



St Mary's C of E Primary School

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Newsletter No. 2

Friday 29th September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

We've had a superb month in school and it's been a pleasure to welcome the Reception children into our St. Mary's family. There's lots to tell you and some important dates to share, so please read carefully!

Collective Worship:

Our focus for this half term's collective worship is all about having a Heart for the Earth. Inspired by our vision to care for all of God's creation, we have been learning about climate change and climate justice. Immersing ourselves in Genesis chapter 1, we have reflected on the beauty of God's world and how over time, people have sadly done things to spoil it.

Our learning about climate justice has helped the children to understand how unfair it is that it's often the case that people and communities who do the least to contribute to climate change, that are the most affected by it.

We are dedicated to supporting the children to demonstrate an active responsibility to challenge injustice wisely. **Please keep an eye on the Y1-Y6 Google Classrooms** as I'll be inviting the children to create a poster on the theme of climate injustice, as part of a [Christian Aid project](#). The posters will be shared with global leaders (attending COP 28) in an exhibition at the Houses of Parliament. Our children will potentially have the opportunity to affect thinking and change, which is very exciting!



Harvest Festival:

On **Monday 2nd October**, we will be celebrating Harvest festival in school. Please give what you can – all donations will be split between the Chipping Barnet Food Bank and Homeless Action in Barnet.

We ask for donations to be **brought to the school hall as the children arrive for school on Monday morning**. Please bring donations in a strong plastic bag as we will donate these too.

Please don't include any fresh fruit and vegetables in your donations.


Here is a [link to Homeless Action in Barnet's online wish list](#) which includes bigger items like bedding should you wish to donate to HAB directly.

SHOPPING LIST MOST NEEDED

Tinned Meat & Fish
Tinned Fruit & Vegetables
Tinned Potatoes & Pulses
Rice, Pasta & Pasta Sauces
Rice Pudding & Custard
Baked Beans & Spaghetti
Tinned Soup
Coffee, Tea & Biscuits
Long Life Milk & Juices
Cereals and Jam
Toiletries & household items



Just One Tree Day:

As part of our commitment to climate change, we will be marking Just One Tree Day.  **JUST ONE TREE.** [Just One Tree is a non-profit organisation](#) whose mission is removing CO2 from the atmosphere through global reforestation.

The aim is that the tree absorbs CO2, restores biodiversity and makes the world a better place. Another incredible aspect of the reforestation process is the ability to improve the lives of those living in challenging conditions. Trees are planted in various locations, including Brazil, Haiti, Madagascar and more.

Why should we plant more trees?

- Trees absorb the pollutants we humans put into the atmosphere.
- They clean the air we breathe, filter the water we drink, prevent soil erosion and flooding, give life to the world's wildlife, house complex ecosystems, supply us with medicine and provide jobs to over 1.6 billion people.
- They really are the superheroes of the planet and we need them in order to survive.

'Just One Tree Day' is Friday 13th October – this will be a non-uniform day.

You can donate £1 or whatever you'd like to give, by clicking our school fundraising page [here](#). For **every** pound donated, **one** tree will be planted.



Messages for teachers:

If you have an urgent message that you need to relay to your child's teacher in the morning, please either **call and speak to someone in the office, or tell the senior member of staff on the gate** and we will speak to the relevant person. **Please don't come into classrooms** at the start of the day as this is a very busy time and teachers will be focused on settling the children. Thank you for your cooperation.



Messy Church- Messy Harvest:

Why not pop along to messy church on Sunday 15th October at 3pm? This will be a chance for congregations from both Brookside and St. Mary's church to come together to worship at Brookside Methodist Church.

There will be lots of fun and engaging activities for the children to do too!



Black History Month:

We will be celebrating Black History month in October. The theme for 2023 is highlighting achievements of Black and ethnic minority women. We are very proud of our curriculum which consistently includes opportunities to celebrate diversity and representation.

I'm sure you all know who Greta Thunberg is, but do you know who Vanessa Nakate is? We will be learning about the life of this extraordinary young woman as just one inspirational example.



Justice and Equity:

Our reflections in collective worship will include continued work on understanding justice and equity in all its forms so we will once again participate in 'wear red day' on Friday 20th October, in support of the organisation 'Show Racism the Red Card'. The children should wear uniform or PE kit (as usual or a Friday) and a red item e.g. a red t shirt, red socks, red hair band etc. Any donations towards the cause can be made directly [via their website](#).

Online Safety – free resources:

As part of our computing curriculum, we teach the importance of online safety in class, but *I wonder if there are things about your child's online activity at home that you might have questions or concerns about?*

With the internet so readily accessible, the most effective approach to online safety needs everyone involved, including parents and carers.

We're delighted to let you know that St. Mary's School is a member of The National College – a multi-award-winning online training provider for staff and parents.



What does this mean for you?

As part of our membership, The National College provides dedicated training and resources for parents and carers – particularly, around online safety and keeping children safe online.



That's why we now enabled access to hundreds of **FREE** courses, explainer videos and online safety guides to support parents'/carers' awareness of the online world. Topics range from understanding apps like TikTok and Instagram to recognising the signs of online harm and what you can do to help.

Signing up is easy

Signing up to the platform is simple. Just follow <https://nationalcollege.com/enrol/st-mary-s-church-of-england-primary-school-3> and complete your details.

Once you're set up, you'll be able to **choose 'Parent/Carer'** as your user type and get instant access to all training and resources.



Download the app for free

Another fantastic benefit of The National College is its National Online Safety app, which you can download for free. It gives you access to all their parent and carer resources on the go, whenever you want.

You can download the National Online Safety app using the links below:

- [App store](#)
- [Google Play](#)

They're always there to help

The National College has a brilliant support team if you have any questions. Their [help centre](#) provides a comprehensive bank of answers to most FAQs, but if you still can't find the answer you're looking for, you can always get in [contact](#) with them.

Please do sign-up and make the most of their valuable resources.

Friends of St. Mary's (FOSM):

The fundraising focus for this academic year will be on the development of the playground and outdoor spaces. Money raised at every cake sale, event and fayre will go directly towards improving facilities for the children at playtimes.



Here are a few dates to keep in mind:

- **Friday 6th October:** Coffee morning for parents and carers of children in Reception. Please come along at school drop off time and have a cuppa in the library. Pre-schoolers welcome. This will be a chance to meet other Reception parents and to meet some of our FOSM members too.
- **Tuesday 10th October at 6pm:** FOSM Annual General Meeting followed by committee meeting. This will be in the school hall – glass of wine and nibbles on offer as well as opportunities to hear about the FOSM's success last year and plans looking ahead. **Everybody is welcome to come along** – this meeting is open to all parents and carers at St. Mary's. There is no expectation to stay to the committee meeting after the AGM.

- **Friday 20th October:** Y6 cake and fruit sale - pick up your treats on the playground at home time. Bring some cash and a bag or container to take goodies home.

Other key dates:

- Monday 2nd October: Harvest festival – food bank donations welcome.
- Tuesday 3rd October – Y1 history workshop
- Wednesday 11th October: Y6 and Y4 trips
- Thursday 12th October: Y6 residential visit meeting - 6pm at school.
- Friday 13th October: One Tree Day – Non Uniform day
- Tuesday 17th October: Y2 trip
- Friday 20th October: Wear something red for Show Racism the Red Card
- Friday 20th October: final day of this half term
- Monday 23rd – Friday 27th October: half term



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

