



St Mary's CofE Primary School

Parent Newsletter

October 2023

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Parents' Evenings

Thank you to all who attended our first round of evenings for this year. It was great to see so many of you coming along (over 90% of children had at least one parent/carer attending) and we hope that the information shared was useful for you.

Admissions: Reception 2024

As in previous years, applications for admission to Reception classes in Birmingham is online. If you have a child born between **1st September 2019 and 31st August 2020**, you are now able to apply for a Reception place for next September. The link for this is below:

https://www.birmingham.gov.uk/info/20119/school_admissions

Open sessions for prospective parents interested in a place at this school will be held on **Thursday 9th November** and **Thursday 16th November** between 9.30 and 11.00. Please contact the school office if you would like more details and we would be grateful if this information could be passed onto to any other parents locally who may be interested.

Attendance

Our attendance figures for the first month of the school year were higher than the current national and local picture but there is much more that can be done.

Regulations about leave in term time are unchanged. This can only be authorised in exceptional circumstances and when a request has been submitted in writing. This means that each case can be assessed on its own merits and a timely decision made.

Friends of St Mary's (FOSM)

FOSM is a group of parent volunteers who work with the school to hold fundraising events throughout the year. In the past, they have funded new climbing equipment in the playground, an electric piano and playground games with all money raised going directly towards making the children's experience of school better.

We would like any parents or family members to contact us if they are interested in getting involved; every bit of help is valuable no matter how large or small.

The group also meet weekly on at the start of school on either Wednesdays or Fridays. If you would like to know more please get in touch via the school office.

Safeguarding

The school takes its safeguarding duty seriously. If you have any concerns about the safety or well-being of a child, then you must contact the school or the Birmingham Children's Advice and Support Service (CASS) on 0121-303-1888. All calls are treated with confidence.

Term Dates and Christmas Dates

Half-term begins at the end of the day on **Friday 27th October** with children returning on **Tuesday 7th November**.

Looking further forward, the Christmas break begins at the end of the school day on **Friday 22nd December** and we reopen to pupils on **Monday 8th January**.

On the theme of Christmas, please find key dates below. Further details about the arrangements for each of these events will be shared after half-term:

-Reception and KS1 Nativity

Tuesday 19th December and Wednesday 20th December (both 9.15)

-Christmas Parties

Wednesday 20th December (afternoon)

-KS2 Candlelight Carol Service in Church

Thurs 21st December (2.00pm at St Mary's Church)

-Reception and KS1 Church Service

Fri 22nd December (9.30am at St Mary's Church)

Mrs Ahmed

Mrs Ahmed leaves us today to begin maternity leave and we wish her well in the coming weeks and months.

Harvest

We will be continuing our tradition of asking families to contribute towards our Harvest appeal this year.

Donations of any tinned or packet items (no perishable goods please) will be greatly appreciated with all items going towards a local food bank so people in the community benefit directly from your generosity.

Contributions can be sent into school from **Monday 23rd October**.

We will be holding our traditional Harvest Church services just before half-term, all are welcome to join us with the dates and times below:

-**Encourage**: Thursday 26th October at 2.00pm

-**Inspire**: Friday 27th October at 9.30am.

A Harvest Prayer

Dear God,

At Harvest time we thank you for the food that we eat and for all the other good things we have.

We ask you to help those who are not as lucky as we are and pray that they benefit from the help and generosity of others.

Amen

Making a difference

The school has had a longstanding relationship with WHOlives (WHOlives.org) in raising funds for the construction of water pumps in places where these are desperately needed.

Our Year 6 pupils have traditionally got involved with this as part of their learning project in the Spring term and our recent Year 6 children did some wonderful work in generating funds to support a specific project in Uganda. They were so successful that they have been in a featured article in the latest WHOlives newsletter which is reproduced below. Well done to all.

What happens when Year 6 students in the U.K. learn about the contaminated water that plagues millions?

St Mary's Primary School has been a champion of our mission for many years. This year the Year 6 students made cakes for a bake sale during the coronation and raised over \$1,300 USD for a village called Buryanti and its 343 students who were missing school due to sickness from drinking stagnant pond water.

Over 300 students needed clean water

The school and the general community in Buryanti collected water from a surface pond. This dirty and contaminated water was all they had, so they used it for all purposes, including drinking and bathing. Lack of safe water in the village has kept most households in poverty and suffering for many years.

Typhoid fever is a bacterial disease spread by drinking or eating contaminated water. Typhoid was rampant in Buryanti. St. Mary's Primary kids put a stop to typhoid by raising the funds for a new well with a handpump.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” - Margaret Mead

