St Bernadette's Catholic Primary School

Loving, serving and growing together with Jesus

Autumn (Advent) Term 1 2026

Virtue: Generosity

Catholic Social Principles: Preferential Option for the Poor

Dear Parents and Carers,
I hope that you found last week's parent consultation sessions helpful – it makes such a positive difference when teachers and parents come together in this way. I apologise for the initial confusion was we moved over to the new booking system.

I hope that your children (Y1-Y6) thoroughly enjoyed the theatre production of Pinocchio – it is wonderful to have been able to offer such an entertaining, interactive opportunity for the children.

Year 6 recently enjoyed a fantastic residential trip to Rock UK, taking part in a wide range of exciting, challenging and team-building activities. I congratulate the children on all their achievements. I understand they were the cleanest, most organised group of children – the staff were very impressed! I extend my grateful thanks to all the staff members who gave their time and energy to provide these enrichment opportunities for our children.

We break up for the half term holidays on Friday 23rd October, which is also the annual PTA 'Break the Rules' day (normal pick-up times). School resumes on Monday 2nd November.
Please see the dates page at the end of this newsletter for the planned activities for the rest of this term.
Kindest regards, Mrs Zamora

Special School Mass

On Sunday 8th November, we are very privileged to be leading the celebration of the Mass in Christ the King Church, Kents Hill at 11:30am. We are hoping that lots of our children, along with their families, whether Catholic or not, are able to attend the Mass as it is a wonderful opportunity to come together as a community. Last year, we were absolutely delighted with the huge group of children who attended; they looked so smart in their school uniforms and were a credit to their families and made us very proud. The parishioners were very complimentary and commented on the beautiful manners and singing of our children. We hope that we can do the same again this year! In order to show the pride we have for St. Bernadette's, we are asking that our children attend Mass in their school uniform. Our children will lead the readings, bidding prayers and lead in singing the hymns. It would be lovely to see many of you there. Please indicate on the School Gateway if your child is able to attend the Mass. Please drop your child off inside the church by 11:15am if you are not attending the Mass with them.

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Spread the Word …

Lower birthrates locally and nationally have resulted in many schools having surplus places.
At St Bernadette's, we have an increasing number of available spaces in our younger year groups.
This is a great opportunity for new families to join us. However, lower numbers of children can create a concern for school finances and the future structure for our school. Please do support Catholic education and our lovely school by telling people about us. Word of mouth from you to your friends and families could help us a lot. Do recommend us to families with babies, toddlers and young children. You can also request a school poster from us to share on notice boards at your work or to display information about our upcoming school tours. If you have any great ideas of how we can promote St Bernadette's across Milton Keynes, please do reach out to us.

We are a welcoming and inclusive school and families do not have to live locally nor be Catholic to attend.

Applying for a Place at St Bernadette's

You can now apply for a place at our lovely school or nursery for September 2027. To apply for a place in Reception (FS2 - children born between 1st Sept 2022 and 31st August 2023), there are two necessary steps. Applications MUST be made via the council https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/school-admissions/starting-primary-or-juniormiddle-school-september Additionally, supplementary forms should be completed and returned directly to St Bernadette's. You can find out more and download our Admissions Policy and supplementary forms from our website or collect them from the school office. https://www.stbernadettesschool.com/school-admissions/

Even if your child already attends our nursery, you still must make a formal application to the council for a place in Reception for September 2027.

If you know of parents of children who are applying for school or nursery places for September 2027, please encourage them to come and see our school in action - we have tours available at the following times and days:

St. Bernadette's Catholic Primary School, Tewkesbury Lane, Monkston Park, Milton Keynes, MK10 9PH
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Join Our Governing Board

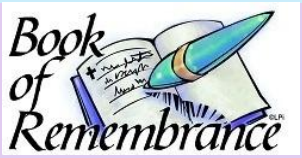
We are pleased to advise that there are currently two vacancies to join our school's Governing Board in the voluntary role of Parent Governor.
Although not essential, if you have a Public Finance or Educational background and can spare the time to be part of our active Governing Board, we would love to hear from you – an email has been sent out to all families with nomination forms attached (to be returned by 2nd November). Please ask at the office if you require a hard copy.
The role of the Governing Board is:

- Head Teacher and staff appointments
- Strategic Planning and Change Management
- Educational Standards
- Financial Planning and Control

Induction and ongoing training is made available to all Governors. If you are interested in finding out more about the role, please contact me (ZamoraJ@stbernadettesschool.com or Dr C Edordu, Chair of the Governing Board, to arrange an informal chat: CEdordu@stbernadettesschool.com

Rail safety

As part of our special Safety Fortnight Focus, KS1 and KS2 had important railway safety assemblies on Monday delivered by Jeevan Kang from Network Rail. He shared some fascinating and eye-opening information with our children about railway tracks, including the speed and weight of trains and just how long they take to stop.
It was fantastic to see the children so engaged, with gasps of shock, hands shooting up to ask questions and so many eager to join in the discussion. Their reactions showed just how powerful and important this message was, especially when he shared that railway-related trespass incidents involving young people are above average in Milton Keynes, making the assemblies particularly relevant to our children.
We are grateful to Jeevan, for such an informative, engaging and important assembly which has helped reinforce a message that could one day save a life



November is the month when we particularly remember our lost loved ones. On return from the half term holidays, we will have a Remembrance Book outside our school chapel where we add the names of anyone from our school community and extended families who we wish to be remembered in our prayers.
Please do let the school office know (office@stbernadettesschool.com) of any names you would like to be added to the special book.

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Our Charitable Work

Thank you so much for all your generous donations to MK Food Bank. Thanks to your help, the Food Bank will be well-stocked to provide food for some of the most vulnerable individuals and families in Milton Keynes. We cannot thank you enough. Monday 12th is the last day to bring in donations.

CAFOD's WORLD GIFTS

Year 1 - 6 children have voted to choose the CAFOD WORLD GIFTS they would like to fundraise for this academic year and they are certainly aiming high! The results of the class votes can be seen below. Each year group from nursery to Year 6 will be planning their own fundraising events across the school year. Good luck children!

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Heartfelt Thanks!

I knew that when I was contacted by the SVP charity regarding a father and his 3 year old daughter in crisis that I would be able to reach out to our school community for help. Within just one week so many bags of lovely clothes were delivered to the school to support this vulnerable family. Thank you so much! I am so grateful to be part of such a generous and caring school family.

Special Year of St Francis

As a school community we are continually inspired by the life of St Francis of Assisi, especially as we remember the 800th anniversary of his death and celebrate this special year which has been dedicated to him by Pope Leo. The children have been learning about his special prayers, hymns and how he was devoted to helping the poor, caring for God's beautiful creation and for being an instrument of peace. The children carried out a range of activities last week; including contributing to a whole school prayer chain for peace in our world and making promises to look after our world. The children have also written beautiful prayers which have been added to our display. We have all been challenged with the mission of living like St Francis: caring for our earth, being peacemakers and looking after those who need our help.

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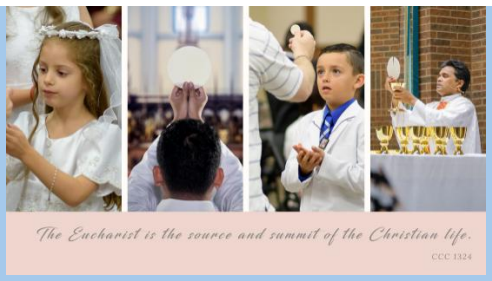
October Rosary Prayer Group

It has been lovely to welcome families to our early morning Friday Rosary Prayer Group at 8:10am in the school chapel.

Friday 23rd October will be the final chance – please do consider joining us between now and then. We have plenty of sets of rosary beads available for your use.

First Reconciliation and First Communion 2027



In our cluster of parishes (Christ the King, Our Lady of Lourdes, St Bede's, St Edward's and St Mary's), preparation for Reconciliation and Communion will begin after half term. The programme is for children in Year 3 and upwards. This year parents are to come to the Open House on any Monday in October to register their child. Open House takes place at Christ the King Church, Frithwood Crescent, Kents Hill, MK7 6HQ, each Monday between 5.30pm and 7pm. Please come on any Monday evening during October, to register.

Mini Vinnies Comissioning Service

On 22nd September we celebrated our new Mini Vinnies in our very special Commissioning Ceremony. We were thrilled to have our school governor, Deacon Reg, take part in the ceremony and inspire our children with his wonderful words:

"As Mini Vinnies, you follow the example of St Vincent de Paul by showing kindness, compassion and care for others. You help to make our school and our wider community a better place.
Our Community Mini Vinnies – you look for ways to support people in need and make a positive difference in the local community.
Eco Mini Vinnies – you care for God's creation by helping to protect our environment and encouraging everyone to look after our world.

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Prayer Mini Vinnies - you help us to remember the importance of prayer and to bring the needs of others before God.
Each group has a special role, but all of you share the same mission: to serve others with generous hearts. We are very proud of you and look forward to seeing the difference you will make. May God bless you as you begin your work as Mini Vinnies." (Deacon Reg)

We are very blessed to have so many children in our school community who are so passionate in their desire to help and serve others in our school and wider community. Watch this space for the wonderful work that they will carry out in the coming year!

If you want to find out more about the roles and work of our Mini Vinnies, follow this link on our website https://www.stbernadettesschool.com/mini-vinnies-1

Class Collective Worships

We hope that parents and carers will be able to join their children in the small hall and chapel for class collective worships this year. Please see the dates page at the end of this newsletter for the worships taking place next half term.

Mass for the Harvest and the New School Year

Fr Francis and Deacon Reg came to school to celebrate our very special Harvest Thanksgiving Mass with Yera3-6. The Prayer Mini Vinnies did a fantastic job in leading the readings and prayers. The singing was absolutely beautiful from our KS2 children as always. We were delighted that some of our parents joined us. Hoping we can have a few more next time!

Year 6 Applications for Secondary School

The deadline for applying for secondary school places for our current Year 6 pupils is 31st October. Applications are made via the council website. The portal for applications is currently open: https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/schools-and-lifelong-learning/school-admissions/starting-secondaryupper-school-september-2027 Please make sure you do state all four preference schools in your application. If your child is taking the 11+, please **do not** only select grammar schools as your preferences. These schools are over-subscribed, therefore, **passing the 11+ does not automatically ensure a place for your child.**

Our local Catholic secondary school is St Paul's. https://www.st-pauls.org.uk/ We highly recommend visiting to see them in action. Year 5 & 6 parents and carers are warmly welcome to make visits to St Paul's each Friday at 9:30 until Friday 23rd October. Please contact St Paul's to make an appointment: 01908 669735

Thank you to our PTA

Our PTA do wonderful work organizing fun activities for our children across the year whilst also raising vital funds for the school. I cannot thank them enough. Special thanks to those who worked so hard last year as committee members, We have new committee members this school year and hope that lots of parents will sign up to either join the committee or offer ad-hoc help whenever possible. Please do look out for communications from the PTA - it is currently such a small group of parents; if we are to be able to continue

to provide such special events as the Christmas Fair again this year - Saturday 5th December between 10am-1pm. We really will need the help of many to be able to go ahead. Please do look out for communications and sign up to help – if even just for an hour.

Stay connected with St Bernadette's on social media!

Please follow us and engage with our posts. We also encourage you to like and follow our Facebook page to keep up with all our updates!

https://www.instagram.com/stbernadettes_catholic_school/#

https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100087749677571

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Dates For Your Diary	
Fri 16 Oct	8:10 Rosary in the chapel Y4-6 Parent visits to St Paul's 9:30am Individual and sibling photographs taken – full school unform (not PE kit) on this day
Mon 19 Oct	Y5 Eagle Class Collective Worship in the Small Hall with their parents 2:50pm
Wed 21 Oct	MK Innovates STEM Festival
Thurs 22 Oct	Y5 trip to Bletchley Park
Fri 23 Oct	8:10 Rosary in the chapel PTA Break the Rules Day Y4-6 Parent visits to St Paul's 9:30am Last day of half term – normal home times
Half term holiday - NB 31st October is deadline for Y6 applications for secondary school	
Mon 2 Nov	New Catholic Social Teaching Principle: Human Dignity New Virtue: Compassion
Thurs 5 Nov	Flu vaccinations – nasal spray – make sure to sign up online Boys Y5/6 Football league matches
Sun 8 Nov	Join us for a special Mass for Remembrance Day at Christ the King Church, Kents Hill
Mon 9 Nov	Cross country competition – St Paul's
Tues 10 Nov	Tours for pupils joining reception or nursery in Sept 2027 10 am and 4:00 pm. Please book via the school office
Wed 11 Nov	Flu vaccination catch-up clinic
Thurs 12 Nov	9:00 – 10:00 Mental Health Support Team Coffee Morning – come and have a chat! 2:50 Y5 Falcon Class Collective Worship for their parents in Small Hall Y5/6 Football League Finals Night
Mon 16 Nov	Odd Socks Day – anti-bullying week
w/c 16 Nov	Anti-bullying week – *Break the Silence*
Wed 18 Nov	Y4 Lion Class Collective Worship in the Small Hall with their parents 2:50pm
Wed 25 Nov	Tours for pupils joining reception or nursery in Sept 2027 10:30 am and 5:30 pm. Please book via the school office Y4 Leopard Class Collective Worship in Small Hall with their parents 2:50pm
Fri 27 Nov	Y6 Africa WOW Day
TBC	PTA Christmas Shop
Thurs 3 Dec	2pm FS2 Saplings Nativity Performance for their Parents
Sat 5 Dec	Christmas Fayre 10am-1pm – look out for further info 6pm Carol Service Our Lady of Lourdes Church
Mon 7 Dec	Y1/2 The Christmas Story for their parents 2pm (Y1 leading the performance roles)
Thurs 10 Dec	9:15 Nursery – Acorns – Christmas Singing Celebration for their parents Tours for pupils joining reception or nursery in Sept 2027 11 am and 5:00 pm. Please book via the school office
Mon 14 Dec	Y5-6 Carols & Readings Performance for families 9:30am and 6:00pm
Tues 15 Dec	Tuesday Group Rocksteady Performance for their parents 2:15 pm 3:15 – 4:15 PTA Disco FS2, Y1, Y2, Y3
Wed 16 Dec	Wednesday Group Rocksteady Performance for their parents 2:15 pm 4pm School Choir Performance for their parents
Thurs 17 Dec	3:20 – 4:20 PTA Disco Y4, Y5, Y6
Fri 18 Dec	Last Day of Term: MUFTI Day for CAFOD World Gifts EARLY CLOSE – KS1 & FS2 2:20pm. FS1 & KS2 2:30. No Care club
Sun 20 Dec	5pm Carol Concert Christ the King Church

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