



8th January 2021

The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's Schools

Newsletter

Following the government announcement on Monday evening regarding school closures, we would like to thank everyone for their understanding in relation to this. We know this is a difficult time for everyone. Should you have any concerns or difficulties, please do not hesitate to contact us. We take this opportunity of wishing you good health and we hope you all stay safe and well.

TERM DATES

Please see below the school term half term and Easter dates.
Monday 15th February to Friday 19th February - Half Term
Wednesday 31st March – Term Ends Mortimer St. Mary's 1.30pm Mortimer St. John's 2pm

USING XBOX OR PLAYSTATION FOR ACCESS TO REMOTE LEARNING

Through using an Xbox or a PlayStation, you are able to create an Office 365 account which gives you access to key packages such as Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams and Emails. For those of you accessing remote learning for more than one child this may be helpful. Here are some instructions to support this:

Xbox

1. Plug a keyboard in to the Xbox USB slot (less than £10 from Amazon)
2. Go to 'my games' and 'app'
3. Find 'Microsoft Edge' and Select
4. Type in Office 365 and log in using an Office 365 email
5. You can then access key packages including: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, emails
6. To move around you use the Xbox controller or plug in a mouse.

PlayStation

1. Identify the PlayStation internet browser icon (it is WWW with dots around it)
2. Press the PlayStation logo on the controller
3. Go to the library and find options for games and applications
4. Go in to applications and you will find the internet browser
5. Type in Office 365 and log in using an office 365 email
6. You can then access key packages including: Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Teams, emails

WEEKLY MILE

At Mortimer St Mary's we were due to start the weekly mile again this term. I would love for you to start the weekly mile (walking or running) at home, in addition to your two PE sessions! If you are able to, time how long it takes you to complete the mile so that hopefully after a few weeks you start to see an improvement in your times.

If you complete your mile, send your teacher a message with your time so that we can keep track of who has completed the mile each week.

I look forward to seeing your results.

Mrs Webb

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The link below may give some nice ideas to help children & families stay positive during these difficult times.

<https://www.elsa-support.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Coronavirus-home-challenge-4-1.pdf>

MONTH OF ACTIVITIES

Here is a month of different outdoor activities that will help your children learn, but are fun as well.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1mLU71V6xLUSv-0-If1ZcNOdkolCXHnh/view>

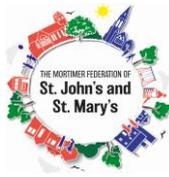
Ultimate STEM challenge – a home for nature

BP's Ultimate STEM Challenge is inviting young people across the UK to get creative and design a home for nature, using natural and technical solutions, to improve biodiversity in their local community. The competition is open to ages 9-11 and can be entered individually or as a group. There are fantastic prizes for the winning pupil(s) and their school. The pupil/team with the most creative and innovative design will win £3,000 to bring that home for nature to life, while the runners up will receive £1,000 each to make their designs a reality. **Competition closes on 3 March 2021.**

On their website are plenty of free resources for primary and secondary year groups, including easy to use lesson plans, engaging homework activities and video lessons with wildlife presenter, Michaela Strachan.

<https://bpes.bp.com/ultimate-stem-challenge>

Big Schools' Birdwatch – 5th January to 22nd February 2021 - A great data gathering and handling opportunity!



Children could sign up at home for the Big Garden Birdwatch (29-31 January).

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/get-involved/activities/birdwatch/>

National Nest Box Week - February 14 to February 21 2021 Run by the British Trust for Ornithology, it aims to encourage people to put up nest boxes to help breeding birds. Why not have a go at making your own nest boxes and putting them up around your garden?
<https://www.rspb.org.uk/globalassets/downloads/kids--schools/making-a-nestbox-activities.pdf>

WORSHIP AT HOME

When it isn't possible to join with the local church, this outline is designed to help you have a short time of worship as a household. Please adapt it to suit those who are present – add anything you might usually do in church or omit anything that you are not comfortable with. Have a variety of voices leading, not just the oldest!

As you prepare:

- *Choose a place where you can sit comfortably – it might be on the floor, round a table or even in the garden (if the weather is good enough). A rug or cushions might make it more comfortable if you are sitting on the floor.*
- *Agree a time to worship together. It might be first thing in the morning, before your lunchtime meal, or before bedtime begins.*
- *Decide who will lead – it doesn't have to be an adult or just one person. Think of ways in which the youngest can also help lead.*
- *Gather the things that will help create a sacred space – we suggest a cross, Bible and candle. If you do not have these as physical objects, find or draw pictures that could be used.*
- *Look through the service and gather any materials you might need – paper, pens, modelling dough, Lego etc.*
- *If you enjoy singing, decide one a song or hymn to start with and one to end with. There are some suggestions at the end.*

TIME TO GATHER

- **Leader:** We usually go to church to worship God with God's people, but today we are being church here in this place.
- **Everyone:** God is with us.
- **Leader:** Place the cross in the middle of your gathering.
- **Everyone:** God is with us.
- **Leader:** Place the Bible in the middle of your gathering.
- **Everyone:** God is with us.
- **Leader:** Light the candle and place it in the middle of your gathering.
- **Everyone:** God is with us – Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- **Leader:** Sing a gathering song or hymn.

TIME TO SAY SORRY

- **Leader:** Let us think about the times we forgot we are followers of Jesus. The times we were unkind or hurtful, the times we did not care for the world or other people. When we say sorry to God, God promises to forgive us.
- *(Either use this Confession or one of the creative ideas suggested.)*
- **Leader:** We are sorry for the times when we lacked love. Lord have mercy.
- **Everyone:** Lord, have mercy.
- **Leader:** We are sorry for the times when our words and actions were hurtful. Christ have mercy.
- **Everyone:** Christ, have mercy.
- **Leader:** We are sorry when we failed to care for your world. Lord, have mercy.
- **Everyone:** Lord, have mercy.
- **Leader:** May the God of love bring us back to himself, forgive us our sins and assure us of his eternal love in Jesus Christ our Lord.
- **Everyone:** Amen.

WORSHIP AT HOME RESOURCES and IDEAS

Creative prayer ideas

Praying with sweets

You will need a packet of coloured sweets e.g. M&Ms or Skittles

Open the packet of sweets and take it in turns to pick one. Before you eat your sweet, say a prayer asking God to help or do something for someone or something in that category (see below).

Red: family

Purple: friends

Green: the environment/animals

Yellow: the world

Orange: school/work

(Change the colour code to fit the colours of the sweets you use.)

<https://godventure.co.uk/prayer-activities/sweets-prayer/>

Playing card prayers

You will need a pack of cards

Shuffle the pack of cards. Take it in turns to pick one and say a prayer:

Red number- Pray for the world

Black number- Say a thank you prayer

King- say a word that describes how great God is

Queen- pray for a girl or woman you know

Jack- pray for a boy or man you know

Ace – pray for your church

<http://flamecreativekids.blogspot.com/2013/08/playing-card-prayers.html>

Pray using your hand

Thumbs up – thank God for something good

Index finger – pray for those who point the way to God

Middle finger – Pray for those who govern our country

Ring finger – pray for your family and friends

Little finger – pray for people who are ill, or anxious, or worried and need God's car.

ECO WARRIORS IN ACTION

Before Christmas our Eco Warriors were busy collecting all the wonderful donations of hats, gloves, socks and pants for the homeless. These donations will have been distributed by "bed4night" among the homeless in Reading.

We would like to say a huge thank you to everyone who donated something and to Adam & Eve for being our collection point this year. Thank you



OTHER EXCITING NEWS!

An Eco Warrior wrote to Adam & Eve and asked them if they would consider being a collection point for "triggers" & "pumps" in the village, which could then be sent to "Terracycle" for recycling into plastic pellets.

Luckily, Adam & Eve were only too pleased to get involved with this and one of our Eco Warriors presented Kelly with a bin decorated with recycling posters the warriors had made. Please can you recycle any triggers & pumps (not the bottles) in the bin outside their shop.



A BIG THANK YOU

Before Christmas, Charlotte Carter presented Mrs Sumner with a cheque in the sum of £550 to the PTFA.

The money was raised by Charlotte taking pictures of "Mortimer Go Walkies" dogs during lockdown. She kindly decided to give something back to the local community as the restrictions prevented her from doing her day job which is family photoshoots.



THANK YOU for all of your wonderful entries for The Wander in the Woods writing competition. I was very proud to submit **60 entries** from Mortimer St.

Mary's.

Well done to everyone who entered. Your stories are fantastic and so so imaginative! Please be very proud of your efforts.

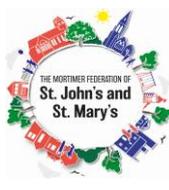
We will be hearing how well we did shortly and I am keeping everything crossed for all of you!

Miss Sims

DATA FOR HOME LEARNING

<https://get-help-with-tech.education.gov.uk/about-increasing-mobile-data>

This is a link to a Government website that is helping families that need extra internet data for their children to complete their online learning.



LEARNING DETECTIVES

At Mortimer St. John's we take pride in our learning and endeavour to teach the children the critical skills to become successful learners, not only in the classroom but throughout their lives.

We encourage this through our Learning Gems which encompass the key skills for being a fantastic learner. Each year, we select children from each class to become a Learning Detective.

The role of a Learning Detective is to become a role model for their peers to support good learning in the classroom. They meet regularly with Miss Green to discuss learning in the school and any examples of brilliant learning they have seen and how we can celebrate these. They also discuss ways that we can help our friends with their learning too. Learning Detectives are also given secret challenges to look for the learning skills promoted by our Learning Gems.

Our Learning Detectives are leaders in being passionate for learning and sharing that passion with others, each and every day. This year our wonderful Learning Detectives are:

Butterfly Class: Sonny & Georgia,

Rabbit Class: Dylan & Millie,

Badger Class: Charlie & Ophelia,

Deer Class: Jack & Melissa,

Fox Class: Naiya, Charlotte & Max and

Hedgehog Class: Charlotte BG & William.