



NEWSLETTER No 4: 6th December 2013

St Mary's CE Primary School
email: info@st-marys.richmond.sch.uk
This newsletter is on the school website:
www.st-marys.richmond.sch.uk

Dear Parents

Wishing you all compliments of the season

As the first term of this academic year draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a happy Christmas and a healthy 2014. As ever, I am very grateful for your support this term. The children have all made an excellent start to this year. We are all looking forward to watching the infant nativity; "The story of Christmas" performed by Years 2 & 3 and the junior Carol concert at St Mary's Church. We will be supporting our charity "Compassion" and the Philippines Disaster fund this year; there will be a collection at each event.

Information regarding end of term Christmas activities

Christmas lunch will be on Wednesday 18th December on all three sites; Christmas lunch is only for those children who regularly have school dinners.

Class breakfasts will be on the morning of Thursday 19th December. The junior and the middle site children will be told by their teacher what to bring in. The infant site children will bring home a short note, asking them what to bring in to share.

Class parties will be on the afternoon of Thursday 19th December. Children may bring in a change of clothes to wear after lunch.

Spring term 2014

Our first day of term is **Tuesday 7th January 2014**. In the event of inclement weather, may I remind you to check the "open status" on the front page of our website (www.st-marys.richmond.sch.uk) if you are in any doubt as to whether the school is open.

End of term reminders

Please ensure you and your child/ren take everything home on the last day of term, including lunch boxes, scooters, bikes, PE kit etc. Our PFI provider cleans the school thoroughly and will dispose of any items left or unclaimed belongings.

Our last day of term is **Friday 20th December**. School finishes **ONE** hour earlier on each site.

School run clubs have now finished and will start again w/c 13th January 2014. A letter will be emailed and sent home via your child/ren with information about clubs before the end of this term.

The RFU Varsity match is on Thursday 12th December. The infant site will close at 2.30, the middle site at 2.45 and the junior site at 3.00 pm

Thank you to Mrs van Otterdijk and FoSM

I would like to thank Johanna van Otterdijk and her team for all their hard work this term. The Christmas fair was a resounding success. We all appreciate the hard work and weeks of organisation required to make these events such a triumph and know that many parents work extremely hard beforehand and on the day. Everyone, particularly the children, enjoyed the fair and a significant amount of money was raised, which will benefit all. Thank you.

Smile shoeboxes

We were able to send 183 Smile shoeboxes off to children who would otherwise receive nothing for Christmas. Thank you for your generosity and for dropping your boxes off to the middle site.



Gardening News

As many of the trees and plants begin to settle down for winter and enjoy a well-earned rest, there is still a flurry of activity in and around the gardens at St Mary's.

Recently, a group of Year 6 children spent a couple of afternoons at the middle site garden with children from Wrens, Pines and 4KT. Along with staff and parents, the garden was planted up with some winter vegetables and given a good tidy up. The children had great fun raking up the leaves, and even more fun having wheelbarrow rides!

The Gardening Club on the junior site have been as busy as ever. Over the past couple of weeks they have been collecting the fallen leaves around the school and putting into bags in order to make leaf mould. Leaf mould is a great soil conditioner and/or mulch and should be ready next year to use in the garden. The fruit trees have had their winter prune and more winter vegetables have been planted.

A big thank you to all the children; they have worked very hard and with enthusiasm over the last couple of months!



Gardening Club busy at work collecting leaves



A bit of fun after all that hard work!

Year 4 visit Chiswick Pier

Each Year 4 class has spent the day being 'river explorers' at Chiswick Pier. We learnt all about the different parts of the river, the wildlife and how to keep the river clean. We would like to thank FoSM for helping to fund our visits. Here are some thoughts from the children.

"When we arrived at the Pier we slipped into our wellies and went straight down to the river. It was such fun when we grabbed leeches and snails with our nets." *Lucy*

"I liked learning about the Thames and now I have better knowledge about it." *Joe*

"I never knew that the River Thames was the cleanest city river in the world!" *Keya*

"We tested how fast the water was flowing by throwing a dog biscuit into the water and timing how long it took to travel 30 meters." *Dan*



Choir news

On Friday 22nd November, the Junior Choir sang Christmas carols as part of St Mary's church Lantern procession. They walked and sung along the Embankment and up to the church where they helped Father Jeff switch on the Christmas tree lights. They then sang 'Away in a Manger' inside the church. My thanks go to the children, who were a credit to the school and sang with enthusiasm throughout the evening. Thank you also to all the parents who came along to support them.

St Mary's success in the NPL Science Film 2013 competition

The results of the Science Film competition posted on the NPL website (<http://www.npl.co.uk/educate-explore/schoolsciencefilm/2013-npl-school-science-film-challenge>) show our passion for science and film making. Please have a look at the films the children made.

Three teams entered:

Science, Science and More with Lysander, Jude, Sophia, Lucilda and Jessica were runners-up in both the "Best Chemistry and Best Hands-on" Film categories.

The Bone Breakers with Scarlett, Monika, Michelle and Hannah were runners-up in the "Best Scientific Investigation" movie category.

Geniusx4 with Ben, Andrew, Findlay and Maria were runners-up in the "Most Entertaining film and the Best Overall School Produced Movie" categories.

Mrs Turner was very proud of all the teams as they were up against some very strong secondary school teams. They showed great teamwork and independence in writing their own scripts and directing themselves. Well done to all.

ArtsRichmond Young Writers' competition

The Young Writers' Festival 2013 is open to all young people who either live or attend schools/clubs in the Borough of Richmond upon Thames. Show off your writing skills in any form: stories, descriptive writing, poems, play lets, lyrics for songs, blogs – whatever your imagination can devise.

Entries are judged in four age groups with prizes for all shortlisted entrants. A Junior Laureate will be awarded £100 from this shortlist at the gala awards event at the Orange Tree Theatre in April 2014.

Entrants may write about any subject of their choice, in any form, not exceeding 500 words or 25 lines for a poem, in a typed format. Deadline for entries: 10th January 2014. See the ArtsRichmond website <http://www.artsrichmond.org.uk/young-artists.php> for further details or talk to Mrs Turner.

Sports news

Cross Country:

The Borough Cross country event was held on Friday 29th November in Richmond Park. The event comprises of two races, a Y5/6 Girls and a Y5/6 boys. All twelve children who ran gave their best on a challenging course. In fact, with 150 children going downhill at the start, it is a relief just to be standing on the first bend. Individual congratulations go to Ben (Y5) for finishing in the top 10 in the boys race. There were 28 schools represented and the boys managed to finish a fantastic 3rd and the girls were 11th. This gave us an overall finishing place of 5th, which is a great achievement. With five Y5 children in the team we look forward to continuing this success next year. With many ex-St Mary's pupils representing Orleans and other schools in the secondary school event (including individual winners) and the continued high numbers attending running club, we hope the children will continue to be inspired.

Netball:

The netball team has completed three league games in the past three weeks. Their first ever outing as a team was against a strong Collis side. A nervous first quarter saw Collis gain what was ultimately an unassailable lead; however over the next three quarters of the match the team grew in confidence and skill and the gap did not widen further. The final score was 13-4

Our second match against Sacred Heart saw the team take an early lead, with some sharp shooting from Caitlin. Unfortunately, the momentum was lost and Sacred Heart slipped into the lead, which they held. Final score was 5-2.

The next league match was a home game against Archdeacon. The team worked together well and there were some excellent passages of flowing play. Sadly, we could not convert all our created opportunities into goals, and went down 8-2 to the accurate shooting of Archdeacon.

Despite not being able to throw our hands up in victory (yet), playing these matches is giving us the experience we need to continue to grow and improve, and the team should be very proud of how strongly it is developing.

I would like to thank Mrs Monteiro for her invaluable coaching and excellent refereeing skills.

Boys Football:

The boys' team had a great day at the borough football tournament at NPL. They negotiated their way through the group stages, winning three games and losing one. This put them through to the knock out stages in the cup competition. They played their best football in the last 16 match against Trafalgar, but unfortunately could not get the ball in the net. After extra time we headed for the dreaded penalty shoot-out. Luckily, the boys held their nerve and deservedly emerged victorious. They buoyantly moved onto the quarter finals, where they took an early lead and managed to scrape and scrap their way to a 1-0 victory. The semi-finals proved to be a very tense but a better quality affair. The boys scored an early goal and were still holding onto their lead with one minute to go. Unfortunately, Hampton Hill managed to score two goals, one with the last kick of the game, to knock us out of the tournament.

The boys performed with great effort throughout the all-day event and to play over seven games requires a lot of concentration. In a highly competitive tournament, the team achieved St Mary's best result in years in this event. Congratulations to all the ten boys in the squad.

Basketball:

The school sent two teams to the Richmond Knights basketball tournament at St Mary's University. There was a Y4 team who played in the morning and a Y5/6 team in the afternoon; both team were mixed. Both of these teams were chosen from children who attend basketball club at school run by Richmond Knights. They had no friendly fixtures and many had not played in competitive basketball matches before. It was therefore very pleasing that both teams won their fair share of matches and ended up finishing 4th out of 9 teams. Well done to all the children involved and there is a tournament like this each term. Thank you to Mrs Beagley and Mr Gayle for taking the children.

Girls Football:

On November 13th the Girls Football team took part in the Richmond Borough Schools Football tournament at NPL in Teddington. Over 30 schools turned out and competition was tougher than ever as the girls set out to retain their title which they won so impressively last year. We played four group games of which we won three which put us through to the knock out stages where we were knocked out in the first round by Heathfield. The 1-0 defeat to Heathfield came after a sterling effort from the ladies who battled hard and defeated the majority of the opposition we faced. Special mention should go to Rhea Gautam who led her charges with aplomb and ended up being our top scorer to boot. Madeleine 'the cat' Monteiro also produced a faultless display in goal with her immaculate kicking. I was proud of how the girl's performed and they can be rightfully pleased with their position amongst the top ten teams in the borough.

Tag Rugby:

The school tag rugby team got their league campaign underway on Thursday 5th December. We played St Mary's & St Peters at their ground. This was the first competitive match for most of the team; they played very well, passing to each other with great skill. The game was two halves of 15 minutes, which is very long for a game of tag, and unfortunately we ended up losing 13 tries to 10. The match was level for much of the game and the children had to play through heavy rain and fading light. The B team also played St Mary's & St Peter's. They too had the same result as the A team; losing by 3 tries 11-8. The B team also played with great effort and determination. Well done to all nineteen boys and girls. There will be more fixtures in the spring term, leading up to the borough tournament.



How St. Mary's are maximising the influence of the School Sports Premium

Teachers in charge: Helen Gray and Tom Holmes

Link Governor: Hugo Clarke

St. Mary's has been allocated approximately £9000 as part of the ring fenced government funding for Primary Schools to achieve outstanding Physical Education and school sport for all children.

Of utmost importance to us at St. Mary's was using the funding in a way that will have a sustainable benefit on our pupils now and for years to come. At St. Mary's we were fortunate to have received the funding in a positive position, with a close partnership with parents and our local community; we welcome your support for this partnership to continue to grow. We have a good foundation for using the money for long term benefits to the school, rather than a 'fix it quick' scheme which is unlikely to last.

Our priority with the funding has been labelled 'sustainable CPD'. We believe that by upskilling our very able and dedicated staff team and parents, we will be able to improve our provision without the need for outside agencies to take over. We carried out a staff audit to find out where our strengths lay; within the staff team we hold various qualifications and courses in a fantastic variety of sports. We have now booked staff meetings and whole school INSET training to develop our skills in the areas where we hold less expertise. We have also engaged staff on sport and multi skills training days to support our curriculum.

We have trained staff and parents to lead a new 'Energy Club' and welcomed parents to lead clubs of their own specialism, including yoga. It is exciting that the opportunities our children have for extra- curricular activities continue to grow. We have built on an existing partnership with Orleans school by inviting the Year 11 pupils to guide active playtimes and lunchtimes after Christmas.

After finding out about the funding, our decision to get the children involved with our whole school improvement has been invaluable in inspiring them. The children have been extremely motivated by the opportunity to write our first vision statement for sport at St. Mary's. This leads me on to the exciting development of our sports council. After Christmas, we will have four Sports Captains, who will be Year 6 children who have had the 'attitude of an athlete' throughout their time at St. Mary's with a resilient and committed approach to school life. We will also have a Sports Rep in each class who will be voted by their class members, these sports reps will be part of our Sports Council, led by the captains. In addition to our Sports Council, we will be ensuring that all children aspire continuously in sport, with a new Sports Champion being awarded for their effort in every PE lesson throughout the school.

Our Sports Council will be the voice of the children for sport in the School Council meetings. They will also support the coordination of intra school competitions to build on sporting events within the school. We look forward to an increase in school sport, a developed attitude and consistently improving partnership.

Thank you to Year 5 children

I would like to thank Apoorva, Elise, Joseph, Findlay Clay, Manon and Sophia for showing prospective parents around the infant site. As usual, the children were complimented on their good manners, enthusiasm and knowledge of the school. Thank you.

Prayer meeting

The next prayer meeting will take place on Thursday 16th of January, at 8pm. It will be at 33 Craneford Way, TW2 7SB. You are warmly invited to come. If you would like more information, please contact Ieke Hilmy (boys in Reception, Yr 2 & Yr 4) on iekehilmy@yahoo.co.uk.

Governing body news

This term the governors have been busy again! Many parents ask what it is the governors do exactly, so here's a low down of some recent activities.

Our Ethos committee arranged a staff inset training, we've analysed the results of the pupils and parents Sayer's Croft questionnaires, reported on our well-controlled finances, and we have scrutinised and updated our self-evaluation and school development plan in response to our SATs results and other key data, as well as the important work of keeping our policies updated (at least twelve this term, and many of these thanks to our Curriculum Committee!) The 2015/16 Admissions policy will soon be out for consultation, so keep your eyes peeled.

More about school governance is planned for our website, so if you are interested in ever becoming a governor, please keep a look out.

We very much enjoyed running the decorated jars stall at the hugely, successful Christmas fair (well done FoSM) and seeing so many families enjoy the event. We have conducted two visits focused on school development and have been showing the trustees around the school; we are immensely grateful to them for their support. We have welcomed two new staff governors, Katy Welsh and Jane Tomlinson, and have appointed a new foundation governor, Mrs Hilmy, mother of Stefan in Reception Blackbirds, Nik in Year 2 Maples and Marco in 4R. The governing body is strong, progressive, and looking forward to further developments in 2014. Watch this space!

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Help needed at the junior site Library please

Father Piotr has been helping at all three libraries but is unable to commit to a regular slot every week. We need one parent (or a group of parents who would be willing to organise a rota) to help Year 4 for one afternoon a week (apart from Friday as we have Creativity on a Friday afternoon). It should take no longer than an hour and a half. If you are able to help, please contact Charlotte Thomas at the junior site (info@st-marys.richmond.sch.uk). Thank you for your support.

Severe nut allergy in Year 1

Sasha Murley (Puffins) has a severe allergy to peanuts and almonds. Although St Mary's is nut free, last week she had a reaction at school which may be because she touched someone who had eaten one of these nuts for breakfast. She was treated and was fine within a couple of hours but it highlights how important it is for her not to come into contact with them. It only takes her to be in contact with a trace of the nut protein for her to have a reaction. We would therefore be extremely grateful if you could make sure your child washes their hands if they have nuts for breakfast. Thank you for your understanding.

Information regarding school lunches for the spring term

School Meal Payments for the Spring Term are £63.80 for 1st half of the term and £63.80 for second half of the term. The cost for the whole term is £127.60.

The amount owing which parents will see "online" in January 2014 will be to the end of the 1st half of term not to the end of the week in which you log on.

A reminder that children stay on the School Meal system until notice is given **in writing** to cancel. Failure to give notice will result in parents being charged for the meals booked for their child.

Tucasi

We cannot accept payments online for anything apart from school lunches. We hope to be able to offer you the facility to pay for trips etc online in due course. Thank you.

Half termly letters

You will receive your child's half termly letter before the end of term. It will also be available to view on the school website www.st-marys.richmond.sch.uk

Request from the middle site class teachers

We would be grateful for old comics, magazines (animals, Doctor Who etc) for Year 3 to read during guided reading sessions. Please drop off to the middle site. Many thanks.

French Trip payments, message for Year 6 parents

May I politely remind Year 6 parents that the final payment for any outstanding balance is due by the end of March 2014.

Should you have any queries, please contact Denise Donald, Finance Officer, at the junior site (ddonald@st-marys.richmond.sch.uk).

We are required to pay the balance to Kingswood on 1st April 2014. Thank you for your co-operation.

A thank you message from St Paul's food bank

This is just an official thank you from the St Paul's food bank for the harvest collection (a slightly belated thank you as we've had an internet catastrophe that has prevented me sending emails).

The food collected is, we estimate, sufficient to provide food parcels for 60/70 families. It is much appreciated by our clients, and by the charities and statutory agencies who refer people to the food bank. We have an ever increasing amount of organisations seeing hungry people who they wish to refer to us, for example, just this week the Hounslow job centre approached us for some food bank vouchers to give to job seekers.

It was a great idea to have the pupils give a brief explanation about the food bank at the Harvest service, as raising awareness of food poverty is important.

I see that a thank you to parents went out in the newsletter a couple of days ago, but I just wanted to add my thanks to the St Mary's staff who were so supportive.

Best wishes

Naomi and Hugo Foxwood on behalf of St Paul's Hounslow West Food bank

Persistent lateness and absence

I have recently met with the EWO (Education Welfare Officer, Laura Budgen) to discuss persistent lateness and absenteeism. If your child is routinely late or has an attendance percentage of less than 85%, you will be contacted by the EWO.

Parking across resident driveways at the middle and infant sites

I am saddened to be writing once again about a small minority of parents who persist in blocking our neighbours' driveways on a daily basis. It is extremely disrespectful and I have received another email of complaint this week. I have no jurisdiction in this matter; all I can do is to ask you not to block driveways. Thank you.

Gill Hines parent workshops

The last two Gill Hines workshops for parents for this year are:

Helping children deal with the behaviour of others (back by popular demand!) on Tuesday December 3rd, 7.30 -9.30pm

Managing anger on Thursday December 12th, 7.30 -9.30pm

Both workshops will take place at Whitton Community Association, Twickenham.

£1 places available for parents of children receiving free school meals

For more information and booking go to www.gillhines.co.uk

Christmas activities for children and families at Orleans House Gallery

Discover a range of family workshops at Orleans House Gallery this festive season. Work with professional artists to create Christmas crafts, or come and meet Santa in his grotto! For more info and to book call 020 8831 6000, or visit our website at www.richmond.gov.uk/arts

Reminders until the end of term

The Reception and Year 1 Nativity play will be on Monday 9th, Tuesday 10th and Wednesday 11th December at 10 am.

Years 2 & 3 "The story of Christmas" will take place on Tuesday 17th and Wednesday 18th December at 10 am.

The Junior Carol service is on Monday 16th December, 6.30 pm, at St Mary's Church. Everyone is welcome and children in Years 4 - 6 are expected to attend.



Yours sincerely

S. Campbell

Stuart Campbell
Head Teacher (headteacher@st-marys.richmond.sch.uk)
6th December 2013



THE ROYAL SOCIETY
Associate Schools and Colleges



RUGBY FOOTBALL UNION

St Mary's CE School is a member of the RFU Education Partnership