

Blessed Dominic Catholic Primary

Love - Learn - Believe

Newsletter

Spring issue 9 - 13th February 2026

Headteacher: Mrs Hourihan

Deputy Headteacher: Ms Sulis

Diary Dates

Wednesday 18th March - 1D Library

Thursday 26th March Easter Service 3B and 4B- 9.15am

Friday 27th March - Easter Service 3D and 4D - 9.15am

Friday 27th March - Last Day of Term – School closes at 1.30pm

Easter Holidays – Monday 30th March to Friday 10th April 2026

Monday 13th April - Children return to School

Monday 20th April - Year 3 School Trip -Ramses and the Pharaohs

Wednesday 22nd April - Year 4 School Trip - St Albans

Wednesday 29th April - International Evening 3.30pm-5.30pm (details to follow)

Monday 4th May - Bank Holiday

Tuesday 5th May - Year 2 RAF Museum

Dear parents / carers,

This week we have continued our Lenten journey as a school community, deepening our faith through prayer and reflection. Our Prayer Leaders, assisted by Miss Healy, provided the whole school with the opportunity to take part in a special Lenten retreat. As part of this Lenten Retreat, children visited a number of prayer stations led by the Prayer Leaders, where they spent time in quiet prayer, reflecting on scripture and listening to God's word.

It was wonderful to see the children approach this time with such reverence and thoughtfulness. Their prayerful attitude helped them to grow in their relationship with God as we continue our journey through the holy season of Lent. Thank you to the parents who were able to join us at the end of the day on Wednesday to participate in this retreat. We hope that you too found this a meaningful opportunity for prayer and reflection within our school community.

Next week we will continue our Lenten journey with our Big Lenten Walk. We warmly invite as many parents as possible to join us. The walks will take place at the beginning of the school day, so please feel free to remain after drop-off and accompany your child as we walk together through our local area in the spirit of prayer, community and service. The money raised will go directly to CAFOD, supporting their vital work helping communities in need around the world so far we have raised £110 of our £200 target.

On Monday evening, I had the wonderful opportunity to watch some of our children perform at the Artsdepot. They performed their dance to 'Roar' with great enthusiasm, joy and confidence, sharing their gifts and talents with a wide audience. Hopefully, during our International Evening you will all have the opportunity to see these wonderful children perform their routine.

Thank you to those who have already responded to say that they will be able to host a table at International Evening, and to those who have offered to contribute to the entertainment. Our school community is richly blessed with talented children and families, and it will be a lovely opportunity to celebrate and share the many traditions and cultures that make our community so special.

Today we also marked the end of Science Week with our Science Fair. Thank you to all the children who participated in the poster competition in Key Stage 1, and to those in Key Stage 2 who worked collaboratively to investigate their curiosity questions. The entries were truly impressive, and the questions the children explored showed great creativity and curiosity about the world God has created. Students from St James' Catholic High School also came to visit and view the entries and were very impressed by the quality of the children's work. Thank you to everyone who took part and supported this wonderful celebration of learning.

This weekend we celebrate Mother's Day. We give thanks for all mothers and mother figures in our community, for their love, care and guidance. We keep them in our prayers with gratitude for the many ways in which they nurture and support our children each and every day. I wish all mothers and families in our community a joyful and blessed Mother's Day.

Wishing you all a lovely weekend.

Mrs Hourihan



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Fourth Sunday of Lent (Year A)

Prayer for Mothering Sunday

Dear God,
Thank you for our mothers and for their love and care.
Bless them with health, joy, and peace today and always.
Help us to show them love and gratitude every day.
Amen.



On Tuesday 17th March we will celebrate
St Patrick's Day.
This day honours Saint Patrick, the patron saint of
Ireland.

St Patrick Blessing

May the road rise up to meet you.
May the wind be always at your back.
May the sun shine warm upon your face;
the rains fall soft upon your fields and until
we meet again,
May God hold you in the palm of His hand.



Celebrating Success

STAR OF THE WEEK

DAISIES - Oxana
BLUEBELLS - Naya
1B - Andrea
1D - Zion
2B - Maya
2D - Frankie
3B - Alexzaandra
3D - Aida
4B - Kaleb
4D - Dylan
5B - Hesley
5D - Lily
6B - Ariela
6D - Hanna



ATTENDANCE THIS WEEK

DAISIES - 96%
BLUEBELLS - 94%
1B - 97%
1D - 100%
2B - 100%
2D - 94%
3B - 97%
3D - 96%
4B - 99%
4D - 99%
5B - 96%
5D - 93%
6B - 97%
6D - 97%



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Stations of the Cross Easter Service

**Thursday 26th March at 9.15am 3B and 4B
&
Friday 27th March at 9.15am 3D and 4D**



Tickets available on Parent Pay, please see letter sent home to you on the Parents App

CAFOD Big Lent Walk

It would be lovely if parents were able to join us for these walks as we reflect together during this special time. Through prayer, action and generosity, we're stepping out in faith to support communities facing poverty and injustice. We warmly invite families, staff and friends to join the walk, sponsor the children, or make a donation—every step and every gift makes a difference. Together, let's walk in hope and love this Lent.

To donate and find out more information, please visit our JustGiving page:

<https://schools.walk.cafod.org.uk/fundraising/blessed-dominic-big-lent-walk-fundraising-page>

We have also sent details via our Parents App.

Walk Schedule

- Reception – Monday 16th March, 9:00–9:30am
- Year 3 & Year 5 – Tuesday 17th March, 9:00–9:30am
- Year 6 & Year 1 – Wednesday 18th March, 9:00–9:30am
- Year 2 & Year 4 – Thursday 19th March, 9:00–9:30am

Please also remember to donate via our JustGiving page as we continue raising money for CAFOD during Lent.



Lenten Giving Initiative

As part of our giving initiative during Lent, we collected food items for **Colindale Food Bank**. We would like to say a big thank you to all the families who contributed. Your generosity and kindness will help support members of our community who are in need. Together, we collected an amazing 125.45 kilograms of food. A letter from Colindale Food Bank has been uploaded to our Parents App for you to read. We are very grateful for your continued support.



Lenten Retreat

On Wednesday we had our Lenten retreat. Each year group had a chance to visit the hall to take part in different mindfulness and prayerful activities to bring them closer to God during the time of Lent. The children had time to focus on the meaning of Lent and Easter, and they reflected on their Lenten journey so far.





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Barnet Dance Festival



On Monday, our children performed at the
Barnet Dance Festival.
Their behaviour was outstanding, and their
dancing was exceptional.
They represented the school beautifully and
should be very proud of themselves.



INTERNATIONAL EVENING

We are delighted to announce that our
school will be celebrating International
Evening on

Wednesday 29th April 3:30-5:30pm.

This special event is a wonderful opportunity
for our school community to come together
and celebrate the rich diversity of cultures,
traditions, and backgrounds that make our
school so unique. Families will have the
chance to share food, music, clothing, and
cultural displays from around the world.
Please see details sent home on the Parents
App



Easter Raffle

The school is delighted to inform you that we will be
holding an Easter Raffle on

Friday 27th March.

We would greatly appreciate any donations of Easter
eggs.

Tickets will go on sale from

**Monday 16th March at £1 per strip of 5
tickets.**

To buy tickets, please send the money in a sealed
envelope with your child's name.

Thank you for your support.



Pancake Sale

Thank you again to our wonderful
PTA group who organised our
pancake sale last month.
Altogether we raised £350!

Also, thank you to all the parents who
purchased pancakes and supported
the event.





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Birthday Celebrations

While we love to celebrate each child's special day, we kindly discourage gift bags and food items being brought in. We have a lot of children with allergies so as a community we need to help keep each other safe.

Instead, we encourage children to bring a book to share with the class, which can be added to the class library as a lasting memory of their birthday.

Thank you for your support in keeping celebrations simple, inclusive, and focused on learning!



Attendance

Regular attendance plays a vital role in your child's learning and overall development. Every school day counts!

Unfortunately holidays cannot be authorised during term time and authorised absences can only be granted in exceptional circumstance. Please contact the office if you need to request an exceptional leave of absence. These will be considered on a case by case basis.

FPNs (Fixed penalty notices) can be issued for unauthorised absences and the fine is up to £160 per parent.



Governors' Fund £60 per Pupil Contribution



Each year, our school's Governing Board asks families to contribute to the Governors' Fund, which supports important projects and improvements not covered by our regular school budget.

This year, the suggested contribution remains £60 per pupil.

The fund helps us enhance our school environment and resources — for example, improving playground areas, upgrading IT equipment, and supporting enrichment opportunities for pupils.

We do this via the 'Governors Fund' where we ask parents to contribute. We don't stipulate or mandate this but instead prefer to encourage all families to contribute what they can.

A huge thank you to all the families who have already contributed — your generosity makes a real difference to what we can offer our children.

If you've not yet had the chance to donate and would like to, contributions can be made via Parent Pay.

AFTER SCHOOL CLUBS

Please make sure your child brings their school PE kit every week if they have been accepted for Ninja Warriors, Football, Spykids, Tennis, Dance or Archery after-school clubs.

**FOR SAFETY REASONS, CHILDREN
WILL NOT BE ABLE TO TAKE PART IN
THE SESSION IF THEY DO NOT HAVE
THE CORRECT PT KIT WITH THEM.**

Thank you for your support.





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Safeguarding

The wellbeing of our children is of paramount. Should any person (parent or staff) have a concern regarding a child's wellbeing, please inform one of the school safeguarding team:

- **Mrs Sowa - DSL & SENCo**
- **Mrs Hourihan - Headteacher**
- **Ms Sulis - Deputy Headteacher**
- **Ms Smart - Assistant Head**

In cases where school staff have concerns, they have a duty to discuss the issue with Social Services to seek further advice. This is the statutory obligation of all schools.



SAFER SCHOOL STREET

**IN OPERATION
8.15AM – 9.15AM
& 2.45PM – 3.45PM**



**WE REMIND ALL FAMILIES TO USE THE
FREE PARKING AVAILABLE
AT THE RAF MUSEUM**

**WHICH HAS BEEN MADE AVAILABLE
EXCLUSIVELY FOR BLESSED DOMINIC
PARENTS AND CARERS DURING
DROP-OFF AND PICK-UP TIMES**

Uniform Reminders

We would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone of our school uniform expectations. Please ensure that children come to school wearing their full uniform each day.

- **Trainers should only be worn on PE days and must be plain black or white.**
- **On non-PE days, children should wear black school shoes (not boots).**
- **School socks should be plain grey or white.**
- **School trousers should be grey (leggings are not part of the school uniform).**
- **A school tie should be worn each day.**
- **School coats should be plain blue or black.**
- **Hair below the shoulders should be tied back.**

Uniform is an important part of our identity at Blessed Dominic. As a community, it is important that we all follow these expectations and wear our uniform with pride. If you are experiencing any difficulties with uniform, please do not hesitate to contact the school—we are always happy to help.



Easter Camp 2026 is here!

Bookings are now open with Non Stop Action. Join us this Easter for Multi Sports at Moss Hall Junior School (N3 1NR), and **Football, Dance, and Multi Activity Camp** at Millbrook Park School (NW7 1JF).

Camp runs from Monday 30th March - Friday 10th April.

Book by Saturday 7th March to take advantage of our Early Bird discount.

Reserve your place today at:

<https://www.nonstopaction.co.uk/>

Kind regards,

Cameron Smith Holiday Camp Manager



What Parents & Educators Need to Know about **SCHOOL AVOIDANCE**

UNDERSTANDING SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

School avoidance refers to reduced attendance or non-attendance at school by a child or young person. In 2022-23, more than one in five children in England were found to be absent from school over 10% of the time. This guide focuses on school avoidance with an emotional basis, offering expert mental health advice. However, it's important to remember that school avoidance is a hugely subjective experience which requires a tailored, individual approach.

IMPACT OF SCHOOL AVOIDANCE

REASONS FOR ABSENCE

School avoidance is sometimes underpinned by several factors rather than one single cause. This could include something going on for the child or young person within the family or at school. A child may have caring responsibilities at home, for instance, or a change in family dynamics; bullying and friendship difficulties at school; pressure to achieve in schoolwork and exams; or moving from primary school to secondary school.

PATTERNS OF ABSENCE

You may notice patterns in regular absences or children regularly expressing that they don't want to attend school (particularly being reluctant to leave home on school days). If a child or young person is neurodiverse, there is some evidence to suggest there are more aspects of school life which can cause distress – such as changes in the environment, changes of routine and sensory stimuli.

COMPLAINTS ABOUT PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

There may be an increase in a child or young person's complaints about physical symptoms, particularly on school days or the evening before school. These could include tummy aches, headaches, or saying they feel ill when there doesn't appear to be a medical cause. Always check with the GP first to rule out medical causes or illness.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

School refusal can negatively impact a young person's learning and development. Attending school on a regular basis not only supports academic attainment but is also important for the development of key life skills and the growth of children and young people as citizens.

LONG-TERM OUTCOMES

The difficulties associated with school non-attendance can be far reaching and may have a negative impact on long-term outcomes. It may, for example, lead to reduced future aspirations, poor emotional regulation, mental health difficulties, limited academic progress and restricted employment opportunities.

CYCLE OF ABSENCE

Consistent absences may contribute to sustained school avoidance over time. Further to this, the longer a pupil is out of education, the more likely it is that there is a rise in their ongoing need to avoid the activity making them anxious – increasing their desire to stay at home.

Advice for Parents & Educators

WORK TOGETHER

If there's a concern about a child's absence and emotional wellbeing, it's important that there is clear communication and a consistent approach between the child's parents and the school, so you can take a child-centred approach together towards a plan of support or reintegration. This ensures a consistency of approach from both home and school, creating better outcomes for the child.

FOLLOW REGULAR ROUTINES

Children can benefit from a regular and consistent routine. This could be a morning routine, from waking up and having breakfast through to getting dressed, packing their bag and leaving the house. A consistent evening routine which is calm and spent away from screens can also give children much needed predictability and familiarity. Schools can help create a timetabled routine for the child's school day, if required.

MANAGE OVERWHELMING FEELINGS

Acknowledge the child's worries, listen and discuss coping strategies together to help them manage difficulties. These could include mindfulness, deep breathing or going for a walk. This helps them understand that you are working together towards a common goal, and that these strategies can be used when bigger feelings arise.

RECOGNISE POSITIVE STEPS

Drawing attention to a child's successes – be they big or small – can help to give them some much-needed confidence and motivation. Celebrate these daily victories – such as getting out of bed on time or completing school work – and don't hesitate to let the child know when you're impressed or proud of them. Such an approach can go a long way.

Meet Our Expert

With 30 years' experience as a teacher, trainer, consultant and interim executive board member, Anna Bateman has a superb understanding of what works in pedagogy, school improvement and leadership. She has also advised the Department for Education on their mental health green paper.



The
National
College®

Source: See full reference list on guide page at: nationalcollege.com/guides/school-avoidance

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