



## Weekly Newsletter

16<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Over the last week it has been terrific to see so many parents attending the after school **'Meet the Teacher'** meetings. The last few year groups' meetings took place simultaneously in the three year group classrooms enabling parents to see the work displayed in corridors and staircases around the school as well as in their own children's classrooms; this changed location for the meetings was met with very positively by parents and we are likely to repeat this approach with future similar meetings (rather than using the hall or gym for the whole year group as before). Of course many parents would not have been able to make the meetings due to work commitments and so the various Phase Leaders will be sending out year group newsletters in the next couple of days, summarising the essential content of the meetings, including routines, homework, home reading and the content of the curriculum for the coming term. Routines around online homework were discussed and parents seeking help with this should ask class teachers for assistance, or keep an eye out for the Homework Club dates if they would prefer their child to complete the work there. There will be a parent information session regarding online homework soon as well in case anyone requires extra help accessing and using the online programs. The first online homework will be set this Thursday.

The revised list of **Phase Leaders** for this academic year is as follows:

Ms **Georgie Crawford** - Reception

Ms **Khadisha Gerald** - Years 1 & 2

Mr **Christian Hill** - Years 3 & 4

Ms **Ellie Ford** - Years 5 & 6

Click here for photos of the Phase Leaders and our other St Mary's staff: [Staff Photos 2019-20](#)

Occasionally, at any school, **parental queries or concerns** are raised and we at St Mary's are very keen to address them as swiftly as possible. In terms of how to go about resolving an issue that a parent might have, the process is as follows. In the first instance, a parent should approach the relevant class teacher whereupon most concerns can be successfully addressed. On occasions where the matter still persists, the parent should then request through the class teacher, the office or a senior member of staff on the playground at the beginning or end of the day, to speak to one of the Yeargroup Phase Leaders (listed above). Almost all concerns can be addressed at this level, but if a resolution is still not met, then a request to speak to one of the Assistant or Deputy Headteachers or myself can be made, again in person in the playground (where a future appointment can be arranged) or through the school office - we will endeavour to meet with parents within 24 hours following this type of request, though we may be able to meet earlier in *some* circumstances. I also have a surgery on Tuesday mornings from 9am for an hour for meetings with parents that have requested a meeting.

To further aid communication with parents, we have a **new parent/school message book** kept outside the office that parents will be directed to by office staff. This message book will then allow the office staff, when things have quietened down at the start of the day, to run the messages around the school to the various classes. There will be a

delivery of such messages/items to classes at two times of the school day - at 11.00am and 2.30pm. With 600 children at St Mary's and only 3 or 4 members of office staff it is essential that we have this system, or office staff would be taking messages to classes from parents for much of the day and would find themselves unable to carry out their various other very important duties. The system as described above would include items to be sent up to class (forgotten packed lunch boxes etc.) as well as the attached message recording who the item needs to be conveyed to. The box outside the office will be clearly marked and will have space for packed lunches, PE kits, musical instruments and any other items.

A lot of **new children** joined us at St Mary's this September, and so for any new parents reading this, this school newsletter goes out each week giving information about key upcoming events, whilst older editions of the newsletter are archived on the school website should you wish to check back over things in the future. The dates for your diary section at the back is particularly useful.

To further assist the office, please do not call the office any later than 2.45pm to request a change to **end of day pick-up arrangements**. When very late notice telephone calls are made to the office it is very challenging for the office staff to then get the messages to the right locations, so please call well in advance if a change to what is the typical end of day arrangement for your child needs to be made.

This year, to save parents having to check the **lost property** basket outside the main office, we will bring the lost property items to the playground every Friday after school so that parents can find those items that have gone astray during the week. I would urge all parents to ensure that each item of clothing has the **name and class** clearly written on it so that it can be re-acquainted with its owner as soon as possible - as many items that accumulate week-by-week in the lost property basket tend to have no label.

Lastly, I would like to say how pleased I am with the start to the **new year** that all 21 classes have made at St Mary's this September. We have an excellent set of staff for this academic year, but we would be nothing without our wonderful children and it is lovely to see them starting the year with smiling faces and lots of energy. As mentioned above, if there are any early year teething issues, please do use the communication channels described above to address them so that everyone is happy on the Good Ship St Mary's as we embark on the new school year.

Matt O'Brien  
*Headteacher*

#### Soft Start

In the next few days we will be writing to you again to explain a new 'Soft Start' that we will be trialling soon at St Mary's in the mornings. This type of start to the day is increasingly popular at schools and successfully practised at both of our other trust schools. With a Soft Start, rather than the children lining up outside in the playground, the children are dropped off by the parent at an external school door and make their own way to their class along corridors and up staircases supervised by lots of carefully positioned staff. The class teachers meanwhile would be up in classes waiting for the children to join them. One other difference to what we do now would be the time that we start this - the Soft Start would begin at 8.40, and end at 8.55am. The official school day would remain the same, starting at 8.55am for the purposes of registration, so the 8.40 - 8.55 Soft Start would be optional for those parents that wanted to send in their children earlier. Any children arriving for 8.55 would make their way to classes in the same way as described above. Given the option at our other two Trust schools, almost all the children come in at the earlier time. Soft Starts make for a very calm, informal start to the day as the children arrive in class one-by-one, take their seat and do some independent activities whilst music plays softly in the background. We will be letting you know very soon when we propose to trial this approach and to give you a little more detail on how it will work.

### **Parents in the Building**

We would like to remind parents that at no stage of the day should they be entering the building unattended by an adult, whether before, during or after school. From a Safeguarding perspective, it is essential that adults are not walking through the building unaccompanied, potentially gaining access to children. Parents picking up from clubs or Tea Time Club later in the day must always walk around the building to pick up scooters etc. from the playground rather than entering the building to take the shorter route to where they are heading.

### **School Day Reminders**

We would like to remind parents that Chestnut Avenue North and South entrances are for Children from Years 1 to 6. The entrance in Brooke Road is for Reception children. If you wish to speak to a member of the office staff, please do not walk through the school, but go round and enter through the main school entrance.

### **School Uniform**

School uniform can be bought from the Victoria 2 School shop (near McDonald's on Hoe Street) or ordered on line via Mapac. If you order on line, uniform is delivered to school.

### **Whole School Attendance**

The whole school attendance target is 96.5%. In our first full week back, we exceeded our target at 95.63%. Well done everyone!

### **Attendance and Punctuality Winner**

Reception Attlee and 4 Attlee have made a fantastic start to the new school year and both had a 100% attendance record last week. Year 3 were our early birds with both 3 Morris and 3 Wilson having everyone here on time

Punctuality is very important, not only for school, but in life generally. Children who are regularly late for school miss vital morning information and a late start often sets the tone for the day.

### **Assemblies**

Parents are welcome to join us for our Monday and Friday assemblies – Friday is followed by a coffee morning. Although Reception children are not yet taking part in our whole school assembly, Reception parents are of course welcome to join us. As our school has grown, space has become less and less so we will be splitting assemblies – Attlee and Morris will be in the gym (parents should enter via the playground) and Wilson in the main school hall. Class assemblies are on a Thursday morning, running throughout the year. You are more than welcome to come along to those too. Dates will be published in our dates section.

### **Stars of the Week**

Congratulations to the following children who were presented with Star of the Week for last week:

1 Attlee	Oliver	4 Attlee	Dylan
1 Morris	Florence B	4 Morris	Lorrian
1 Wilson	Bella	4 Wilson	Sophie
2 Attlee	Charis	5 Attlee	Andreas
2 Morris	Parise	5 Morris	Amelle
2 Wilson	Alma	5 Wilson	Georgina
3 Attlee	Edward	6 Attlee	Caspar
3 Morris	Levi	6 Morris	Jude
3 Wilson	Daniel	6 Wilson	Lindsay

Reception children are still adapting to school life and do not join the whole school assemblies, or have Star of the Week assemblies this term.

### **Finance Matters**

All payments to school must be made via ParentPay. Reception parents have been issued with logon details. If you have not received a letter via your child with your details, please contact the school office.

Items such as trips, music lessons etc will be added as appropriate. Please note that breakfast and tea time clubs must be kept in credit at all times. We have a waiting list for both these clubs so failure to keep your account in credit may lead to your child being removed from the club and space offered to another child.

Similarly, dinner money accounts should please be kept up to date. Failure to do so could mean you are asked to provide a packed lunch until your child's account is back in credit.

### **School Lunches**

Just a quick reminder, school meals are now £2.20 per day, which is £11.00 per week. For those parents who prefer to pay half termly, the cost of dinner money for this half term will be £70.40 - or for the full term, until Christmas, will be £158.40. Payment may be made on ParentPay at any time and accounts should be kept in credit at all times.

If your child has packed lunch, please remember that we are a healthy school and packed lunches should not include cakes, sweets, biscuits. No glass bottles or fizzy drinks either please. Thank you.

### **Entitlement to Free School Meals**

You will have been sent via Parent Mail, a letter regarding entitlement to Free School Meals. We have received an extremely low number of forms back. Please do take a moment to have a read and return your form to us. Families who return their form to school will be entered into a prize draw to win £100. Please return completed forms to the school office. Paper copies may also be obtained from the office if you are unable to print them off.

### **Diary Dates**

Dates for your diary will appear in the newsletter each week. Please keep an eye out for events relevant to you.

### **Breakfast and After School**

We have now changed the format in which you can apply for our extended hours provisions. If you would like your child to join our Breakfast or Tea time club, please call the office to request a form to be sent to you via Parentmail. After you have completed the form, Miss Bailey or Miss Hanley will come back to you regarding the spaces via email. Please note, no future bookings will be taken via phone and all requests to alter your existing spaces must be made via email too.

### **Medical Needs**

May we remind you that if your child suffers from asthma, we need to have two asthma pumps in school at all times. Similarly, if your child has an epi-pen or any other medication that needs to be taken on a regular basis (not antibiotics), please could you send that medication into school as soon as possible, clearly marked with your child's name and any instructions. Please note that we are not able to administer any other medication such as antibiotics but you are welcome to come in to school to administer as necessary.

### **Reception Intake September 2020**

Although we have only just returned to school, we are already thinking about our new Reception intake for September 2020. Children born between 1 September 2015 and 31 August 2016 will need to apply this year between October and 15<sup>th</sup> January 2020. We have a series of Open Days/Evenings as follows:

Monday 23rd September at 10am  
Monday 14th October at 10am  
Saturday 16th November at 9.30am  
Monday 9th December at 6pm  
Monday 13th January 2020 at 10am.

Please share with any interested parties.

## Parent Workshops

During the course of the year we will be running a series of Parent Workshops on a number of subjects that parents may find useful. The workshop will begin at 3.45 and will last between 30 minutes and an hour. There will be a crèche for your child, should you wish to attend. Workshops start tomorrow and we hope to see you there.

Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> September	School Vision
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> September	Positive Behaviour Strategies
Wednesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> October	Enjoying Reading Together
Tuesday 8 <sup>th</sup> October	Toe by Toe (By invitation only)
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> October	A guide to RML
Wednesday 30 <sup>th</sup> October	Phonics and Early Reading EYFS
Wednesday 13 <sup>th</sup> November	SEND (By Invitation only)
Tuesday 18 <sup>th</sup> November	Cyber Safety
Tuesday 26 <sup>th</sup> November	EYFS Homework
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> December	Homework
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> December	Christmas Stories
Tuesday 14 <sup>th</sup> January	Fabulous Phonics
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup> January	Magic Maths
Tuesday 28 <sup>th</sup> January	Calculation Workshop
Tuesday 4 <sup>th</sup> February	Free Online Learning
Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> February	Science
Tuesday 3 <sup>rd</sup> March	Gifted and Talented
Tuesday 10 <sup>th</sup> March	History Projects
Tuesday 17 <sup>th</sup> March	Handsome Handwriting
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> March	RE Curriculum
Wednesday 8 <sup>th</sup> April	Sharing Age Related Expectations
Wednesday 29 <sup>th</sup> April	Computing
Tuesday 12 <sup>th</sup> May	Writing
Tuesday 19 <sup>th</sup> May	Developing Your Child's Creativity
Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> June	SRE Workshop
Tuesday 9 <sup>th</sup> June	Creative Curriculum
Tuesday 16 <sup>th</sup> June	SEND (By Invitation only)
Tuesday 23 <sup>rd</sup> June	Values and Growth Mindset

## PFA News

### **(Parents and Friends of St Marys)**

Our wonderful PFA will send news and information via their newsletter on a regular basis. Their first newsletter was sent out last week, and you are all invited to their first meeting, which will take place tomorrow evening, 8pm, in the Village Pub, Orford Road. All welcome!

### **Diary Dates**

<i>Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> September</i>	<i>(pm – 4 Morris trip to Forest School is postponed to 19.9.19) 8pm – first PFA Meeting – Village Pub, Orford Road 3.45 – Parent Workshop</i>
<i>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> September</i>	<i>pm – 4 Wilson to visit Forest School</i>
<i>Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September</i>	<i>pm – 4 Morris to visit Forest School (please note this was originally scheduled for 17.9.19)</i>
<i>Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> September</i>	<i>10am – Open Day – Reception 2020  4 Morris Swimming to Friday 4<sup>th</sup> October</i>
<i>Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September</i>	<i>pm – 4 Attlee to visit Forest School</i>

### **Useful Contacts**

Address: Brooke Road, Walthamstow, E17 9HJ

Phone: 020 8521 1066

Website: [www.stmaryscofe.org](http://www.stmaryscofe.org)

Email: [school@st-marys-coe.waltham.sch.uk](mailto:school@st-marys-coe.waltham.sch.uk)

Teatime Club: 07542 193499

Nursery: [stmarysnursery.net](http://stmarysnursery.net)

Church: [www.walthamstowchurch.org.uk](http://www.walthamstowchurch.org.uk)

### **General Data Protection Act (GDPR)**

The new GDPR is now in force. The Data Protection Officer (DPO) is responsible for overseeing this policy and developing data-related policies and guidelines. Please contact the DPO with any questions about the operation of this policy or the GDPR or if you have any concerns that this policy is not being or has not been followed.

The DPO's contact details are as follows:

**Data Protection Officer:** Craig Stilwell, **Address:** Judicium Consulting Ltd, 72 Cannon Street, London, EC4N 6AE

**Email:** [dataservices@judicium](mailto:dataservices@judicium)

## Dates for 2019-2020

### Autumn Term 2019

First half (32 days)

**INSET – Monday 2nd, Tuesday 3rd September, and Wednesday 4th**

Start –Thursday 5th September

End - Friday 18th October

Half Term: Monday 21 October to Friday 25 October 2019

Second half (40 days)

Start - Monday 28th October

End – Friday 20th December

Christmas holiday: Monday 23rd December 2019 to Friday 3rd January 2020

### Spring Term 2020

First half (29 days)

**INSET - Monday 6th January 2020**

Start – Tuesday 7th January 2020

End – Friday 14th February 2020

Half Term: Monday 17 February to Friday 21 February 2020

Second Half (30 days)

Start – Monday 24th February 2020

End – Friday 3d April 2020

Easter Holiday Monday 6th April 2020 to Friday 17th April 2020

### Summer Term 2020

First Half (24 days)

Start - Monday 20 April 2020

End Friday 22nd May

Bank Holidays Monday 4th May and Monday 25th May (during half term)

Half Term: Tuesday 26 May 2020 to Friday 29 May 2020

Second Half (35days)

Start – Monday 1st June

Finish Friday 17th July

This calendar gives a total of 195 days. Four Inset Days and one further day made up by staff from Twilight sessions gives 190 school days