

Growing courageous advocates for change

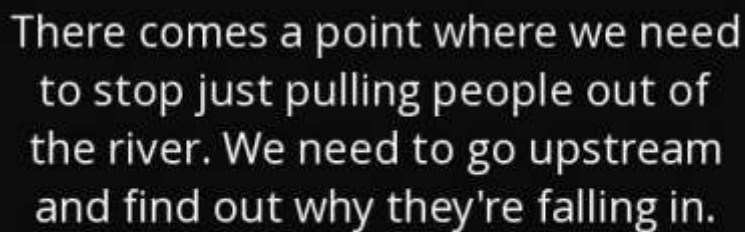
‘Anyone who calls out injustice is a prophet’

At St Mary’s we hope that In educating for wisdom, hope, community and dignity we help to build God’s kingdom here on earth and work to bring about a fairer and more joyful world.

What is ‘courageous advocacy’? The act of speaking out against an issue of injustice, often on behalf of those whose voice is not heard. Speaking out, at whatever level this takes place, requires an element (and sometimes a great deal) of courage! Becoming a courageous advocate for change means being informed about an issue but moving beyond simply knowing, to saying and doing.

The thread running through the Bible is of a loving God, willing people to love each other in order to bring the Kingdom to earth. We aim at St Mary’s to teach our children this message, that they as Christians are advocates for God and that at times this means they need to be courageous. They need to speak out for those that are poor, or weak, those who cannot speak or act for themselves. We use the terms ‘courageous advocacy’ and ‘global citizenship’ interchangeably as for us they both convey an approach to education that embodies an ethos of action taking, challenging injustice and becoming agents of change in the transformation of ourselves, our relationships and our communities from local level to the global.

Every child at St Mary’s is a **courageous advocate and a global citizen**. We work hard to empower our children with the message that everyone can make a difference. We support charities chosen by our school, highlighting their work and supporting them with fundraising and activities. We also ensure each term every class at St Mary’s ensures that it is working as global citizens through planned activities linked to our wider curriculum. We also encourage our children to be responsive, to act where they see injustice, and where they see need.



There comes a point where we need to stop just pulling people out of the river. We need to go upstream and find out why they're falling in.

— Desmond Tutu —

Courageous advocacy at St Mary’s:

Taking action should be a deeply educational and empowering experience involving reflection and critical thinking

- Pupils should be involved in decision-making and have a sense of ownership and understanding of why they are taking a particular action
- Pupils should be encouraged to think critically through the full range of options and how they help address the causes and symptoms of a particular situation
- Pupils should be supported to think through the possible consequences of their actions and to take account of the law, school policies and ethical and safety considerations
- Pupils should reflect on what has been learned through taking action

Our Summer term actions have included:

Reception

Proverbs 12:10

A righteous man regards the life of his beast: but the tender mercies of the wicked are cruel. Whoever is righteous has regard for the life of his beast, but the mercy of the wicked is cruel. The godly care for their animals, but the wicked are always cruel

In Reception, we have been exploring the life cycles of different creatures. We looked at bees and discussed how they are really important creatures for the preservation of our world. We spoke about how we could attract more bees to our world and it was great that the children were showing concern for this important issue. The children were really keen to make a difference. Our aim for this act of Courageous Advocacy was to raise awareness of the importance of bees in preserving our world. As a result, we hope that our children become more considerate members of society who can solve problems and have a strong moral compass in regards to nature and preservation



Year 1

The children went into the local area near by the school and completed a litter pick. We were assisted by some community volunteers. The children were very enthusiastic about using new equipment, but they also saw for themselves the extent of the rubbish and litter that people drop, and what a mess it is making of our beautiful local area. They did not like this and once back in the classroom wanted to discuss what could be done about it.

We as teachers are seeking to empower and grow children who are active, global citizens, so with this in mind, the children decided to each make posters, encouraging people to recycle all the things they can and to remind people not to drop litter. The children saw that recycling doesn't just impact our local area but our wonderful planet too.

If the purpose of education is the promotion of life in all its fullness and human flourishing then we must seek to develop people who: - learn to flourish in every aspect of their lives and can work for the flourishing of others and the planet we share, Living your vision into being 'Let your light shine...' Year 1 have realised that it is not enough to just live your vision they need to help others to develop that same vision and help them to flourish. The making of posters and the message they give to others helps with this. The children are really making a difference.

Year 2

We began by looking at the following quote - Genesis 2:15 says “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

We discussed its meaning and the importance of taking care of God’s world. We decided to do a litter pick in the local area.



The children noticed that there was a lack of bins for the local community. We wrote a letter to the local council to ask for more bins around our school.

St Mary's Church of England Primary School,
Castlefields Avenue South,
Runcorn,
Cheshire,
WA7 2NR

Dear Sir/Madam,

We are the Year 2 class at St Mary's Primary School and we have been litter picking in our local area. We were shocked at the amount of litter on the ground. We noticed that there was only one bin for local people to put their rubbish in as we walked around the local area. Is there any way that more bins could be available so local people can dispose of their rubbish more easily? We feel that this would help to keep the local area looking clean and tidy.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Lamb's Year 2 class

As yet we are still waiting for a response from the council.

Year 3

In partnership with the Church of England's Education Office, we want to encourage a deeper understanding of global injustice and the Christian response to it in primary school pupils across England."

(christianaid.org.uk, 2019)

Throughout the year we have focussed on working to improve the global community so for the last term we thought about the wider community and how we as Christians have an important role in it. Linked to our Courageous Advocacy work this term has been a deeper understanding of **Tolerance of Those with Different Faiths and Beliefs, one of the British Values**. Our RE work has focussed on learning about Islam and their faith. As a church school we think it very important to both be aware of other faiths, recognise that other people believe different things and accept and understand that this is important. We believe it is important for our children to appreciate their role as part of a community and the wider world and other faiths and beliefs are part of this.

With this in mind we have visited the Abdullah Quilliam Society mosque



and been able to see at first hand what a mosque looks like and to compare and contrast it to our places of worship. The children were very interested to note that although the actual building is very different, many of the underpinning beliefs are similar. This will develop their understanding of, and tolerance of other faiths. We believe it is important for our children to appreciate their role as part of a community and the wider world. We also carefully plan opportunities in our curriculum to ensure that the children regularly discuss and debate the big issues, to challenge injustice and to engage in activities that can bring about change

In the bible we read that

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. Matthew 7 When we think of Jesus we need to remember that in his lifetime when He met members of other faiths He simply loved them, praised the good in them, and only answered the questions they were actually asking.

By learning about other faiths and exploring their beliefs we hope that our children will become better society members. As Christians we are taught that:

We claim the privilege of worshiping Almighty God according to the dictates of our own conscience, and allow all men the same privilege, let them worship how, where, or what they may" (Articles of Faith 1:11).

Year 4

After learning about World Water Day, Year 4 decided they would do several different things in response



Year 5

Year 5 have been looking at the characteristics of 'inspirational leadership.' They assessed the qualities of religious leaders (Queen Elizabeth II, King Charles III, Archbishop Desmond Tutu). We also looked at local leaders and how they share similar characteristics.

Children were then given opportunity to explore what skills they had and how, given the opportunity, they could use these skills in and around school and the wider community. We linked with our English learning about pollution and recycling and discussed what leaders should be doing to ensure a better world for the children.

Year 6

Monday 12th June 2023
 Dear Governments of the world,
 I would like to inform you about my latest worry about our planet. It has come to my concern that a lot of deforestation is happening in the Amazon Rainforest and I would like to do something about it.

My first worry is Ranching - ranching involves clearing an area of the rain forest then rearing cattle on the land. This can cause serious problems

In our literacy and topic subjects, children have learned lots about our planet and how sadly, climate change is affecting it. In geography, children explored the physical and human features of Brazil and were appalled at how the Amazon (any many other rainforests) rainforest is being destroyed by deforestation and how this is in particular, is affecting our planet. Children imagined a world in the future without the plants and animals we have today. They made links to bible verse Genesis 1:24-31 when God said, "I command the earth to give life to all kinds of tame animals, wild animals, and reptiles." And that's what happened. God made every

one of them. Then he looked what he had done, and it good.

at was

Dear governments of the world,
 In the bible it says that you are the steward of the earth. Can you please stop cutting down trees because you are ruining the planet day by day and I would like you to stop it as a Christian I would like to protect God's planet with all my ability.

Did you know there are 15 billion trees cut down each year and if you continue like this will be...

like soil erosion, river siltation and contamination with organic matter. Would you really want this?

Furthermore, mining can have a impact on the water drainage, pollute water with run-off from the mine and threaten local communities that you are in charge of. For and example indigenous people are affected by the quality of their food supply and you aren't doing anything about it are you?

accountable to God as stewards of the creation.

* As christians we believe that Gods world should not be ruined and we should take care of his creations

I am getting utterly frustrated because of deforestation. God gave us this wonderful world and we're destroying his values by demolishing millions of trees. Governments aren't understanding the affect on god's creation we must do something rapidly. It needs to change!!

and wood. If something doesn't change, the damages will be irreversible. We should be showing Christian values and protecting God's world, instead

like soil erosion, river siltation and contamination with organic matter. Would you really want this?

Furthermore, mining can have a impact on the water drainage, pollute water with run-off from the mine and threaten local communities that you are in charge of. For and example indigenous people are affected by the quality of their food supply and you aren't doing anything about it are you?

Children wrote letters Governments of the

world expressing their concerns, persuading the government to act now -before it's too late. Children made links to Genesis 2:15 "The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it" and in their letters highlighted how we are

After thoroughly enjoying a First Aid workshop delivered by British Red Cross, Year 6 decided they would like to encourage everyone in the St. Mary's community to see the value of acquiring some fundamental First aid skills. Children discussed what they had learned and considered how they could respond if they were ever put in a situation where they needed to assist someone in an emergency. When Jesus used the Parable of the Good Samaritan as an illustration of loving others who may not be our friends, children reflected on our Christian values



and made connections to it. Luke 10:25-37. Children discussed their newfound knowledge and self-assurance and decided that if they knew how, they would assist in any scenario.



Dear ST Mary's community,
 being
 a good christian, I would like
 to tell you the importance
 of first aid. The British red
 cross came to year 6, talked
 to us about first aid. It
 can be used for life saving
 opportunity. Will you help someone
 well keep reading. Only you
 well need is modern day

Overall first-aid is very
 important. It also links with
 the bible story, the Good
 Samaritan - because if someone
 was unconscious you wouldn't
 just leave them? Would you?
 Rayah Tomner - St Marys

Friday 16th June 2023
 Courageous Advocacy -
 First Aid
 \$
 Dear ST Marys Community,
 Being a good christian,
 I would like to tell you
 about what you should
 do in a situation where
 someone is choking,
 or have passed out due
 to something blocking their
 air ways. If something
 like this happens \$ you may

School council



The School Council presented several charities to the children to choose from, to support this year. They decided on a local charity and a national charity, this was Young Minds. The children wanted to organise a sponsored fun run to raise money for the charity as they support the mental health of young children as this will help the children to flourish.