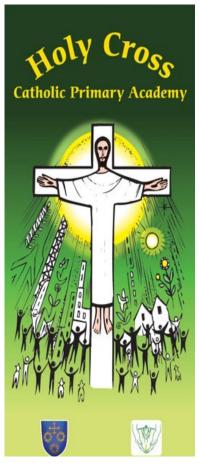


Dear Parents and Carers,

It is the start of Advent this Sunday and so we begin our preparations in earnest for Christmas. When the children come back in to school on Monday they will notice the decorations, the outdoor and indoor cribs. We have several services and events planned, the dates and times for which, you will see below. We look forward to seeing you at some of these in this season of preparation.

Festival of Light

This service takes place in our church next week. E.Y.F.S. and KS1 is on Thursday and KS2 on Friday, both of which are at 2pm. We look forward to seeing the children bring their Christingle in to school on the day of their service. Thank you.



First Holy Communion programme

To register your child for the 2022 First Holy Communion programme please email your child's name and date of birth to hxslyouth@outlook.com. There will be three sessions, each being 3 hours in length. These will take place on Saturday mornings and on the first meeting there will be a parent session in the church. The Communion Masses will take place in June. Once the final numbers for those children taking this Sacrament are known, we will be able to confirm the dates.

Phonics Workshop

Thank you to Mrs. Peters for her presentation to parents on Tuesday morning which will help parents to support their children at home. I know from speaking to some of the parents who attended that they found it very helpful.

Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal

Thank you to the generosity of everyone, who donated shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child appeal. These Christmas gifts will bring so much joy to the children who will receive them.



Holy Cross Family Mass

We are celebrating Mass as a school and parish community on Saturday 4th December at 5.30pm. These masses are a wonderful celebration of our school family and we do hope that as many families as possible can attend.





School Uniform

01279 434813

We are aware that the Holy Cross winter coat has been out of stock at our uniform suppliers. We are pleased to inform you that these are now available again at Top Form.

Top Form Schoolwear Ltd 90-91 The Stow Harlow, Essex CM20 3AP

Irish Dancing

There was a buzz in school on Monday morning when we heard this news. Congratulations to Lily Vetori, Kiera Fennelly, Jessica Wadding, Emilia and Louisa Marsham, Bobbie and Ronnie Faulkner who danced the Morris Reel at the World Irish Dancing championship qualifiers in Potters Bar last Sunday. They have now qualified for the Irish Dancing World Championships which will take place in Belfast in 2022. We at Holy Cross are very proud and wish them every success next year.

Reception Applications 2022

Applications for a place in Reception 2022 must be made by 15th January. They can be made online via www.essex.gov.uk/admissions. A Supplementary Information Form must also be completed. These are available from the school office.

Late Gate

The Educational Welfare Officer paid us a visit on Thursday and conducted a 'Late Gate'. The school gates are open at 8:40 and close at 8:50. It is vitally important the your children arrive to school on time, before 8:50. Arriving late can lead to children feeling anxious, missing out on morning routines and the start of lessons. It can also be very disruptive to the rest of the class and impact learning for all.

There will be further Late Gates conducted in the near future.

CATHOLIC CHURCH CHRISTMAS MASS TIMES IN HARLOW

	T	24th	December	25th December
Church	Location	First Mass of Christmas: For Family / Children	Early-Midnight Mass	Christmas Day
St Thomas More	CM20 1TN		10.30pm	8.30am
Our Lady of Fatima	CM20 2NS	брт	11.30pm Polish	10.30am - 12.15pm in Polish
The Assumption of Our Lady	СМ17 0НА	5pm	10pm	10am
Holy Cross	CM18 6JJ	6.30pm	11pm	11am

Christmas Calendar of Events

Thursday 2nd December

Reception, Year 1 And Year 2 Festival of Light (2pm)

Friday 3rd December

Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 Festival of Light (2pm)

Tuesday 7th December

Year 2 carol concert (2pm)

Year 2 carol concert (6pm)

Wednesday 8th December

Reception and Year 1 Christmas Nativity performance (2pm)

Thursday 9th December

Reception and Year 1 Christmas Nativity performance (2pm)

Reception and Year 1 Christmas Nativity performance (6pm)

Friday 10th December

Christmas Jumper Day

Monday 13th December

Reception Christmas panto (12pm to 3pm)

Tuesday 14th December

Year 5 and 6 Christmas panto (12pm to 3pm)

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 Christmas lunch

Wednesday 15th December

Year 1 and Year 2 panto (12pm to 3pm)

Carols round the crib (5pm to 6pm)

Thursday 16th December

Year 3 and Year 4 panto (12pm to 3pm)

Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 Christmas lunch

Friday 18th December

Last day of term.

Finish times are as follows:

Reception at 1.15pm from the Reception playground

Rest of the school 1.30pm from the main playground





Christmas Cards

The Christmas card post box will open on Wednesday 1st December and will be located outside the school office door. Please remind your children to post their cards here and not to hand them out in class. They will be collected, sorted and delivered to the correct classes. Please remember to write the name of the child and the class they are in on the envelope.

Christmas Hampers

The festive period is upon us and as always we will be doing a raffle, closer to Christmas, for your chance to win one of 14 beautiful hampers filled with gifts. If you have been with us at Holy Cross for some time you will be aware of these hampers.

For those of you who have joined us recently, each class sends in donations for the class hamper. An example of these is then displayed by the front office. Raffle tickets will be available for you to purchase during the week before we break up for Christmas and the winners will be drawn on Monday 13th December and winners will be notified via Pupil Asset and the Facebook page.

Please could you send a Christmas item in by Monday 6th December to allow us to make up the hampers. Some examples are chocolate, wrapping paper, Christmas biscuits, sweets, crafts, wine, Christmas activities, decorations etc.

Thank you for your continued support.





Times Tables Rockstars

Congratulations to the following children for trying really hard with their times tables this week.

2HD: Zofia Rutkowska 2PT: Isabella Tyson
3N: Praise Owolabi 3R: Tehilah Sambo
4C: Jermaine Ondiege 4E: Isaac Adisa
5G: Victor Budnyak 5S: Maja Owczarz

6CN: Nikodem Smaglo 6E: Sophie Stopplecamp



Evolve Christmas Football Camp

Evolve are running their popular holiday club this Christmas holiday. Bookings can be made on www.evolvepa.com/camps





Saturday 27 November 2021 - Saturday 19 February 2022



Pick up a giant bookmark from any Essex library. Read six books to complete the challenge and collect a stamp for each library book you read!

Visit libraries.essex.gov.uk for more information













Sign up to the Winter Reading Challenge and be entered into a prize draw to win one of these fantastic prizes!

- Explore Essex Explorer Passes, valid for one year.
- **Sky Ropes Session for two,** to be taken by 31 August 2022 (subject to availability). Min age of two for the junior course, min height of 1.22m for the main course.
- Essex Outdoors school holiday activity days, for one child aged 8-16, to be taken by 31 August 2022 (subject to availability).
- Wilderness Foundation activity afternoon, Chatham Green centre, for children aged 5-11 (and their parents and siblings) to be taken Saturday 26 April 2022.
- **Signed books,** from authors Emma Beswetherick, Catherine Emmett and Vassiliki Tzomaka.
- Love Essex goodie bags.

Full terms and conditions can be found on our website: libraries.essex.gov.uk





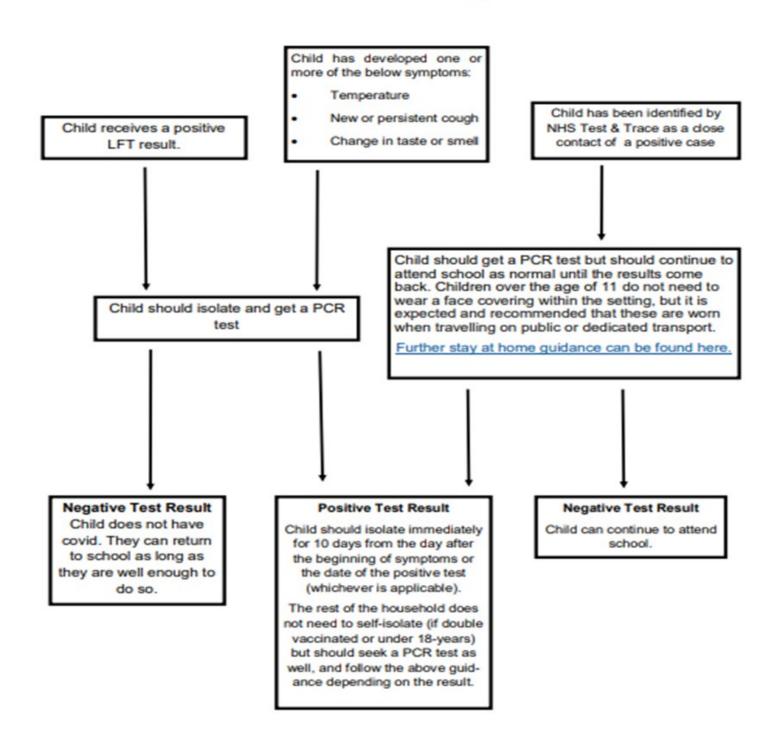






The way that Covid is managed in schools has changed from September. Please find a flowchart below which illustrates the self-isolation and testing guidance for children.

Self-Isolation and Testing Guidance



Gospel Values Awards

The Gospel Value this week is...

Gentleness

- love and friendship

"If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also." (6:29) Samaritan Village (9:54)



Congratulations to the following children who received the Gospel values certificate this week.

1DG: Isla McNamara 15: Tilly Lentz

2HD: Axel Brooks 2PT: April Thorp

3N: David Owolabi 3R: Leah Hyde

4C: Natalie Harmas 4E: Faith Williams

5G: Talulah Gray 5S: Emilia Chapska

6CN: Emilia Chapska 6E: Naavah Dixon

ATTENDANCE MATTERS

The winners of the KS1 Attendance Award are 2PT attaining 98% attendance. Well done! The winners of the KS2 Attendance Award are 3R and 4E, achieving 98%. Well done!

Please ensure you are sending your child into school everyday, unless they are not well enough to attend. Attending school is so important and makes a huge difference to your child's learning. The gates open at 8:40am until 8.50am.

Familiarise yourself with the symptoms of COVID 19. If your child displays any COVID 19 symptoms they must have a negative PCR test before they may attend school. There is no need to keep your child off with a common cold, if they are well enough to come in.

It is essential you notify us of your child's absence by 9am either by telephone or using the Parentmail report absence option. We need full details of why your child is unable to attend school. We are frequently having to contact parents, to find out why their child is absent from school.

Parents of children below attendance targets will be invited in for a meeting with the Educational Welfare Officer.

R B	95%
RL	92%
1DG	96%
15	91%
2HD	94%
2PT	98%
3N	96%
3R	98%
4 <i>C</i>	93%
4E	98%
5 <i>G</i>	97%
55	95%
6CN	88%
6E	89%

RELIGIOUS LIFE AT HOLY CROSS



Based on the gospel for 28 November, First Sunday of Advent: Luke 21:25-28, 34-36

"Stay awake, praying at all times..."

Today is the beginning of Advent, the great season of expectant waiting. We wait in anticipation for the celebration of Jesus' birth at Christmas and, as today's gospel reminds us, we are also waiting in hope for the day when Jesus comes again.

The gospel today is disturbing. As we hear Jesus predicting destruction and suffering, we may find ourselves lamenting all that is not right in our world: poverty, injustice, the climate crisis, the global pandemic.

The opportunity of Advent is not to ignore this reality but to "stay awake, praying at all times", as we yearn for and work for the coming of God's Kingdom. As we enter this season of waiting, we remember it is a season of active waiting. We join Saint Paul's prayer, asking God to increase our love for the whole human race, so that we can bring hope and healing to all creation.

Eternal God,

you will come when we do not expect you.

Help us to welcome you now in one another,
to reach out to our sisters and brothers,
who are in need of care and support.

In this way may we be found ready,
when you come again in glory.

Amen.



The Words of Pope Francis

The joy of the gospel fills the hearts and lives of all who encounter Jesus. Those who accept His offer of salvation are set free from sin, sorrow, inner emptiness and isolation.





SHARING SUNDAY'S GOSPEL WITH PARENTS & FAMILIES

Dear Parents and Carers,

This Sunday is the start of the season of Advent, a word which means 'important arrival'. Advent is the time to start making preparations to celebrate Christ's birth - God's momentous arrival into our world in the person of Jesus.

The Gospel reminds us that there is no time to lose. We shouldn't put off our good resolutions until New Year. Now, Advent, is the time to think about the way we live our lives and begin to make any necessary changes.

Wednesday 24th November 2021

The message is clear for all of us: we are to 'stay awake!' Pope Francis reminds us, "Christ asks us to be wide awake and alert, to see the things in life that really matter."

Enrich this special season through exploring this Sunday's Gospel and this Wednesday's word, which is **ADVENT**.

Dom Henry Wansbrough

To see this week's Parish Version of The Wednesday Word: wednesdayword.org - Parents' Pages - Lectio Divina with Fr Henry.

THE GOSPEL IN CHURCH Sunday 28th November 2021



Jesus said to his disciples, "There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars and on the earth, and the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man

approaching in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand upright, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand. Watch yourselves; be careful not to let your hearts be weighed down with the cares of life. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to stand with confidence before the Son of Man."

Adapted from Luke 21:25-28.34-36 The 1st Sunday of Advent, Year C

Everyone can learn more about this Gospel in Church ~ all are warmly invited.

"Advent is a time for us to prepare for the coming of Jesus, Prince of Peace. It's a time to make peace with ourselves and our neighbours." Pope Francis



WORD CONNECTING HOME, SCHOOL AND PARISH THROUGH SUNDAY'S GOSPEL



Advent reminds us that God loves us so much that he sent his only Son, Jesus, into our world.

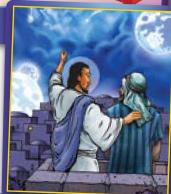
Let's use this season of Advent to be open to welcome Jesus, to make a fresh start and to draw closer to God, through living a good life!

Our Special Time Together

Enjoy reading the Gospel overleaf (or below for younger children)

Jesus said to his disciples, "There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars. Then people will see the Son of Man returning in the clouds with power and great glory. You must always be ready, because only my Heavenly Father knows when this will happen."

What did Jesus say we must always be? Which word or words stood out for you in this Gospel, and why? Look at the Gospel picture opposite. What does it make you think about?



Wednesday's ADVE Word is ...

"Advent is a journey towards Bethlehem. The Birth of Jesus brings us the good news that we are loved immensely by God." Pope Francis

Advent is the time when we make an extra effort to be more loving towards God and our neighbours. Ask your child what they think the word 'Advent' means (parent help: for the answer, please see the 'Parent Letter' on the front page). What do they know about Advent? What do they like best about this season which leads up to Christmas? You may want to share with your child what you like best about the season of Advent.

Loving God & Each Other

Advent is an opportunity to be spiritually refreshed and helps us get ready for Christmas.

Choose something to do, individually or as a family, to stay spiritually 'awake' and make this Advent prayerful and special. Perhaps you can: say a prayer together as you put up the crib or the Advent wreath; pray especially for someone (or better still for a few people) each evening throughout Advent; go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession); go to Church on Sundays; regularly give thanks to God for the gift of Jesus.

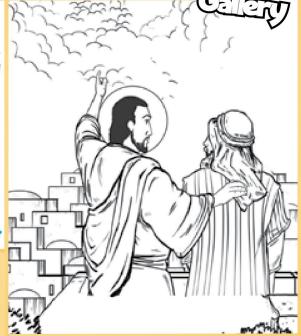
 Dear Lord Jesus, please help us to get ready during Advent to welcome you with joy this Christmas, and when you come again in your glory, Amen.

SMARTSEARCHERS FIND THESE EIGHT WORDS EITHER ACROSS OR DOWN SIGNS SKY

SUPERSEARCHERS FIND THE WORDS **BACKWARDS OR DIAGONALLY**

Cross out the letters **a** • **k** in the jumbled words below to find 4 real words.

awikllo disacipolesk askuno Jesus said to his _____, "There be _____ in the ____ and moon and stars.



Search for at least three differences between this picture and the colour one. Then draw them in before colouring.

Each Advent we think about Mary and Joseph's difficult journey to Bethlehem.

This Advent, let us pray especially for all those people who have been forced to make dangerous journeys, similar to that of Mary and Joseph, to find safety.

This week I will try my best to ..

Write a promise and then draw a big smile on Smiley

For more, see: wednesdayword.org and cbcew.org.uk

Wednesday 24th November 2021 - A WEEKLY PRAYER CUSTOM



Encountering Christ

Prayerfully preparing for the Sunday Mass and praying in particular for our school families



Preparing for the Mass of Sunday 28th November 2021 - The First Sunday of Advent



Relax & Remember

Set aside 10 -15 minutes and create a suitable environment by removing any distractions. Make sure that you are comfortable. Perhaps light a candle. Make the sign of the cross † and remain still for a minute of settling silence. **Call to mind the love that God has for you. Remember that through this scripture our Lord is truly present.** Then read the Gospel, preferably aloud and slowly, and pay attention to any words that stand out. If any do, meditate on them for a few minutes and be invited into a dialogue with God.



2

Read

Taken from the Gospel for 28th November 2021 (Luke 21:25-28. 34-36): Liberation is Near at Hand

Jesus said to his disciples, "There will be signs in the sun and moon and stars; on earth nations in agony, bewildered by the clamour of the ocean and its waves; men dying of fear as they await what menaces the world, for the powers of heaven will be shaken. And then they will see the Son of Man coming in a cloud with power and great glory. When these things begin to take place, stand erect, hold your heads high, because your liberation is near at hand. Watch yourselves, or your hearts will be coarsened with debauchery and drunkenness and the cares of life, and that day will be sprung on you suddenly, like a trap. For it will come down on every living man on the face of the earth. Stay awake, praying at all times for the strength to survive all that is going to happen, and to stand with confidence before the Son of Man."

B

Reflect

After spending a few minutes considering this Gospel, continue by reading Fr Henry Wansbrough's reflection.

The first Sunday gospel of the year (and the liturgical year begins in Advent) is also in a way the last gospel of the previous year. It comes at the end of Jesus's ministry, when he is preparing his disciples for their own ministry - in succession to him. Jesus is speaking to them on the Mount of Olives, looking down on the white city of Jerusalem, glittering in the sunshine. The city is soon to be destroyed by the Romans, with dreadful horrors of famine, massacre, burnings and executions. This is seen as a foretaste of the end of the world when Jesus, the Son of Man, comes to save his people. We do not know when this will happen, and, more importantly, when it will happen for us, when we will meet the Son of Man and be judged and saved by him. But our Christian faith is a guarantee that it will be a moment of God's mercy, whenever it occurs. We must look forward to it, and have it ever present before our mind. But we would be fooling ourselves if we think that there are no struggles and trials and hardships to be undergone on the way. Why is the passage appointed for the first Sunday of Advent, the turning-point between the years? Because the birth of Jesus at Christmas, for which we are beginning to prepare, is a significant move towards the fulfilment of the promises of salvation, the coming of Christ as a baby – with all the budding potential of a baby.

What does Jesus really mean by these prophecies of catastrophic turmoil in the universe? How does Jesus want us to face turmoil and troubles in life?

Dom Henry Wansbrough OSB



Respond & Request

Now slowly and prayerfully read the Gospel once again but this time in silence. Consider how this Gospel could apply to your life in general. Then thank God for any insight you may have received. Conclude by asking God to bless you with one of the following spiritual gifts to help you act on any resolution you have made: love, understanding, wisdom, faithfulness, peace, self control, patience, or joy. Please remember to pray for the Church and particularly our school families. **Then conclude by requesting the prayers of Our Lady & St Joseph.**



The Wednesday Word is under the patronage of St Joseph, Patron Saint of Families and Protector of the Church Within the tradition of the Catholic Church, each Wednesday is dedicated to St Joseph

WEDNESDAY WORD PLUS +





First Reading: The Branch for David

Jeremiah 33:14-16

See, the days are coming - it is the Lord who speaks - when I am going to fulfil the promise I made to the House of Israel and the House of Judah: "In those days and at that time, I will make a virtuous Branch grow for David, who shall practise honesty and integrity in the land. In those days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell in confidence. And this is the name the city will be called: The Lord-our-integrity."

At the darkest moment of Israel's history, when the storm-clouds of invasion were gathering, and the threat of Babylonian conquest and subsequent exile seemed almost inevitable, comes this prophecy from the mouth of Jeremiah that the promise made long ago to David will not fail. Jerusalem will be sacked, but the promise remains that the city will be named 'The Lord is our Integrity' or, more accurately, he is our 'Saving Justice'. The justice of God is not like human justice which is conformity with the law. It is God's fulfilment of his promises made to Abraham, Moses and David. So, at this dire moment, Jeremiah renews those promises that the stock of David will never fail, and gives a corresponding symbolic name to the city of David. Today's gospel speaks of another destruction of Jerusalem, that wrought by the Romans in AD 70, and looks beyond it to the final coming of Christ. So several layers may be uncovered in this reading: God's promise, seemingly lost when the Babylonians sack Jerusalem, will be restored by the coming of Christ at the incarnation, and then by the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans, which is the prelude to and promise of the final coming of Christ. In all these events the Lord is our Saving Justice.

How does Jesus bring the Saving Justice of God to the world?

Second Reading: The Coming of the Lord Jesus

1 Thessalonians 3:12-4:2

May the Lord be generous in increasing your love and make you love one another and the whole human race as much as we love you. And may he so confirm your hearts in holiness that you may be blameless in the sight of our God and Father when our Lord Jesus Christ comes with all his saints. Finally, brothers, we urge you and appeal to you in the Lord Jesus to make more and more progress in the kind of life that you are meant to live: the life that God wants, as you learnt from us, and as you are already living it. You have not forgotten the instructions we gave you on the authority of the Lord Jesus.

The Lord will overcome all evil.

Paul gives instructions about living in holiness while waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Each year the Church reminds us of the final coming of the Lord, which is to be the end of the world as we know it. In the Old Testament the 'Day of the Lord' is the day when God will come to re-establish all things, to put wrongs right, to punish the wicked and reward the righteous. In the New Testament, from this earliest letter of Paul onwards, this Day of the Lord is the Day of the Lord Jesus. It is pictured as a day when the Lord Jesus will come in a triumphal procession 'with all his holy ones', to be joined first by those who have died in the Lord, and then by those who are still living. For Paul, the Day of the Lord is so dominated by his triumph that he does not even mention or envisage punishments for the wicked. The Lord will overcome all evil, sweeping all before him, and will carry all with him in his triumphal procession. Writing later to the Corinthians, Paul envisages that Christ will put all things under his feet, even the last enemy, death, and he will then hand over the Kingdom to his Father.

What is the "kind of life" that the Lord Jesus wants us to live?

The Wednesday Word: Connecting Home, School & Parish through the Word of God w: www.wednesdayword.org e: info@wednesdayword.org

Happy Birthday this week to...

Lilly Bergamini, Xavier White & Taylor Leagas



Merit Certificates:

1DG: Mayah Rupasinghe, for her lovely painting in art

15: Charlotte Nyarko-Mensah, for being an example for others around her to follow

2HD: Mason Russell, for working hard on his numeracy

2PT: Oliver Ruffell, for his excellent literacy work

3N: Sian Hanifin-Flynn, showing great resilience and perseverance

3R: Julia Czarny, for always working hard and supporting other children without being asked

4*C*: Harry Hollingworth, for his brilliant answers in R.E.

4E: Pola Bubetty, for being such a responsible member of the class

Marissa Fraser, for her excellent attitude to learning, always trying her very best and never 5*G*:

giving up

55: Tinashe Agyare, for working hard in R.E. and contributing thoughtful ideas to class discussions

6CN: Emma Woodhouse, for always being kind and supportive to others and trying her best in lessons

6E: Beau Walsh, for fantastic work in history

Menu Week 1

Diary Date

Monday 29th November Tuesday 30th November

St Andrews Children Non School

Wednesday 1st December

Thursday 2nd December Friday 3rd December

Choir 3:15 - 4:15

Uniform £1 donation

Years 2 & 3 Karate 3:10 - 4:10

Year 3 Roman Day KS2 Festival of Light 2:00 - 3:00

KS1 Festival of Light 2:00 - 3:00 KS1 Football Club 3.10 - 4.10

Years 4,5 & 6 Karate 3:15 - 4:15 KS2 Fitness Club 3.15 - 4.15

KS2 Football Club 3.15 - 4.15

KS2 Art Club 3.15 - 4.30

House Points

Congratulations to the winning house St Andrew

Please download our News & Events App for dates for the year. Details are available on the schools website under News & Events at www.holycross-pri.essex.sch.uk