



St Mary's C of E (Aided) Primary School



# NEWSLETTER

Telephone: 01798 872007

October 2017

## Christian Value: LOVE

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast.

*Corinthians 13:4-8*

### Harvest Eucharist

On Thursday Father Paul led our Harvest Eucharist and, you will not be surprised to hear, the children responded to him brilliantly. They particularly liked seeing some of the gifts he had been given to welcome him into The Rectory and quickly identified the building in a newly acquired painting as their very own St Mary's Church here in the village. We sang Harvest Hymn, Harvest Song and Harvest Samba. Thank you to everyone for your harvest contributions. These have all now been delivered to the FSW. Please remember that everyone is welcome to join us for our Eucharists; you do not have to be a regular church-goer and we welcome all denominations.



### Harvest Workshop

The harvest celebrations are certainly not yet over. Another event to look forward to is the Fairtrade Harvest Workshop being held at St Mary's Church on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> October. The Workshop will run from 10.00am through until 12.00 noon and there will be opportunities for face painting, crafts and games. Entry is free and there is no need to book in advance. However, children under the age of 5 will need to be accompanied by an adult.



### Pulborough Harvest Fayre

Very many thanks to everyone who went along to the Harvest Fayre and either took part in the Scarecrow Competition or supported the St Mary's School and PTA stall. Mrs Callender and Mrs Benson were kept very busy selling Pumpkin Soup, they raised over £80, and the Bottle and Chocolate Tombola run by the PTA also proved very popular and raised in excess of £500. I was sorry not to be at the Fayre myself this year but there was a clash with a family wedding which had to take precedence. I am looking forward to next year's Harvest Fayre and am wondering what the theme will be for the Scarecrow Competition in 2018.



Congratulations to everyone who took part in this year's Scarecrow competition especially our winners. Our Children from St Mary's secured a second and third places prize this year.

## Tomfoolery

This week the PTA arranged an afternoon of magic and entertainment for our younger children. Children and their parents from local pre-schools were also invited and judging from the shrieks of laughter a good time was had by everyone. The event raised £300. Half of this will go to Springboard as Tomfoolery's chosen charity and the other half goes to the PTA.

It was lovely to see so many children from the different pre-schools and we look forward to seeing them all again at our **Open Afternoons on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November.**

## Meet the Teacher Evening

It was really lovely to see so many parents at our Meet the Teacher evening last week. Feedback has been very positive and it was especially nice to hear so many of you commenting on how wonderful our classrooms are looking.

A number of parents in Key Stage Two were asking about residential visits. This is something that the Governors and I have been looking into very carefully over recent months and a letter to all Key Stage Two parents will be sent out in the next week or so. The letter will outline our thoughts for extending the breadth of residential experiences we offer children at St Mary's and there will be a reply slip so that you can give



us your feedback. It is important that the residential visits we offer meet the children's needs, fulfil the demands of the National Curriculum and are cost effective. When your replies are back I will look at them all so that we can arrive at a programme of residential visits that has taken everyone's views on board.



Another issue that arose at the Meet the Teacher Evening is the Homework Grid currently used in Key Stage Two. This was trialled last year in just a few classes and feedback taken from parents and children. Some adjustments were then made and a Homework Grid was then created for each Year Group from Y3 up to Y6. The response to this new initiative has been interesting in that in some classes parents and children have been overwhelmingly in favour whilst in other classes, sometimes in the same year group, parents have been less enthusiastic with a small number of you saying that the grids are too complicated and the tasks set too challenging. Again, this is something that we will look at carefully to see what changes need to be made either to the Homework Grids themselves or to the way in which they are introduced and explained to parents and children.

In Key Stage One many of you commented on how useful it was to see how we teach phonics. As a result we will be running a series of Phonics Workshops for parents so that everyone can be sure they are saying the sounds correctly and therefore helping children with not only their phonics but also reading, writing and spelling.

Also in Key Stage One there was a request for more books in the fiction library, particularly for the more able readers in Year Two. This is something that we were already aware of and we are working closely with the School Library service and Steyning Bookshop to source the best new titles.



The Meet the Teacher Evening did highlight one misunderstanding amongst the younger children. At the very start of term we asked children in Year Two not to play with their younger siblings who had just joined the Reception classes. This was so that the Reception children would start to make new friends from within their own classes and not rely on older brothers, sisters, cousins and friends. This was only ever intended as a short-term arrangement. Now that the Reception children have made friends amongst their peers we are more than happy for older brothers, sisters, cousins and friends to play with them.

## Messages from the school office

### Joinos – Online payment system

Following a few technical issues at the start of term (with the merchant not St Mary's) our new cashless system Joinos is up and running smoothly. Some year groups have already enjoyed the benefit of using the system for their trips and we would urge anybody who has not yet registered with Joinos to do so as the codes you have been sent will expire soon. If you have any problems please contact Mrs Lees in the school office.

### News from the School Council

Under the guidance of Mrs Robinson the School Council have met together and taken views from the rest of the school. Their chosen charities for the year will be:



**Local: Chestnut Tree House**

**National: Great Ormond Street Children's Hospital**



**Save the Children**

**International: Save the Children**

They particularly wanted to focus on children's charities this year and I do think they have chosen extremely well.

As a school we will, of course, continue to support other charities with whom we already have a close link. These will include BBC the FSW, the Royal British Legion annual Poppy Appeal and Christian Aid.



The School Council are also keen to raise money for Children in Need and have suggested a Teacher's Quiz which does indeed sound very exciting. With the children writing the questions I think the teachers will find it quite a challenging event.

Amongst other things the School Council have also suggested a range of after-school and lunchtime clubs that teachers might like to run. These include a table tennis club, a tag rugby club, a gardening club and a general knowledge club. I will be talking to staff to see which of these can be set up. Children have also asked for more opportunities for free writing and maths. Again, I will be talking to teachers and we will look at class timetables to see what we can do.

## News from the Eco-Council

Under the guidance of Miss Turner the new Eco-Council members have met twice now and have lots of good ideas for this academic year.



They have looked at the Waste Hierarchy and discussed the importance of 'The Three R's' - Reduce, Reuse and Recycle.

They are keen to devise new strategies to keep St Mary's litter free and ensure that we are all using our recycling bins correctly.

October is 'Walk to School Month' so the Council Members will be asking their classes how many times they have managed to walk to school each week. At the end of the month, Mrs Brown will be awarding a prize to the winning class.

Another piece of really good news is that St Mary's were placed in the top 100 schools in the Wastebuster Home Recycling Challenge - well done and thank you to everyone who took part in this competition last term.

## Grounds Working Party

Special thanks to the team of staff, parents and Governors who came along to help at our Grounds Working Party on Saturday morning. Amongst other things, we cleared the raised beds at the back of the school field, tidied up the Reception garden, cleared mud and leaves from the front playground, gave the Forest School and Poly Tunnel areas a complete overhaul and even had time to give St Mary's Garden a makeover. The skip that was completely empty at 9.30am is now absolutely brimming over and awaiting collection!



We did stop a couple of times for tea and cake, so a big thank you to whoever it was who brought in the cakes – they were delicious.

Children who were helping at the Grounds Working Party have been rewarded with Dojos – anyone who has not yet been to see me to ask how many Dojos they have earned please come before it is too late!

Members of the PTA were also busy on Saturday morning using the time to give their shed a complete clear out – we let them have some space in the skip!

## Congratulations

We have just awarded our first Vine Leaf of the year. It went to **Tyler Jupp** (USA) Tyler has received this for exceptional kindness.







**Congratulations also to UK and Austria classes** – you have won the Tidiest Cloakroom Award twice already this term. That is a great start and the rest of the school could really learn something from you. Well Done!



### Keeping our Children Safe

I know I have said this before but **PLEASE** think about where and how you park when dropping children off at school or collecting them in the afternoon. Almost everyone is sensible, considerate and obviously very aware of children's safety. However, it only takes one person to park too close to the corner or half on the pavement for an accident to happen. Local residents have already been in to see me complaining of driveways and emergency access being blocked and this really doesn't promote a good image of our school.

Please also remember that the car park is for staff use only. It is not to be used by parents or taxi drivers. If you have a 'blue badge' and need access to the car park please arrange a meeting with me so that can be properly agreed.

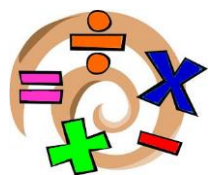
### Billingshurst Lions

The children across the whole school had a lovely time last week in the WalkRunFunathon arranged with the Billingshurst Lions. A total to date of just over £345 was raised with one third going direct to the Lions, one third going to the PTA and one third going to Chestnut Tree House.

The Lions have also sponsored St Mary's School in the 2017 ROAR# event. This is similar to last year's 7 Billion Ideas to Change the World Challenge but this year only a few schools were selected to take part and we were one of them! All good news for St Mary's. The children will be working on their Change the World ideas over the coming weeks and the winning team will be invited to represent the locality in the South East finals in December.

### Maths Superstars

We are delighted to announce that St. Mary's performed brilliantly in the Maths Challenge held at Windlesham School last week. They came a truly brilliant 16th and 17th place out of 64 teams. Congratulations Emily, Cian, Josh and Adelaide on your success. What super-brained mathematicians we have at St. Mary's! We are very proud of the way you represented our school.



### Talented Athletes

Congratulations also to our team of Talented Athletes who represented St Mary's at The Weald school on Wednesday of this week.

### Playground rumours!

I want to reassure everyone that there is absolutely no truth in the rumour that we are no longer having the Big Top for our Year 6 summer production. I have no idea where this rumour started but I can confirm that the Big Top has most definitely been booked.



## **Spanish teaching at St Mary's**

One of the strengths of St Mary's has always been the very high standard of teaching and learning in Spanish. Sadly, during Ms Bell's maternity leave we have struggled to maintain these high standards and plans to appoint a temporary Spanish teacher have failed to materialise. As a result we have purchased a scheme of work that comes complete with interactive internet links, resources, games and songs which will enable our own staff to teach Spanish. We are hoping that Ms Bell will be returning from her maternity leave in the spring term.



## **Putty and slime!**

There is a 'craze' developing about bringing 'putty and slime' into school which, unfortunately, is becoming something of a problem. We are finding putty and slime, either shop bought or home-made, stuck to furniture, walls and carpets; even in children's hair. For this reason we are saying that no more putty or slime should be brought into school. This does not apply to the special 'Theraputty' that has been given to a small number of children by Mrs Copus. Thank you.

## **Forest Schools**

**No Forest schools this Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> October 2017 for Thailand and Canada**

## **Message for Year 6 parents:**

On Thursday 19th October, Year 6 will be participating in a Science Enrichment Day.

Please could you collect and bring into school: - old CDs, - sports bottle tops (like fruit shoot ones that you can pull on and off), 1 and 2 litre fizzy drink bottles, any small bits of junk modelling stuff.

## **Jiminy's After School Club**

Our After-School care club has started well and even with the evenings starting to draw in the children are still able to enjoy some time out of doors. They have made use of the Forest School as well as the Willow Dome and they have plenty of space to use up any extra energy on the playground. Do remember that if you want to make use of this facility you do need to register first – please contact Michelle on [jiminyasc@yahoo.com](mailto:jiminyasc@yahoo.com).

## **Asthma is school**

As you will be aware we have a statutory duty to maintain accurate medical records, if our records show that your child suffers from Asthma you would have received an updated Asthma form to complete requesting 2 x Asthma pumps to be bought into school. If we have not received the form / pumps we will assume that your child no longer requires this medication in school and will come off our records.

## **Children starting school in September 2018**

It is that time of the year again when parents are starting to look at schools for children to join in September of next year! At St Mary's we will be holding two Open Afternoons on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November when children and their parents will be able to join in a wide range of exciting and fun activities. They will be able to work alongside some of our existing Reception children, experience the Forest School and find out more about what our lovely school has to offer.

If you know of any families with children due to start school next year do please let them know about our Open Afternoons or ask them to contact the school direct to arrange an individual visit.

### **St Mary's Open Afternoons**

**Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> and Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November**

**1.30pm – 3.00pm**

#### **Pre-School at St Mary's**

Many of you will already have heard the good news that shortly after half term a new Pre-School, **Little Explorers**, will be opening at the school. If you are interested in securing a place please call Julia on 07816 530135.

#### **Billingshurst Choral Society**

Singing - have you ever tried it?

- Singing is proven to be really good for your health
- We are looking for new choir members - experience or beginners
- Main requirements are enthusiasm and commitment
- Our music ranges from Classical to Abba, from Opera to TV & Film themes - and all things in between
- We need all voice parts - both men and women
- Ability to read music an advantage but not essential - we can help
- PLEASE come and have a few trial evenings with Billingshurst Choral
- We are welcoming, friendly and will help you achieve
- Just come to BILLINGSHURST PRIMARY SCHOOL, Station Road on Tuesdays 7.30 to 9.45pm or phone the Chairman on 07799 687790 for further details

Finally, please do remember that my door is always open and I am very happy to meet with parents individually to discuss any issues or concerns that you might have. Similarly, if you have suggestions of what we could be doing to make St Mary's an even better place for you and your children we would love to hear from you.

*Kind regards,*

*Joanna Brown*  
*Headteacher*

#### **Dates for your diary - October 2017**

<b>Saturday 7<sup>th</sup></b>	Fairtrade Harvest Workshop 10am – 12noon	<b>St Mary's Church</b>
<b>Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup></b>	Nasal Flu Vaccination Programme	<b>Year R – Year 4</b>
<b>Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup></b>	Half Term	
<b>Monday 30<sup>th</sup></b>	Inset Day	
<b>Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup></b>	Viking Forest School Day	<b>Year 4</b>