

ST MARY'S C OF E (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

'A Christ-centred school with a child-centred curriculum'



Week beginning 21st September 2026

Message from Mrs Copus



It feels a bit like we are in an Indian Summer at the moment and the weather has helped us to continue with our learning outside with swimming, forest schools and PE lessons. Lets hope that it continues for a bit longer. It is the Harvest Fayre at the weekend and I look forward to seeing you there with your scarecrows!

Living Church Links

This half term, we are reflecting on Love as our Christian value.

We look forward to sharing the children's thoughts and reflections on what 'LOVE' means to them and how we can show love and kindness to others each day.

KS2 children have all visited St Mary's church as part of their whole class worship over the last couple of weeks on the theme of love and the Good Samaritan.





News

Ofsted

As you are aware, we were visited by Ofsted last week for an inspection. At this stage, we are unable to share the outcome or grading, as the inspection report still needs to go through the necessary checks and ratification process. As soon as the report has been officially published, we will share the outcome with you. We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to our parents and carers for the kind words, supportive actions and understanding that you have shown us. Your encouragement and positivity have meant a great deal to the whole school team. We are incredibly grateful to be part of such a supportive and caring school community. Your support makes a real difference and we thank you for standing alongside us.

Governor Vacancy

Letters were sent out to parents regarding a vacancy we have on our Governing Body for a Parent Governor. If you are interested then please do reach out.

Fairtrade Fortnight



We launched Fairtrade Fortnight in whole school worship on Tuesday, reminding ourselves of the importance of showing support for farmers and workers in developing countries.

We shared the story of a young boy named Gbassay who lives in a small town called Gorahun in Sierra Leone. Gbassay's family are cocoa farmers who also grow a range of other crops such as banana, coconut and pineapple. We learnt about the difference between 'subsistence crops' which are grown to feed Gbassay's family, and 'cash crops,' which are grown to sell.

Fairtrade works hard to ensure that farmers such as Gbassay are treated fairly. We discussed how important it is that everyone in the supply chain – particularly the farmers – receives a fair price for their hard work.

We shared the story of the labourers in the vineyard (Matthew 20: 1-16) and reflected on the Christian values of respect and justice.



Things to know



Attendance

96.6%

Attendance continues to be a key priority, and we will now be sharing our weekly attendance percentage with families. Please remember to provide sufficient information when your child is absent due to illness and that holiday absences cannot normally be authorised. If you are experiencing difficulties with attendance, please speak to our friendly and supportive pastoral team – we are here to help.

Hot School Meals

The school meals app is now up and running as it should be. Please ensure that you have registered your child and added any relevant dietary requirements. From next week, if a meal has not been ordered by a parent/carer, you will need to provide your child with a packed lunch. Thank you for your support in helping us ensure that all children have a suitable lunch each day.



Census - 1st October

Meals can now be ordered for 1st October - school census day. Please remember to place your child's meal order as soon as possible. School meals are an important source of funding for our school, so your support in ordering meals is greatly appreciated. Thank you!



Things to know



Dates for your diary

Sat 26th Sept – Harvest Fayre – 11 – 5pm

Mon 28th Sept – Bikeability Mon-Thur Year 6 and Fri Year 5

Wed 30th Sept – Meet the Teacher - 3.30pm for EYFS and KS1, 3.45pm for KS2

Wed 30th Sept – Sex & relationship meeting for Y6 parents (after 'Meet the Teacher')

Thur 1st Oct – Black History Month / National Poetry Day

Fri 2nd Oct – Harvest Eucharist – Please bring in tins, produce, dried goods, hygiene products. Parents are welcome

Wed 7th Oct – 6 week in meeting for EYFS parents

Fri 9th Oct – Year 1 / 2 to church

Thur 15th Oct – PTA AGM – 3.30pm – Please come along!

Fri 16th Oct – Individual & Sibling School Photos – full school uniform please

Fri 23rd Oct – INSET DAY

Mon 26th Oct – HALF TERM

Tue 3rd Nov – Parents Evening 3.30pm – 6pm

Thu 5th Nov – Parents Evening 3.30pm – 6pm

Fri 6th Nov – UK/Thailand to church

Fri 6th Nov – Firework Evening PTA



Celebration Assemblies

Please come and join us at 9am on these dates so the children can share their learning with parents / carers.

SA – Thur 1st Oct

China – Thur 8th Oct USA – Thur 15th Oct

SL – Thur 22nd Oct Australia – Thur 5th Nov

India – Thur 12th Nov Italy – Thur 19th Nov

NZ – Wed 25th Nov Thai (Year 1's) – Thur 26th Nov



Learning Curriculum

Predators and Prey



What a fantastic Superstarter for NZ, SL and USA! The children headed out into the Parham grounds to explore the fascinating world of predators and prey. Through a range of exciting outdoor activities, the children developed their understanding of the natural world and discovered more about the relationships between different animals and their habitats. A wonderful start to their learning!



History

Our Evacuee Day for China, South Africa and Japan classes began with the children dressed as evacuees, before the sound of an air raid siren signalled the start of our wartime experience. For many of the children, hearing an air raid siren and imagining what it would have been like during the war was a completely new experience and provided a valuable opportunity to bring their learning to life. The children visited Pulborough Railway Station, where they imagined what it would have been like to leave home and be evacuated to the countryside. They then visited the pillbox, where they imagined Spitfires flying overhead across the Downs, before finishing their day at the war graves at St Mary's Church. It was a fascinating and thought-provoking day, and a wonderful reminder of the wealth of history right here in our village. There is so much for our children to discover and learn from on their doorstep!



World War 2

We were delighted to welcome Mr Leverett to speak with Japan class. Alan was able to talk about his experiences of being evacuated to the Lake District during WW2 and what his childhood was like as an evacuee. The children asked thoughtful and insightful questions.



Mr and Mrs Hancock also kindly shared an incredible collection of authentic WW2 artefacts belonging to Mr Hancock's father, an RAF pilot who fought in the Battle of Britain.

The children were completely mesmerised hearing stories of courage and seeing real pieces of history up close.





Sport

Swim Gala

A group of Year 5 and 6 children attended the first swimming gala of the school year at The Weald School in Billingshurst last week. They were an absolute pleasure to take and represented our school brilliantly, competing against other schools from across the local area. We are incredibly proud of their enthusiasm, teamwork and determination!



Talented Athlete

The first Talented Athlete event at The Weald took place this week, with a number of our students taking part. They enjoyed a range of team-building challenges, including a crate-stacking challenge and problem-solving activities, before taking part in a carousel of multi-sport events. Well done to all the children who took part – you represented our school brilliantly!



Athletics Track Morning

Some Year 6 children had a fantastic and inspiring day at an Athletics Enrichment Day held at the new all-weather athletics track at Christ's Hospital. The children were incredibly fortunate to meet several athletics champions, including Olympic gold medallist and World and Commonwealth Champion Christine Ohuruogu. They also enjoyed a delicious lunch in the school's impressive dining hall and had the opportunity to watch the Christ's Hospital band rehearsing. What a memorable day filled with sport, inspiration and new experiences!



Loving Celebrations

House Cup

The school uses ClassDojo as a positive encouragement tool to build a supportive learning environment and keep parents connected. Children can earn ClassDojo points by demonstrating positive behaviours, hard work and school pride throughout the day and by demonstrating school values:

- Showing the core Christian and community values upheld by the school.
- Positive behaviour: Displaying kindness, respect, and good conduct around the classrooms and school grounds.
- Effort and focus: Putting great energy into their daily lessons and tasks.
- Achievements: Celebrating individual successes, academic milestones, and excellent work.
- Teachers track these points digitally in real-time, allowing families to see updates and celebrate their child's daily successes from home.



This week's winners are -
St Mary's (Blue)



Loving Celebrations



Vine Leaves

Joni (UK) - Wisdom - for having such a mature conversation with Mrs Gowland about why our stick insects shed their exoskeleton and how they camouflage and being so careful when handling them. Fred (Jap) - Wisdom - for his thoughtful response to our Guided Reading challenge which he shared with the class. Harrison (Jap) - Wisdom - for his original thinking whilst making predictions in English. Lottie and Minnie (Jap) - Perseverance - for their hard work and determination in their learning. Alexis (SL) - Courage - for a fantastic start at St Marys, making new friends and trying her best in all lessons. Felix (SL) - Wisdom - for sharing so many interesting facts with the class about Rainforests Prabhas (SL) - Creativity - for producing such an intricate detailed piece of artwork when making our African masks. Freddie (Aus) - Perseverance - for continuing to try his best in all his learning. Danny (Aus) - Service - for being so kind and helpful to everyone in class. Esmae (NZ) - Friendship - for looking after her friend when they came back to school after being poorly. Erik (NZ) - Friendship - for often being in tune with others needs and will be the first to offer practical support. Swailly (Chi) - Perseverance - for his determination in his spelling group with others. Hudson-Blue (Ita) - Service - for being very helpful to his friends during our computing lesson. Hattie (UK) - Perseverance - for showing resilience at lunch times and is now a very smiley member of lunch club. Darcey (Aus) - Service - for being so helpful and polite to a teacher who was covering her class. Peri (SL) - Service and Kindness - for being so polite and using great manners when coming to the office. Andrew (Chi) - Love - for thinking about his friends and checking in on them when they need it. Lawrence (Ind) - Wisdom - for blowing us away with your phonic knowledge! Avish (Ita) - Courage - for being so brave when joining a new school and settling in well. Leo (Ita) - Service - for always being on hand to help with a job and for taking great care of our classroom. Marlie and Indy (SL) - Humility - for making a conscious effort to help tidy the playground after break. Stephan (Chi) - Wisdom - for sharing thoughtful ideas and reading aloud beautifully in our book club.



Loving Celebrations



Achievements



Leah R (SA) - earned her 2nd brown belt in karate



Isabelle (Ind) - took part in a Spartan Race in aid of St Catherine's Hospice



Oliver (Jap) - passed Stage 6 swimming award



Lyla (Ita) - came 2nd and 4th in a dance competition at the weekend



Amelia (USA) - passed her Stage 1 clarinet



Roman (SA) - took part in the Transplant Games representing the Evelina Hospital, coming 4th in the Badminton tournament & raised £1200 so far!

