that you may find useful. Below is a link to a virtual assembly by the National Oak Academy. This follows the theme of 'Express yourself'.

<https://www.childrensmentalhealthweek.org.uk/news/watch-our-children-s-mental-health-week-assembly-with-bafta-kids-and-oak-national-academy/> (Express yourself assembly)

The page below will signpost you to a variety of inspiring and fun activities that you may wish to take part in with your child.

<https://www.place2be.org.uk/our-services/parents-and-carers/coronavirus-wellbeing-activity-ideas-for-families/>

## Covid 19

School staff are now engaged in twice weekly voluntary testing through rapid lateral flow tests that we have been provided with. This will continue for the foreseeable future and allow us to identify some asymptomatic cases as early as possible and prevent any further transmission.

Half-term is approaching and I wanted to remind you that in the half-term the school are still responsible for the tracing of any positive Covid cases for people who become symptomatic up to 48 hours after they leave our school. Please use the office e-mail ([info@stmichaels-dorking.surrey.sch.uk](mailto:info@stmichaels-dorking.surrey.sch.uk)) to let us know if you have received a positive result for a pupil. We would ask that you make sure you receive a reply so that you are certain we have received your message and acted upon it. We look forward to seeing those at school when we return on **Tuesday 23rd February**. Monday is an INSET Day and we will therefore not be setting any work for that day.

## Loving to learn .....



We hope you enjoy some pictures of the creative remote learning from our children at home. We are so proud of how hard you are working and thoroughly enjoy seeing the work you have completed.

## Otters



## Owls



## Woodpeckers



Next half terms value is **COMPASSION**.

God Bless

*Nicola Cleather*

Head of School

*Paula Bliss*

Executive Head

### A Prayer for Lent

Help us to see this holy season of Lent as a time of spiritual renewal, rather than a time of hardship. Motivate us to reach a new level of experiencing your grace.

**AMEN**

The small school with a big

