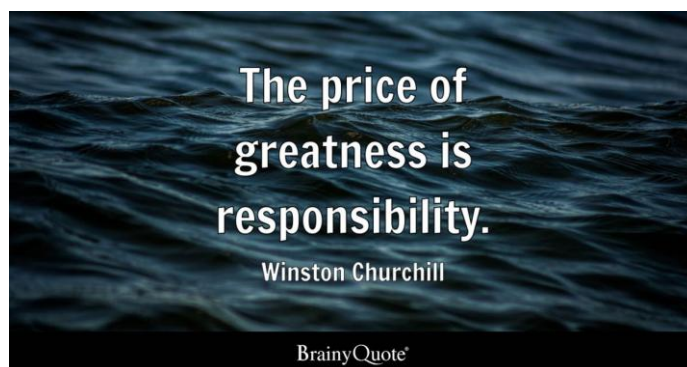


Courageous Advocacy - Spring 2025



Living Christ's vision; 'Let your light shine...

At St Mary's we hope that "In educating for wisdom, hope, community and dignity we are living Christ's way in building God's kingdom here on earth and work to bring about a fairer and more joyful world."

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

'Courageous Advocacy' 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 but moving beyond simply knowing, to saying and doing. Here are our Acts of Courage this term:

Courageous Advocacy Reception Spring Term

In Reception we have been learning about how plants help the earth—cleaning the air, providing food, and creating homes for animals. Inspired by their lessons, the Creation story and their faith, they decided to make our world a better place. We dug small holes in our compost, carefully placed a seed inside, and covered them with gentle hands. The children were so proud, and they knew that they were helping to make God's world more beautiful and sustainable.

Their choice to plant seeds was an act of courageous advocacy—standing up for God's creation and making a difference. Instead of waiting for others to take care of the planet, they took responsibility themselves, showing that even small actions can bring about great change.

Their decision reflected the wisdom of **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."

Like Adam, these children recognised that caring for the earth is a Christian duty. By planting seeds, they not only grew plants but also hope for a greener, more sustainable world.

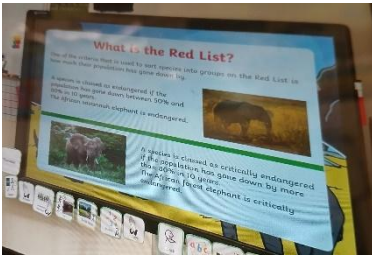


Year 1

We are seeking to empower our pupils and to help them know, they have a voice and are able to speak up and speak out about important issues. "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." (Proverbs 31:8-9)

In Year One, The Curious Case of the Missing Mammoth has been our literacy text for this half term and through it we have been introduced to different animals e.g those that are extinct and those that are endangered. We have also been studying animals including humans through our science topic. So we have been able to combine our learning and ideas to focus upon endangered animals as our inspiration for our Courageous Advocacy work this half term.

The children also had a trip to Knowsley Safari Park, which provided a wonderful opportunity to investigate and identify endangered animals. We looked through a power-point showing which are the most common species of animals being affected and what is causing animals to be endangered. The children were very concerned that we should try to help make people aware, so it was decided we would make Fact Files.



The children had to consider concepts like, how do we **protect** and **conserve** these animals. The children in Year One wanted their information to be displayed and accessed around the school so the other children could learn to talk about these important issues and raise peoples' awareness too. Durin our Celebration Assembly one Friday we gave each class a fact file to keep.

"The action should be a deeply educational and an 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." As a result of our learning and work carried out on this theme, the children also wanted to go home and share their learning with their families. They feel it is important to pass on the message and encourage others to be aware too, which could lead to further action in the future and more people knowing about these important global issues.

The thread running through the Bible is of a loving God willing people to love each other and care for His creation, in order to bring His Kingdom to earth. The children were given time to reflect and think upon what they had learned.



"The Lord hates cheating, but he delights in honesty." (Proverbs 11:1)

"Better to have little, with godliness, than to be rich and dishonest."
(Proverbs 16:8)

Year 2 have been learning about Fairtrade product.



Children were tasked with looking for Fairtrade products in the supermarket. We found only a small amount of produce that was Fairtrade. We decided to write to the manager at our local Asda. We expressed our disappointment at the lack of Fairtrade produce on the shelves. We await a reply.

Year 3 Courageous Advocacy:

"The righteous care for the needs of their animals, but the kindest acts of the wicked are cruel." - Proverbs 12:10

Activity Report: "Save the Whales!" Letter Writing Campaign - Year 3

This week, our Year 3 class took part in a cross-curricular activity that combined environmental awareness, persuasive writing, geography, and values education. The focus was on encouraging empathy and global responsibility by writing letters to the governments of Norway, Japan, and Iceland, kindly asking them to stop whaling and protect whales instead.

We began by learning fascinating facts about whales—how they live, what they eat, and their role in the ocean ecosystem. The children were especially captivated by images and videos of whales swimming with their calves, breaching, and singing underwater. These moments sparked rich discussion around the importance of caring for creation, drawing on the Christian principle of stewardship.

Using a world map, we located Norway, Japan, and Iceland and learned that these countries still allow whaling. This led to a sensitive, thoughtful conversation about different cultures and how we can make our voices heard in a kind and respectful way.

The children then wrote heartfelt letters to our Prime Minister to ask him to persuade the three countries to stop whaling. Using sentence starters and a writing template, they crafted persuasive messages like:

"Whales are amazing creatures, please stop hunting them"

'Good people love whales, please leave them alone before they become extinct.'

'Whales are very special, please stop hurting God's creatures'

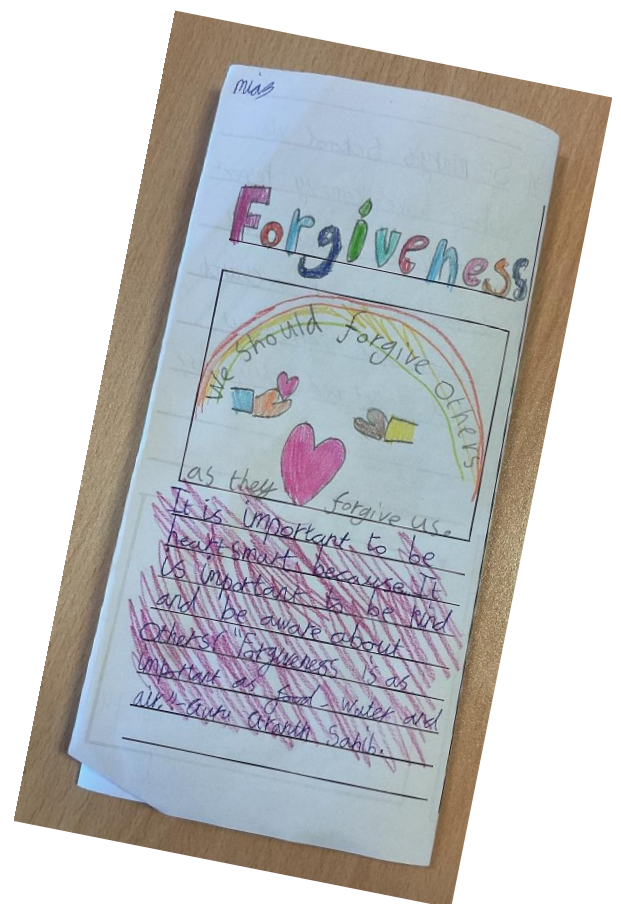
To end the session, children read theirs aloud to the class. The activity not only helped develop writing skills but also nurtured compassion, global awareness, and a sense of agency.

We plan to compile the letters and either send them to the PM or to the embassies of the respective countries or display them in school as part of a "Voices for Whales" board.

Teacher Reflection:

Year 4 noticed that there were strong links between the teachings of Jesus that you should always forgive people who sin against you and the strategies they learnt in Heartsmart about looking after their mental health. They reflected that Jesus might have been thinking about people's mental health when he said we should always forgive, because he didn't want us to go through our lives carrying baggage or holding grudges. He just wanted us to let our anger go and be happy.

A collection of children's drawings and writing on lined paper, featuring various themes like 'Heart', 'Love', and 'Family'. The drawings include a heart, a family, a house, and a person. The writing is in German, with some words like 'Liebe', 'Familie', and 'Herz' visible.



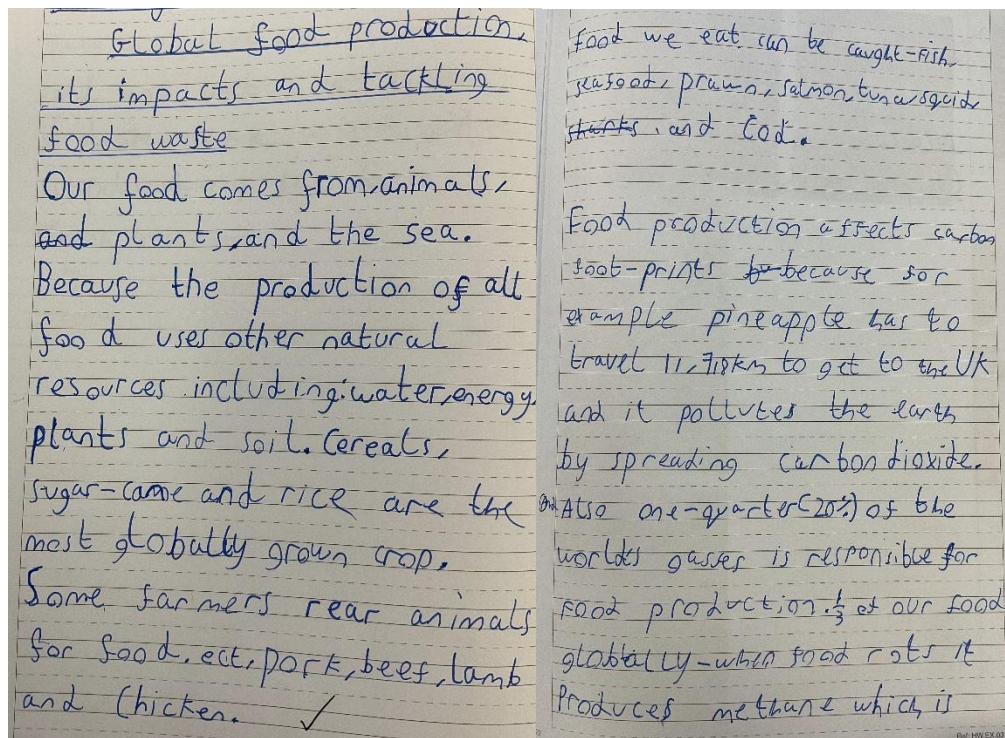
After learning about natural resources and sustainability in geography, year 5 remembered how God created the universe and put humans in charge to look after it. Year 5 wanted to show stewardship by writing to their MP about the issues and how we can do our part to make it right.

Job 12:7-10: "But ask the beasts, and they will teach you; the birds of the heavens, and they will tell you; or the bushes of the earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will declare to you. Who among all these does not know that the hand of the Lord has done this? In God's hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind."

The problem with Non renewable sources of energy
Dear M.P.
Me and my class would like you to start using more solar power and less fossil fuel. The problem is when you use fossil fuel the acid gas can't leave the atmosphere because it's weak to pass. Air pollution is bad for animals as well. Antarctica for example the polar regions are melting rapidly. Hopefully you hear this

How can we reduce the carbon footprint of food?
1. We can buy locally instead of an abroad place. e.g. I live in runcorn, so I could look at the label and see if it's from runcorn or at least Britain.
2. Eat less dairy and meat (red meat)

because has the most carbon emissions.
3. DON'T WASTE FOOD!!!! Don't waste food because if you do it means that bad CO_2 or pollution. It also means that we are raising our carbon emissions. But if we do stop our carbon emissions will lower until a good height.



Year 6 Courageous Advocacy

Our art and Design and technology work this term has focussed on fabrics and textiles. During our artwork we learnt about textiles and how fashion designers have been influenced by artists. We particularly studied the work of Yves Saint Laurent and his use of Mondrian's striking patterns.



The children designed their own Mondrian influenced artwork and we spent time learning about the design process, with the children using Op art as an influence for their clothing designs. During this work we discussed fashion and what that meant to us, the children were astounded by how much designer clothes can cost, but then we talked about how more expensive, better made clothes, using more sustainable fabrics and methods might possibly be better for the God's world and in turn for us. We also learnt about some of the conditions that 'fast fashion' is produced and discussed this.

The bible itself says very little about fashion, but we can look at Paul's letter to Timothy. Paul writes that being thankful for what we have is far wiser than pursuing wealth for its own sake. This is true when it comes to clothes, and it could be worth asking whether we are at risk of falling into the fast fashion trap of mindless consumption.

We then moved onto our textiles work and continued to think about the implications of 'fast fashion.' We focussed on different values:

Fortitude

It is courageous to plan for the future, but we can build on the expectation that God holds the future even if the future could be dark or uncertain. Because of our faith, we can live in hope and trust. "Building a wardrobe" and buying clothes that last are potential avenues for this—learning about quality, and about good and bad methods for caring for clothes both demonstrate that we have not given in to nihilism.

Prudence

Caring for what we own, including our clothes, communicates the care God has for creation, as well as our own role in stewarding it. We can be afraid that care looks too much like vanity, but we should not be put off by this: if we care for any of our possessions, we recognize we are caring for what God entrusts to us.

Temperance

The speed of fast fashion has allowed us to follow the whims of the moment in a way that was impossible when every piece of clothing was tailor-made. Temperance, or the use of our self-control in the enjoyment of pleasures, is necessary to moderate our enjoyment of fashion.

Justice

Justice ties into the ethical issues of fast fashion that are spoken of most often: the sweatshops, the working conditions in the industry, and the effects of the fashion industry on the poor who have no option but to buy cheap clothes rather than durable ones that would save them money. Our clothing choices do communicate how we feel about the broken realities of the world we live in.

We then learnt some facts about the fashion industry, both positive and negative, but thinking about what we could do to stop the 80% of discarded textiles globally are [doomed for the landfill](#) or incineration. Only 20% are actually reused or recycled.



Could we change this?

Yes, we could-

Year 6 talked about what they could do to stop the amount of clothes going to landfill- we talked about eBay and Vinted as great ways to stop this and decided we could run our own 'Bring and Buy clothing Swap Shop'. The children made posters, they spoke to the children in Collective Worship and planned the clothing afternoon.

During the afternoon we estimated that 80-100 items of clothing were recycled, and we raised £13 which will be sent to a charity which helps people in clothing poverty.

