



# St. Monica's Primary School

## Newsletter 21st July 2021



Dear Parents, Governors and Friends,

This is our last Newsletter of the Academic Year, and I am writing to a school community who finds itself split apart yet again.

And yet: though we might be split apart we should look back at this year and celebrate the amazing spirit of the St. Monica's School Community. I have never been so proud to be the Head Teacher of this tremendous little primary school.

I am proud of our Governors who have scrutinised Risk Assessments, supported the staff and kept the Governance of the school running with the same dedication and thoroughness as ever, despite not being able to step foot in the building. Gone are our 6 pm meetings in Year 6 with chocolate biscuits to fuel the policy reviews into the evenings, but we've become familiar with each other's Google Meet rooms and the occasional visits of children in to see what mum and dad are on the laptop for. Behind the scenes Governors have run a food bank for families in the area, have helped make our First Holy Communion Celebrations happen and have overseen a time of change with great resilience.

I am proud of our teachers and teaching assistants who have gone from 0 to 60 as experts of a new technology, upped their game since last year to improve our remote teaching offer to the children, taught our Key Worker groups and then worked harder than ever to help the children catch up with things they've missed during the lockdowns. I've never seen so much 1:1 reading, and little groups focusing on key objectives with a real determination. No school initiative has been greeted with 'we can't do that' but always with 'how can we make that happen for the children'. The teachers and teaching assistants really care for the children and have completed a year of professional dedication that they should be proud of.

I am proud of all our 'back room' staff who have wrestled with DfE reporting forms, Parent Meeting systems, Risk Assessment arrangements, bubble closures and openings, extra cleaning, and generally taking on a new role every other day to keep the school running.

I am proud of our parents who have been multi taskers extraordinaire this year. I know of parents who have worked till the early hours to get the day job done and been ready to support their child on a live call the next morning. However you managed the impossible task you were set, I salute you. You guided your children safely through an unprecedented time, you sent us upbeat and kind messages of support and you cheerfully put up with every change of arrangements.

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But most of all, I am proud of our tremendous children. Whether at home or at school they have shown great resilience. Even when returning after a lengthy period at home, they have been beautifully behaved and a pleasure to teach. They have looked after each other – the warmly supportive comments of children, in the chat sections of Google Meet Assemblies, has been a highlight of my year. They have worked hard – there are so many stories of children who have made super progress through their own self motivation and hard work. We wish our precious Year 6 children all the best for a happy and successful next step in their education (and there is more to be said to them in the St. Monica's Mascot which will be published next week). We wish all our children a safe and peaceful summer holiday and look forward to welcoming you back to school in September.

Last word is reserved for four much loved and valued colleagues. Mrs Keleher has a wonderful career to look back on and takes with her our love and thanks for the years of caring devotion she has given to our children. Mr Marciniak moves on to take up the Headship of our Lady's Catholic Primary School. We are so proud that our school has helped to prepare him for such a role. He has been an outstanding teacher and huge character in his time at St Monica's. Mrs Morrow and Mrs Tyson have both been long serving teaching assistants giving hugely skilled service to numerous youngsters whose education has been enriched through their support. All 4 colleagues will be missed.

To everyone in the St Monica's Community we send our love,

Mrs Norman and all the staff x

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