



# St Mary's C of E Primary School

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## Newsletter No. 11

Friday 8<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that this first newsletter of the year finds you all well and that you had a restful and enjoyable summer. We have had four wonderful days in school and it has been a real joy to welcome the children back.

### Staff news:

Over the summer, one of our teaching assistants, Ms. Holmes got married! We'd like to congratulate Jayne and Paul on their nuptials, and I'm sure you will join me in wishing them well for the future. Ms. Holmes is now Mrs. O'Malley!

We have also welcomed a new teaching assistant to our St. Mary's family; Mrs. Marion Poojari will be working with Y3.

### Meet the team:

On **Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September**, we'd like to invite parents and carers of children in **Years 1 to 6** to pop into classrooms **straight after home time** to meet your child's teaching team and see the learning environment. **Teachers will dismiss the children at the usual time.** Please note that this is a casual, brief look around rather than an opportunity to look at your children's books or speak to the staff about your child's learning. Please don't worry if you can't make it; it's a very informal hello! Remember we have consultations later this term.

COME AND  
SEE US!

### Reception:

We are really looking forward to welcoming YR into school next week! We can't wait to meet you all in school. Y3 have even considered YR in their class prayer which is so wonderful (see collective worship section).

### Premises work over the summer holiday and parental contributions:

The roof is almost finished! Scaffolding will stay up for roofing work on the school house once the school roof project is complete.

You will remember that we were able to secure a grant from the diocese to make the roof replacement possible, additionally, the parental donations that we collect as a Voluntary Aided (VA) School have also gone towards this work. Thank you for your financial support with helping to fund this essential project. We could not have replaced the roof without your contributions.

To ensure that we can continue to keep making necessary future improvements to school, we ask parents/carers to make the following contribution via School Money for the school year:

- £75 for one child
- £110 for two children
- £140 for three or more children

You can find out more about why our school requests these contributions as a VA school [here](#).

### Fundraising impact:

Thanks to the fundraising efforts of the Friends of St. Mary's (FOSM) and your donations, every class has now got a modern interactive whiteboard. We had the final three boards installed over the holidays. We are so appreciative of your support at after school cake sales, school events and fayres as we would never have been able to fund the costly interactive boards using the school budget. I am meeting with Sian and Susanna, chair and vice chair of the FOSM in the next few weeks so look out for news on dates and events coming up!



### Forms to fill in and return to us:

- New, updated permissions/consent form and emergency contact form will be coming home with your child early next week.
- Please be sure to complete EVERY section on the consent form and sign.
- Make any necessary amendments to the emergency contact form
- **Return both forms to school by Friday 22nd September – these should be handed to the teacher**



### Curriculum letters:

We have uploaded curriculum letters to the website and emailed these out to you. Please take a look at the learning that's coming up over this half term. Letters contain essential information about home learning and PE days too.

### Collective Worship:

Our focus this half term will be centered around caring for God's creation; I will be introducing the concept of having a 'Heart for the Earth' on Monday.

We began our first week back by reflecting on the parable of the mustard seed. This parable is the theological underpinning of our school vision and ethos, and is also captured in our school logo.



It encouraged our thinking about 'starting small' and achieving great things in our learning and in wider life, which could include providing for others in time, just like the birds who nested in the mustard tree's branches. Years 1 to 6 wrote beautiful 'start the year' class prayers inspired by the parable:

<https://publuu.com/flip-book/232760/554390/page/1>

### After school clubs:

We are in the process of exploring more after school activities to offer to the children. Sadly, Lemon Jelly won't be running again this year owing to their staffing difficulties. They have kindly offered two free taster sessions for children aged 5 and up to access the club that runs at East Barnet School on Wednesdays 4-6pm. See attached flyer.

### Books in school:

You may recall that last year, we invited parents to donate books to our class libraries in a couple of different ways.

Our Amazon Wish List can be accessed [here](#). We continue to add new books all the time. **If your child has a birthday coming up, donating a book might be a lovely way to celebrate!**



If parents would like to donate a book via Amazon, and they leave us a message on the page, then we will include a sticker inside the book to note who has made the donation.

As an alternative to the Amazon wish list, we have also worked with the Children's Book Shop in Muswell Hill to create a collection of St Mary's class wish lists:

<https://www.childrensbookshoplondon.com/wishlists>.

Once purchases are made, The Children's Bookshop will send books to school once a week for free, labelled with the child's name and class, but parents are also welcome to go into the shop and browse if they'd rather and take it with them immediately.

### **Attendance and punctuality:**

It's essential that children are in school every day and that they arrive on time, **by 8.55am**. This is so that children can achieve well at school.

Term time holidays **should not** be taken as this is highly disruptive to the children's education.

The school or local authority can fine parents for the unauthorised absence of their child from school, where the child is of compulsory school age.

The decision on whether or not to issue a penalty notice may take into account:

- The number of unauthorised absences occurring within a rolling academic year
- One-off instances of irregular attendance, such as holidays taken in term time without permission
- 6 unauthorised lates (arriving after 9.15am) within a 4-week period

Further information can be found in our [attendance policy](#).

### **Key dates:**

- Sunday 10th September: St Mary's church service to mark the start of the new academic year on Education Sunday. There will be a special blessing at this service for school bags, pencil cases, coffee cups... whatever students, staff and parents need to flourish during the academic year!
- Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September: meet the team
- 6pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September: Y6 school journey meeting
- Return consent/permission forms to school by Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> September.
- Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> October: Harvest festival – food bank donations welcome. More details to come...



***From all of us at St Mary's School, stay safe, stay well and our love and prayers are with you as always.***

***Maria Constantinou***

***Headteacher***

