



# St Alban's

**Catholic Primary and Nursery School**

Member of St Clare's Catholic Multi Academy Trust, Diocese of Hallam

**Let God's love shine in our lives as we grow and learn together**

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Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2024

To all in our school community,

Yet again, we have witnessed a busy Spring Term which started with celebrating Epiphany with a liturgy and whole school Theatre Performance treat that was thoroughly enjoyed by all! Our children continued in their Adventures in Learning, discussing the question, 'How do people and our planet work together?' and through Immersion week and two expeditions, they were ready to answer this question in their Grand Finale presentations which were once again so well supported and attended by yourselves! Parent and Carer engagement has been superb and we are so grateful that you have supported our staff and children by attending the Online Safety Workshop, Residential meetings, National Test and check meetings, parents and carers progress meetings, as well as World Book Day, St David and St Patrick's day celebrations, the Good Shepherd Appeal Sponsored Spell and Prayer Card purchases as well as our most recent 'Eggstravaganza!' and CAFOD Big Lent Walk.

Strength to strength...

The behaviour and attitudes of our children continue to shine and our winning house point team enjoyed an Easter Egg hunt and games this afternoon which was well deserved! Attendance has improved again by almost 2% above last year and is virtually in line with average National Primary School attendance. We continue to build working relationships and strengthen our school improvement through reviews, audits and training with colleagues in St Clare CMAT, our Dearne Valley family of schools and with Doncaster City Council colleagues, all of whom recognise our hard work and continuous improvements. Our School Council, Mini Vinnies, CAFOD Club and Faith in Action Leaders continue to work behind the scenes on different projects including developing our Behaviour Continuum and expectations, traffic control, developments in the Faith Garden (watch out for our new arbour on the field in the Summer Term!) and promoting Catholic Social Teaching. Some of these children were taken out to an Intergenerational event at Harrogate Court in Denaby and talked to, played games and enjoyed learning with residents. The day was a huge success and residents loved having the children visit and have asked for us to return soon to continue to spread joy! We look forward to attending the sessions celebrating our mining heritage at Tom Hill in April also and thank the Parish Committee and Gerard McLister for donating a commemorative disc from Cadey Pit which was donated to St Alban's church. This will be unveiled in school next term!

Future Staffing Changes

We have welcomed the return of Miss Gibson, who has complemented the Year 2 Selby team, and we look forward to the return of Mrs Carter-Ward and Mrs Davies who will finish their maternity leave and return to us in the Summer term. I know you will be as excited as we are to have them back part of our dedicated staff team. We do have more babies expected soon as Miss Strawbridge and Mrs Sharp are due to have their babies in September and Miss Gibson is expecting her second child in October 2024 so will be on maternity leave for part of the next

academic year. Please keep these members of staff and their families in your thoughts and prayers. Obviously with more maternity leaves on the horizon, we will be advertising for replacement staff. In addition to our teacher maternity leave covers, we hope to employ more TAs to support our growing needs in school. As you know our numbers on roll have grown significantly over the last few years with good news travelling far and wide about our wonderful Catholic school as well as with the opening of our own Nursery.

Exciting Nursery news to share!

We are hopeful that we can continue to expand our Nursery and are able to offer in the future funded places for babies from 9 months and children from 2 years from working families who are entitled to the free 15 hours in September 2024. The Government announced the Childcare Reforms last year and Doncaster Council are working in conjunction with providers to offer this provision – click on the link to find out more! <https://www.childcarechoices.gov.uk/upcoming-changes-to-childcare-support/>

If you know of family and friends who are looking for a nurturing school environment and specialist provision for their child from 9 months to school age, please share our plan that St Alban's is planning to expand their provision in the near future! We have support from the Trustees of the Diocese of Hallam, St Clare CMAT and St Alban's Parish Committee to seek funding to develop the old club building and outdoor areas into Nursery provision and Wrap around Care for working families from 8am – 6pm during term-time. In addition to the various rooms being converted into Nursery spaces, a key part of this project is the refurbishment of the function room offering a Parish Hall Community space as well as wrap around provision. This will obviously be a very costly project in order to meet current statutory guidelines and expectations, however the aim of this development is to meet the needs of our community and families across the parishes of St Alban's and English Martyrs and bring back life to a cherished building which was, and hopefully will be again, the centre of St Alban's parish alongside Church and School.

Pope Francis – gave us a message for Lent: "Keep seeking and be ready to take risks. At this moment in time, we face enormous risks; we hear the painful plea of so many people. Indeed, we are experiencing a third world war fought piecemeal. Yet let us find the courage to see our world, not as being in its death throes but in a process of giving birth, not at the end but at the beginning of a great new chapter of history. We need courage to think like this."

On behalf of all the staff at St Alban's, I wish you all a very happy Easter and pray the new term brings with it much joy and peace.

*Mrs L Ebsworth*  
Headteacher