



St Mary's Church of England School

Infants:

Amyand Park Road
Twickenham
TW1 3HE

T: 0208 892 5840

Middle:

Strafford Road
Twickenham
TW1 3AD

T: 0208 249 6836

F: 0208 891 1904

Juniors:

Richmond Road
Twickenham
TW1 3BA

T: 0208 892 7849

F: 0208 607 0420

E: info@st-marys.richmond.sch.uk

www.st-marys.richmond.sch.uk

Friday 21st December 2017

Dear Parents,

With the completion of the nativities and our Carol Service I'd like to thank the staff for all they did to encourage the children to shine this year. Enormous thanks to you too, for helping with learning lines, creating costumes and for donating a wonderful **£628.00** for Shelter at the Carol Service.

As 2017 draws to a close I thought a reminder about just some of the super events the children have experienced would be a lovely way to end the year:

2017-2018

- *Current Reception Class:* Farm Visit, Poetry Recital, Our first Nativity
- *Current Year 1 Class:* Orleans Gallery, a fun DT week culminating in The Aquarium visit and shining in the Nativity
- *Current Year 2 Class:* Hatching the chicks, African Drumming workshop and seeing the changing of the Guard at Windsor Castle
- *Current Year 3 Class:* Butser Ancient Farm, talks on Hinduism delivered by some of our very own Year 3 parents and the Year 3 Bible Service.
- *Current Year 4 Class:* Residential to Sayer's Croft, seeing the bridge rise at Tower Bridge, 'The Battle of Marble' recreating the Battle of Hastings, being cursed in the Ancient Egyptian workshop
- *Current Year 5 Class:* Primary Proms at the Royal Albert Hall, observing adaptations at the London Wetlands Centre and 'exploring the story of the Iron Man through drama and debating'
- *Current Year 6 Class:* Residential to France, Imperial War Museum trip, visit by Sir Vince Cable

More good news to share:

Children at St Mary's were invited to enter Sir Vince Cable's annual Christmas card competition which involved creating a design for his Christmas cards. We are very pleased to say that Beatriz C (Year 3, Sycamores) was chosen as one the successful winners! She was invited to attend a special presentation in Teddington where she met with Sir Vince Cable and other competition winners. Well done Beatriz!

Parent Helpers:

Thank you to those who continue to come in and support school with their time. We look forward to seeing you all again in the new term. If you would like to help your child's year group or another year group in the school, please speak to the office staff at any of our sites.



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Christmas Cards:

Last year I asked you all to keep hold of and send in any Christmas cards depicting St Mary, as we wanted to make something lovely with them. It seems that there are very few of these around these days, sadly. If you happen to get any this year could we please have them when you return to school, many thanks?

A message from Ben Driver, Chair of the governing body

St Mary's governors are part of your community; some are staff and many are parents. They often visit the School and meet staff, pupils and parents, as well as local authority officers, councillors and MPs. Governors also attend four evening meetings each year as a full team and the agenda is always packed with important items for discussion, policies for approval and other business. You can read the minutes of the last meeting of the full governing body on the school website.

This term we commissioned an external review of governance at St Mary's which involved extensive scrutiny of documentation relating to governance and school leadership, and a visit from our reviewer, who attended part of a governors' meeting and had formal meetings with six Governors, including the Headteacher and Chair, five teachers, two members of support staff plus the Clerk to Governors. Her report was extremely complementary about the work of your Governing Body, describing it as "an exemplar of good practice because of the professional input of the clerk and the commitment and skills of many governors". Amongst many other strengths she found that governors are "strategic and proactive. With the new headteacher they have drawn up a vision for the school till 2020. The vision shows their ambition and high expectations. They are deeply committed to the school and its pupils and give generously of their time and skills. They have taken a very professional and rigorous approach to exploring possible options for the future of the school."

Such external, independent review forms an essential part of the Governing Body's self-evaluation, and such positive comments will I hope give parents confidence that effective governance is in place at St Mary's. There are of course also suggestions for improvement and governors share a firm commitment to use these as an opportunity for further development.

In our work this term, the governors are currently consulting the community on changes to the Admissions policy for 2019-20, and you can find out more about this by visiting the school website. In addition, we have been working with the school in key areas of finance & staffing, curriculum & standards, and safety & community, in order that St Mary's continues to grow and develop as a caring and special place for all its pupils and staff. We salute the school on its excellent educational standards, following the recent publication of this year's national primary school results, and are working alongside staff to ensure that the school gets the best funding possible as the national funding arrangements change over the next three years. Thank you to those of you who have contributed to the St Mary's Fund this year; there will be an opportunity next term to hear more about the way this money is being used and what other strategies are being developed to generate further funding in these challenging times.



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In November we said goodbye to our amazing Clerk Kate Nepstad, whom we presented with a beautiful silver St Mary's crest made by my predecessor Lucy Macarthur. Neil Stirling-Jones, chair of the finance & staffing committee has stood down, as his family is moving away, and Jonathan Jones' extra year as an Associate Member has also come to a close. In addition, Natalie Robinson was elected by parents as parent governor, succeeding Richard Goatley. I would like to thank our leavers, indeed all governors, for the wonderful work they have put in in support of our school, and extend a warm welcome to Natalie as she joins us.

We are still looking for a permanent Clerk, and there is currently a Foundation Governor vacancy, to be appointed by the St Mary's Church parochial council. Such vacancies arise on a regular basis, so please do tell anyone you know who may be interested to contact me by emailing: chairofgovernors@st-marys.richmond.sch.uk, or dropping a letter addressed to the Chair of Governors into a school office.

I was reminded how thoughtful and collaborative St Mary's pupils are when I attended the Nativities and Church service in the last week. It was a particular joy to hear in a special assembly the Reception and Year 1 children speak – and sing – of their gratitude to Mrs Shaboe, who is leaving the school after a fantastic 28 years at the school. We wish her the very best for her steps away from the classroom which she has made her own for so long.

For all the love and amazing care which Mrs Abrahams' staff have shown our children this term, we offer grateful thanks, and on behalf of the governors I wish you all a happy and peaceful Christmas.

Ben Driver

Chair of the Governing Body

<http://st-marys.richmond.sch.uk/school-governors/>

Diary dates

We return to school on Thursday 4th January 2018

Tuesday 9th January, Year 3 Bible service, St Mary's Church 10am

Tuesday 9th, Wednesday 10th, Thursday 11th January 2018, Year 6 visiting the Poppy Factory (one class per day to be confirmed)

w/c 15th January, School run clubs start

Wednesday 17th January, Reception trip to Orleans Gallery (one class tbc)

Thursday 18th January, Reception trip to Orleans Gallery (one class tbc)

Thursday 18th January, 5M class assembly (link class Year 3 Sycamores)



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Staff join me in wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and hope that you spend some quality time with loved ones.

"Once in our world, a stable had something in it that was bigger than our whole world" C.S. Lewis

Yours sincerely,

Angela Abrahams

Headteacher

headteacher@st-marys.richmond.sch.uk