

St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy in the Lent term 2021

Instead of spending the evening of Monday 4th January looking forward to the beginning of the Lent term, suddenly, teachers, pupils and their parents, found themselves facing a new challenge: home-learning with no notice or time to prepare.

Messages were sent out to families and staff gathered the next morning to collaborate and decide the best way forward for our school. By the end of that very first week, live zoom lessons were in place; home-learning packs were prepared and available and teaching and learning seamlessly continued.

Throughout this term, we have been fortunate to have exclusively secured Nathan to continue teaching PE at our school. This meant he was able to deliver three slightly shorter sessions to those children attending school each week. They really enjoyed this opportunity to keep active and have fun whilst keeping fit. He even recorded a couple of sessions which we were able to send to our home-learners.



Mrs Birtwisle and Mrs Weaver prepared and delivered a wonderful assembly for World Book Day. The children were very excited to guess the book covers as they were revealed square-by-square. Throughout the day, all classes spent the day doing book-related activities and, of course, everyone enjoyed a curl-up-with-a-book session during the afternoon.



Our Reception Class focused their activities on the Book Trust Book, 'The Runaway Pea'. Following a tweet from Mrs Weaver, the author retweeted!

All of our pupils received their book token and many came back in to school a few days later with the book they had exchanged it for.

We love reading at St Patrick's and we are delighted that a timetable is back in place for classes to take turns borrowing books from our well-stocked school library.

Reception Class also had a wonderful stimulus for writing: Martha the missing dog!

LIVE SESSION
Name: Jonathan
Missing Dog

Name: Martha
Description: Brown and white bulldog

Mrs Weaver captured a 'CCTV image' of the dog and the children were very excited to create missing posters.

Their hard work, of course, led to successfully finding Martha and reuniting her with her owner, Zoe. What a fantastic way to engage our young pupils to get writing.



Collective worship has remained pivotal to our school during this term. Children and staff in school have joined with children and their families at home for Monday morning 'Statement to Live By' Head Teacher assemblies as well as Friday 'Star of the Week' assemblies. We have also come together for a range of liturgies led by teachers and our Chaplaincy Team.



As we move towards more child-led collective worship, Tom Shannon, the lead lay chaplain for the St Thomas Aquinas CMAT, joined Year 6 via zoom for their first ever pupil-led Lectio Divina. His feedback was most positive and we were extremely proud of Delia, Daniella and Phoebe for their hard work in preparing it and then leading it.

As we are all most aware, mindfulness is key to our happiness and our spirits have most certainly been lifted by taking part in the 'Jerusalema Dance'. This global challenge began after a group of friends in Angola shot a video of themselves dancing to the Gospel-influenced song. It consists of a set of dance steps where you are able to dance in your own space turning a quarter-turn at each repeat. After all classes had perfected the routine, the whole school socially distanced on the playground to perform it at the same time. All staff and children joined in with smiles and enthusiasm. After we had finished and were returning to our classes, one Year 2 child turned to Miss Cank and said, "Miss, I don't know why I feel happy, but I just do!" I think we all felt happy and we are planning to repeat it again!



In the final two weeks of term, it has been an absolute pleasure to welcome back all of our children into school to re-join their classes, teachers and fellow pupils. Parents Evening has offered parents the opportunity to, although remotely, meet once again with their child's teachers. Our school has returned to the sound of laughter and everyone seems to have settled back in to routine. Nathan has resumed to delivering a weekly PE lesson for each class as well as reinstating 'Wake and Shake' for our early attenders and after-school multi-sports sessions for all classes Year one and above.

Music lessons are back in Year 5 and the children have been busy composing their own bell-ringing compositions. Their finished pieces will be added to Leicester Cathedral's website. As well as musical talents, many classes demonstrated their artistic skills by making cards for Mother's Day and Easter.

BBC Radio Leicester again contacted our school and presenter Rupal Rajani chatted with Mrs Heggs about our celebrations to mark St Patrick's Day during the Afternoon Show on Wednesday 17th March. Miss Trish was recorded singing a beautiful prayer and this was played as part of the interview.

Although this year, we were not able to celebrate face-to-face with our usual party, all the classes met on zoom and Year 6 led a liturgy where everyone was told about the adventurous St Patrick as well as joining together in prayers and readings. The children were encouraged to wear their own green items of clothing and the school was a sea of green with our pupils dressed up in either their own choice of outfit or their school uniform.



We met, socially distanced on the playground for Stations of the Cross. This was a really beautiful occasion.

Each class took a turn to read and act out the different stations.

Even people passing by stopped to watch and listen.

It was such a wonderful opportunity to be together again.

We were very proud of all of our pupils.

Reflecting back over this past term, we would like to thank our fantastic parents for their amazing support and help during home-learning. We would also like to acknowledge the hard work of our wonderful pupils and our dedicated teachers and teaching assistants, Head Teacher, our lunchtime team, our cleaning staff, Premises Officer and Mrs Diaper, our Office Manager.

We all are all certainly looking forward to the Easter break, but are also excited to return for our final term.