

## St Mary's Courageous Advocacy – Autumn 2024

**“Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves; ensure justice for those being crushed. Yes, speak up for the poor and helpless, and see that they get justice.” (Prov 31.8-9)**

### 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

**So now, what do you need to do to move forward?**



### How might we help our children and young people to develop their prophetic voice?

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.

## Reception – Courageous Advocacy December 2024

Matthew 7:12

‘So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets.’

This half term, we have been exploring our school value of compassion and have been thinking about how we can show compassion to others. We thought about all of the lovely things we have and then about others who are less fortunate. We spoke of the elderly and how many of them are without families. Inspired by some Christmas adverts on the TV which focus on the elderly and loneliness at Christmas time, we decided it would be a nice idea to do something special for some of our residents in the community. The children thought that it would be a good idea to give something to the elderly in our community so that they feel valued around the festive period.

We decided as a class, to ask for small donations of chocolate, biscuits, sweets etc and our Reception parents were very generous with their donations. We made a wonderful hamper for the residents of St Lukes Care Home and I am sure that they will be very grateful for our gift, especially those who are experiencing loneliness.

We also made cards to wish them a happy and peaceful Christmas.

The children were very proud of themselves.

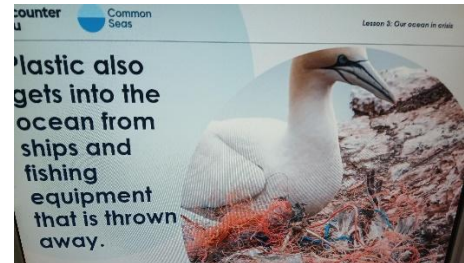
Our aim for this act of Courageous Advocacy was to show compassion and kindness to those less fortunate than ourselves and share the gift of kindness during the festive period.

We feel as a result of this kind act, our children will become children who are more aware of how they can help care for others.



## Year 1 Courageous Advocacy – Protecting Oceans and Animals from Pollution – October 2024

In Year 1 we spent some time looking at “Ocean Heroes” as part of our work on Courageous Advocacy in curriculum writing. The children heard from each child/cause and what they did in their homes and communities to speak out about pollution in the environment, especially in the oceans.



These examples of CA are particularly relevant for us, because these heroes are still children themselves. Our aim was to challenge our children about what they could do to tackle “plastic pollution”, even in their small part of the world.

Because CA is 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, yet moving beyond just saying something and doing it.

We tried to encourage our children to create a poster to show what they had learnt, as a result of hearing the messages from these Heroes, which would lead to some action on their part.



Part of our vision and purpose in educating for wisdom, hope, community and dignity is because we help to build God’s kingdom here on earth and work to bring about a fairer and more joyful world.

By watching video clips, looking at pictures and hearing what these Heroes are doing, we hope our children will;

- look beyond themselves and seek to bring hope and be a blessing to others, locally, nationally and globally.
- learn to flourish in every aspect of their lives and can work for the flourishing of others and the planet we share.
- In the bible Jesus gives us an example of life to follow;

Our starting point of raising awareness was created by pupils reflecting upon God’s creation of the oceans and our stewardship of it. Then we investigated pollution and how the use of plastic is having a horrible effect on our seas. We decided we should take action at school and at home by recycling any rubbish we can like paper, card and plastic. All this was considered so we could “Bring on a better world.” We also believe we should not litter and could pick up any litter in the playground to help look after our world.

**Genesis 1 v26 and v31 “Let the human beings rule over the animals and over all the earth. God looked at everything he had made and it was very good.” We need to keep the world and everything in it “very good” just the way God created it.**

## **Year 2 Courageous Advocacy – Autumn 2024**

Genesis 1:27 – ‘God said to human beings, ‘Fill the earth with people and look after it. Care for all that I have made.’



In Year 2 we made litter pickers in Design Technology using a lever movement. The children used their litter pickers to collect litter in school and at home. They were very excited about using them but also quite upset about how much litter they saw. When we discussed this the children were cross as they said we are not looking after God's world. They linked this back to the work they had completed on Creation.

We reread Genesis Ch 1 v26-30 and talked about what it meant for us as Christians. We then discussed what happens to all the rubbish and watched a film about recycling.

We discussed how hopefully these small acts will help us to follow Jesus' teaching to keep His world safe.

### **Year 3 Courageous Advocacy**

***“Love does no harm to a neighbour. Therefore, love is the fulfilment of the law.” Romans 13:10***

We have been learning about being 'Called by God' in our R.E. lessons during the Autumn term. The children were thinking about what it means to be called by God. We have discussed several of the prophets and the work that they did to ask people to turn back to God, to make the world a better and more peaceful place to live.

That got us on to thinking about what we could do to shape the world into a better, more peaceful place. The children talked about many ways in which they could bring about peace, from being more respectful and accepting of each other to create harmonious relationships, to walking away from incidents and not getting involved in unnecessary disputes.

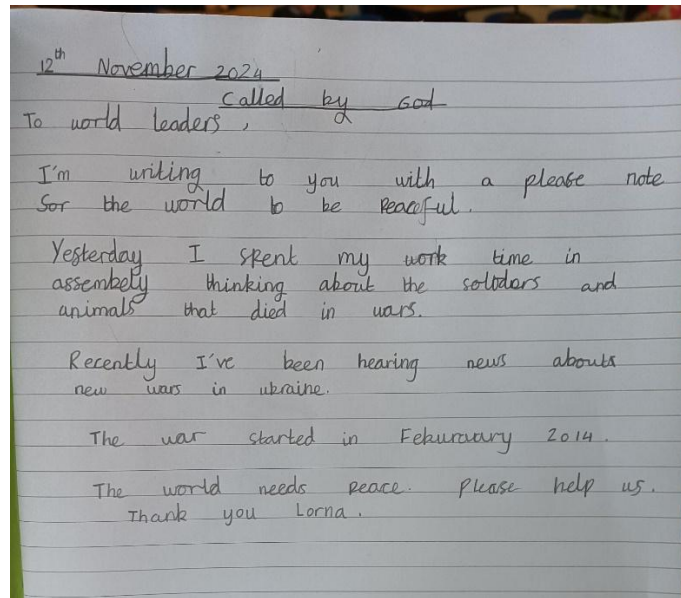
We thought about how other people could benefit from following our lead. We asked the children what they would like to change about our world. Given that we were in remembrance week, the children decided that they would like to help put a stop to what is happening around the world. We decided that we would write letters to world leaders asking them to 'drop their weapons' and 'find a better way to resolve their differences.'

Year 3 have written some fantastic letters to World leaders asking them for peace. They also talked about what they would do in exchange for the leader's co-operation. Year 3 understand that change starts from within, therefore they are going to take steps towards living a more peaceful and harmonious life themselves, both at home and at school.

A letter was chosen and then sent to the world leaders, via Twitter. All world leaders, who are currently involved in wars, have been sent a tweet with a copy of the letter attached.

Courageous Advocacy involves us speaking out, making our voices heard and taking actions that we may find difficult, but are for the good of our community. Speaking out requires real courage, to speak, even if we are wary to do so, or even if we know our opinion is different to others, our voice is still valid and needs to be heard.





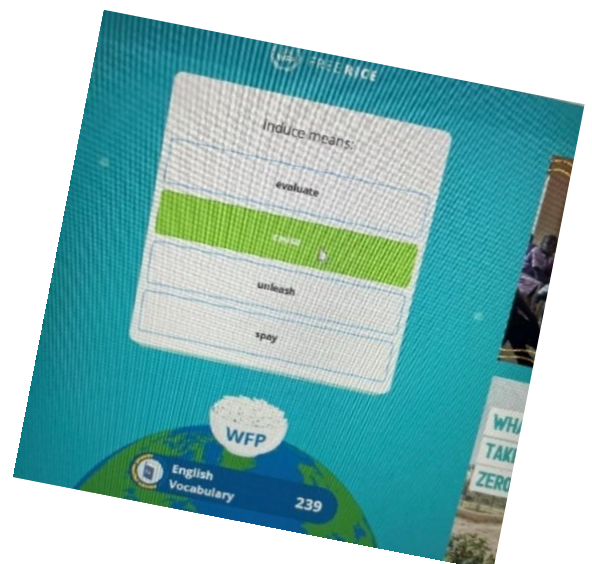
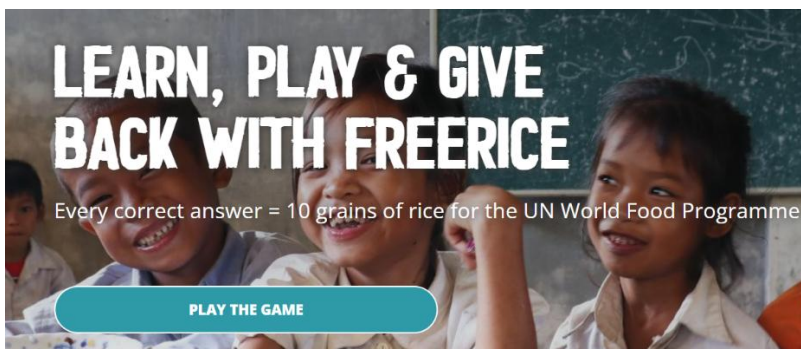
## **Year 4 Courageous Advocacy**

Following our Harvest service in church, Year 4 have been reflecting on how lucky we are to receive healthy, nutritious food every day. We have discovered that unfortunately, some people are not so lucky and in some parts of the world children sometimes go for days without food. When they do manage to obtain food, it is often in the form of plain rice or porridge.

We decided to support those children by 'winning' grains of rice for them to eat. We have spent lots of time answering quiz questions on 'freerice.com' and have won several thousand grains of rice. We have lost count of the exact amount because many of the children have been playing the quiz at home too!

We know we can't change the world on our own but we can all do our bit to make a difference to those less fortunate than ourselves.

This activity has made us feel immense gratitude for the food that we have. Sometimes, we are offered food that we perhaps wouldn't choose ourselves but we have learned that it is important to be grateful nevertheless and remember how lucky we are.



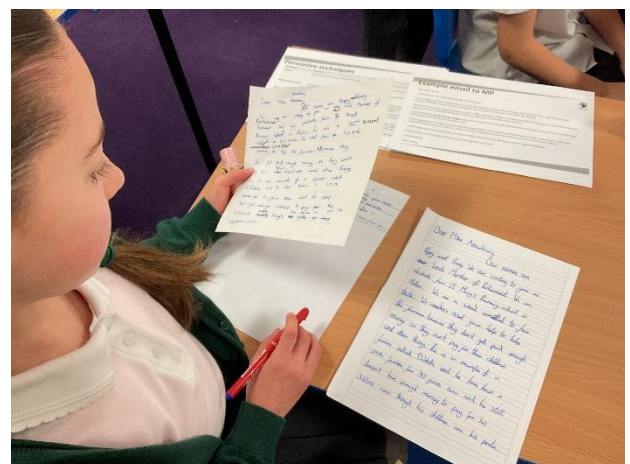


## Year 5 – Courageous Advocacy

During Fair Trade Fortnight, we learned

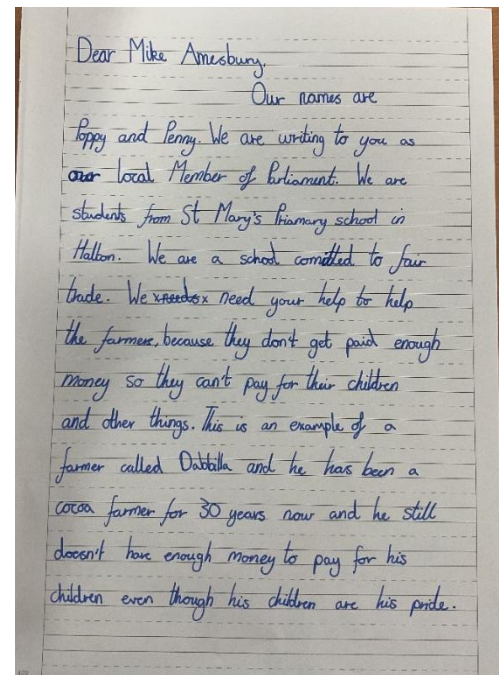
- It's 30 years since Fairtrade products first hit the shelves.
- This year for Fairtrade Fortnight, we were asked to BE THE CHANGE ourselves.
- It's more than just being aware.
- It's about an active choice to support Fairtrade farmers and workers around the world, wherever possible, to ensure they can earn a fairer wage.
- Christians believe that the Fairtrade Foundation supports what it says in the Bible. In Proverbs 14:31 it says, "Those who oppress the poor taunt their Maker, but whoever is gracious to the needy honours God". And again, from James 5:4: "Look! The wages you failed to pay the workers who mowed your fields are crying out against you. The cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord Almighty."

Dear Mike Amesbury,  
Our names are Nicole and  
Charlotte. We are coming from St Marys  
We have a problem with Fairtrade  
because some of the shops don't have  
Fairtrade so we need to convince them  
to have at least one product in  
their shops to look after the farmers.  
Who works so hard for us. As an  
MP you have a special power to  
make a difference.





- As a year group, we therefore felt it was important to BE THE CHANGE and encourage our immediate community and our wider community to do the same. We wrote to our local MP, Mike Amesbury, explaining and persuading him to play his part in ensuring fair trade.



## Year 6 - Courageous Advocacy

During our literacy studies, centring around tigers and the reasons they are endangered, we thought about how all the other animals in the book 'Can we save the tiger?' were from countries different to our own. This led us to reflect on species which are endangered in our local area or in our country and how we can help them.

The children researched a wide range of creatures which are currently under threat and found most to be insects: the most common being varieties of bees.

Here is a piece of work sharing what the children found out.

### Beautiful bees

Although bees are beautiful creatures with short thick bodies and fuzzy hair, not all people see their appeal. As a result, no one is doing much to save them. Yes, there are about 2 trillion left (2024) however their numbers are dropping at a rapid rate.

### Reasons why they are endangered

Habitat loss is one of the most disastrous things affecting bees. These honey-producing beauties are not able to protect themselves, so we need to take action. Picking flowers and cutting grass is all contributing to bees losing their habitats. When bees sting, unfortunately their stinger is removed, and they eventually die. This is a huge problem as bees are sensitive creatures, which startle easily in large human environments.

### What can be done?

Planting flowers and cutting grassy areas less frequently can help save the UK population of bees. Using sugar water on hot days, to help bees be more revitalised is another way in which we can all help.

Following the research, we decided that our school grounds could be improved to help protect bees in our local area. We scattered wildflowers in unused grassy areas to encourage the bee population to grow.

**Psalm 24:1** - 'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it.'