



St Mary's CE Primary School
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SCHOOL NEWSLETTER: WEDNESDAY 6TH SEPTEMBER 2023, WEEK 1

FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Dear Parents,

Welcome to a new School Year. We hope you've had a lovely summer and managed some quality family time around work commitments. We are delighted to see the children back at school and look forward to sharing lots of their learning with you over time.

We were hugely relieved that our school buildings were not affected by closure owing to reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC). Last school year we had condition survey by the Department of Education and both The London Diocesan Board for Schools and PFI (from whom we lease the infant and junior sites) surveyed our buildings – we are safe. We really feel for those children and families impacted by the closures and hope accommodation is provided as soon as possible.

Over the coming weeks we will be sending out various school policies which have been updated including the latest version of Child Protection and Safeguarding; keep an eye out for them.

Charitable work

Yesterday was the International Day of Charity supported by the UN and marked on the 5th of September because it is the anniversary of Mother Teresa's death, who was a leading figure in the world of charity. Our main charity this year is the environmental conservation organisation *Connected Planet Foundation* who we worked with to support Nourish Eco-Village. Their work bridges the gap between wildlife and communities in Africa; projects involve giving children in rural communities their first experience of the animals they live next to and fear or see as a means to make money from poaching.

This work is vital for conservation. We will let you know more about our plans to support them as the year progresses.

What is ahead?

It is set to be a very busy year for us at St Mary's. We are due to have a visit from Ofsted before January 2024 and are also due an inspection called SIAMs – The Statutory Inspection of Anglican and Methodist Schools. We expected them both last year and it feels a little like the wait before you have a root canal – you know it's coming and want it over so the pain will go! Parents play a pivotal role in both of these inspections and in the preparation beforehand so please support us; this is your school.

Each year we refine our curriculum planning to make sure it is robust and, importantly, fun; we know your children enjoy their learning and you'll be pleased to hear we aim to continue those wonderful hook days and great works – do check Twitter regularly to see photos of what is happening each week

(<https://twitter.com/twickstmarys?lang=en>).

Teachers will give an overview of the visits planned and the costs so you know well ahead and they'd love you to join them if you are able. We also look to areas in school that need improvement. The following are some areas we will give extra focus to:

- Writing – develop pupils automaticity in their accuracy of writing fundamentals
- Reading – continue to update reading resources
- Maintain a strong focus on attendance and punctuality
- Encourage our pupils to understand they have a responsibility to make a positive contribution to the world and they can make a difference
- Keep the wellbeing of staff and pupils central to all decision making

We always appreciate the support of our parents and you do so much for us; parents with free time on their hands are invited to join our volunteer force, so let us know if this is something you are interested in. We have plenty of opportunities for you 😊

Collective Worship

Next week Celebration Worship begins and with them an invitation to join us:

Wednesday 8:45, Infant site

Thursday 9:00, Middle site

Friday 9:00, Junior site

Reception parents may like to attend but Reception children will not be coming along until they have settled into school life. Please remember, drinks are not permitted in the hall and we request that once the children start to arrive parents join the children in respectful and spiritual silence.

OTHER NEWS

Thankfully, a teachers' pay settlement has been reached and industrial action will not affect this academic year.

Father Jeff, the author

Cast your mind back if you will to the days of Covid when for something to do many cleaned out their wardrobes or garages and we were permitted one walk a day. Father Jeff took to writing to his parishioners instead of preaching from the pulpit and was, thereafter, persuaded to publish his letters into what is a really special book. With photos of our local area and beautifully crafted chapters it is not only a record of that time but it sends some really deep messages about life. The book is available to buy for a very reasonable £15 and I am certain Father Jeff could be encouraged to sign it if asked! Should you like a copy please drop an email to the office and we will have one ready for collection.

We hope you enjoy reading our weekly newsletters. The aim is to keep you fully up to date with school news and also signpost various events or resources starting off with some suggested by Richmond:

[Mental health support](#)
[Richmond Wellbeing Service](#)
[Alcoholics Anonymous](#)
[Domestic Abuse](#)

Curriculum Meetings

On Friday you will receive an email from your child's new year group sharing details about next week, as well as a reminder of the Curriculum Meetings for you to join us. Each year group's date is as follows:

Year One – Tuesday 12th September

Year Two – Wednesday 13th September

Year Three – Thursday 14th September

Year Four – Tuesday 19th September

Year Five – Wednesday 20th September

Year Six – Monday 11th September

Our vision

Growing and learning together to be our best,
inspired by Jesus' love.

At St Mary's we balance excellence with compassion. By offering the finest education, inspired by the love of Jesus Christ, we nurture our children to reach their full potential, celebrating their unique and special worth.

Care and compassion are at the heart of every child's learning, encouraging their capacity for reflective thought to make a more creative difference in our world. We strive for and celebrate excellence throughout the school community, building our children's resilience to embrace the challenges of our age with confidence.

Our motto is Conemur – may we try together – striving to be our best, for ourselves, our community and our world.

“True love shows itself in action” 1 John 3:18

FINALLY

Finally, a special welcome to all our new children and their families; I know you will be received with the usual St Mary's generosity and feel settled in no time.

Yours sincerely



Angela Abrahams
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