



Dear Families and Friends of St Mary's

Thank you to everyone who participated in the parent governor elections – it was great to see such a positive engagement with the process. I would like to thank both Lydia and Emma for their interest in governance at St Mary's; and welcome Emma Sage to the governing body.

Governors have begun to look at the responses received from the questionnaires, and will share these findings in due course. However, one matter was raised that can be addressed immediately which is the issue of attendance and our decisions to authorise absence and request fines - or not.

Our attendance policy is on the school website and frequently referred to in school newsletters. The key parts relating to holiday absence are reproduced here as they were in the 8th September 2017 newsletter.

Holidays and Penalty Notices

Head teachers may not grant any leave of absence during term time, including for family holidays, **unless there are exceptional circumstances** such as a death or significant trauma in the family. If parents or carers wish to make a request for authorisation, parents/carers will receive a **standard** notification letter outlining the circumstances under which they may be liable for a penalty notice. A penalty notice will be requested should there be any **further** unauthorised absence during the child's time at St Mary's. Families who persistently take their children out of school for reasons that have not been authorised will be referred to the CMES.

Penalty notices will usually be issued where a pupil has 10 or more unauthorised absences (equivalent to 5 days) in the 100 sessions prior to the request for a penalty notice to be issued. A penalty notice *may* also be issued for a first offence. This could be where the unauthorised absence was for an extended period and/or condoned by the parent. An example of this would be instances of unauthorised absence such as holidays taken during term time without the schools permission.

To be absolutely clear: as the local authority will not *usually* issue a fine for a first offence, parents receive a standard notification letter from us warning you that you might face a fine next time. If at any point during your child's schooling you then decide to take a further holiday, we will – and do - request that the LA issue a fine. It does not matter whether the second "offence" is in the same school year or not. On rare occasions, a fine may be requested for a first offence.

It is also worth highlighting to everyone that the decision to authorise any absence rests with the Headteacher, and with me alone. I am not ever going to breach a family's right to privacy by responding to parental requests to know why I have *apparently* authorised one request and not another. In addition,

simply ringing in to say your child is ill, does not mean the absence has been automatically authorised. I am frequently challenged about authorising absence if all siblings are suddenly taken ill at the same time; and I will not authorise such absence as a matter of routine. In addition, where leave/holidays have not been applied for, but it is apparent that they have been taken, we can (and do) still follow the process as if a leave of absence request had been submitted. And that includes requesting that the LA issue a fine.

Attendance DOES matter – and every day DOES count.

We ALSO know that the vast majority of parents/carers understand this.

If there is a good reason why your child is not at school, tell us!

Clear and honest communication enables fully informed decisions to be made about authorising absence.

Percentage of children who have been at school <u>and</u> on time, so far in Term 5						
Ducklings	Rabbits	Badgers	Bees	Otters	Lions	Eagles
94.9%	94.1%	92.8%	96.9%	92.5%	95.7%	94.7%

Well done Bees!

STAFFING UPDATE

We are still in the middle of recruitment for September; and a full update in terms of teaching staff will be given as soon as we are able to. However, I am able to share that Jon Stevenson has agreed to return as SENCO for the duration of Mrs Brewer’s maternity leave. He will be in school a few days before the summer holiday to enable an effective handover. For those of you who don’t know, Jon is a very experienced SENCO and his substantive post is at Batheaston Church School. He has covered Mrs Brewer’s responsibilities previously and has continued to do some consultancy work for us during this year. He knows our children, staff and many parents; and we very much look forward to working with him again. His usual day in school will be a Tuesday, as before. Thank you to Batheaston Church School, and to the Bath and Wells Academy Trust, for releasing Jon to support us – it is much appreciated.

I thought that you might also be interested to know that we do involve children in our interviewing processes and both governors and candidates are always exceptionally impressed with their searching questioning. Whilst the pupil led interviews only form only a small part of the process, to date their recommendations have always matched the views of the formal panel!

HEALTHY CHOICES WEEK

The week commencing the 21st May is our ‘Healthy Choices Week’. During this week, the children will get to experience a variety of different activities led by external providers. It is a great opportunity for the children to learn about health, exercise and nutrition from some specialist in the field.

The week will begin with an ‘Amazing’ runner coming in - **Jim Gump** (nicknamed after Forest Gump). Jim is going to be launching our ‘Healthy Schools Week’ with a whole school assembly, which **families are invited** to as well. The assembly will start at **9am on Monday morning**. Afterwards, the whole school will be going on a fun run with Jim around the school field. We would love it if you would come along in your sports



gear and support the children as they run or walk around the field. You could even tie up your own running trainers and set off on a lap with them! Children can wear sports kit for this day in school – either their own or school PE uniform is fine. You do not have to go and buy anything especially for the day!

Throughout the rest of the week, the children will get an opportunity to participate in a variety of different sports such as cricket from Timsbury Cricket Club; cook food in class and visit the Life Education Bus. Once again we are very grateful to Timsbury Parish Council for funding this visit.



What is Life Education?

LIFE EDUCATION
Learning with Harold

We support schools in their delivery of Health Education (PSHE)

- Our programmes aim to develop children's knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to make their own positive health choices
- The programmes take place in a specially designed mobile classroom called The Life Bus
- There is a different programme for each Year Group
- We use a variety of teaching and learning styles - including puppetry, drama and circle time
- Our Educators are experienced Primary teachers

To find out more about Life Education and our work, please come along to the Parents and Carers Drop-In Information Session on Thursday 24th May, anytime between 2:30 and 3:15pm
Just find us in the 'Life Bus' which will be parked next to the Year 6 classroom!

Laura Hilton will also be visiting every class during the week to talk about nutrition, and she is also offering a **parent workshop** on Wednesday 23rd May, 3.15-4pm in Otters classroom. Please come along and support our local expert!

We will finish our week by having a healthy breakfast of porridge and fruit at 8.30 am on Friday morning; for which there will be a small charge/donation on this occasion. Parents are again welcome to join us. It would be great if this could be a day when everyone scoots or cycles too! Thank you for all your support.

Let's hope the sun shines for the weekend!

Best wishes,
Miss Brown

A note about safeguarding

If you ever have any concerns regarding the safety and wellbeing of our pupils please contact the school to speak to **Miss Alice Brown** (Designated Safeguarding Lead) or **Mrs Claire Brewer** (Deputy DSL). The safety of our young people is the responsibility of us all.

THE PTA would welcome your support for the Family Barn Dance
please!

**HOT FOOT OVERTO CONY GRE HALL ON SAT. MAY 19TH
AND DANCE TO RAY BURNS AND THE RED HOT RANGES**

FUNDRAISER FOR ST. MARY'S
PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA TIMSBURY
Charity no.1036029

From 5-10pm with Icecream stall
Bar • Raffle • *Live band and caller*
Tickets in advance via the school,
Connies Tea Room or Timsbury Childcare

Adult £7.50 Child £2.50 Family
ticket £15 (includes food)

**FAMILY
BARN
DANCE**

Details on our 'facebook' page
St Mary's School PTA, Timsbury



thank you!

To all of the lovely KS1 parents and families who made up some lovely story bags for us. It was very much appreciated and the children have loved exploring them!

Miss Smith

DIARY DATES 2017-2018

Throughout May	Statutory Key Stage 1 Assessments (not strictly timetabled)
14 th – 17 th May	Statutory Key Stage 2 Assessment Week
Thursday 17 th May	Year 5 Trip
Friday 18 th May	Rabbits Lead Collective Worship 9.05am – Year 1 parents welcome
19 th May	PTA Barn Dance – Conygre Hall
21 st – 25 th May	Healthy Choices Week – Mr Finlay is planning an exciting week!!
Wednesday 23 rd May	Term 5 AWARDS
24 th and 25 th May	Life Education Van visit to School
Friday 25 th May	Last Day Term 5 – normal time!
Monday 4 th June	Term 6 starts
Monday 11 th June	Statutory Phonics Screening Check (Y1) Week
Wednesday 13 th June	Year 5 and 6 SRE School Nurse Talk 1
Tuesday 19 th June	Tulip Class Photographs
21 st and 22 nd June	SAMBA Workshops for children
Friday 22 nd June	PTA Summer Fair and Carnival Procession
Tuesday 26 th June	Year 5 and 6 SRE School Nurse Talk 2
Thursday 28 th June	Year 6 Production 6pm
Friday 29 th June	INSET DAY 5 – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS
Thursday 5 th July	Badgers Lead Collective Worship – Year 2 parents welcome
Thursday 5 th July	B&NES Secondary School Transition Day for Year 6 (children go directly to their secondary school)
Friday 6 th July	Sports Day – confirmed date
9 th - 13 th July	Year 6 Residential
Friday 13 th July	Year 2 Trip
Tuesday 17 th July	Reserve Sports Day
Friday 20 th July	Term 6 AWARDS and Family Open Afternoon TBC
Tuesday 24 th July	Leavers' Service. Last Day of Term 6. School Ends 2pm
Week commencing 24 th September 2018	Year 6 Residential – confirmed

Raise Money for the PTA just by shopping online!

Users of Easyfundraising have raised over **£1100** for the PTA so far.

WELL DONE AND THANK YOU TO OUR 53 SUPPORTERS!

It doesn't cost you ANYTHING extra – and just involves a few extra clicks!



The website: <http://www.easyfundraising.org.uk>

How?

Click on the Green "Support a Good Cause"; type in Timsbury in the search box; chose St Mary's Primary (at the bottom of the list); Click 'Find' then "Support this Cause". This takes you to a registration page. When you then access online shopping sites via EasyFundraising to make a purchase, the PTA receive a donation. It doesn't cost you a penny more, your purchase details are not shared with anyone, and the PTA receives a monthly donation to spend in school on children!

**CAN WE GET TO 70 SUPPORTERS BEFORE THE END
OF MAY???**
SHARE WITH YOUR FAMILY AND FRIENDS!

TERM DATES 2017-2018

	INSET DAYS (School Closed to Pupils)	Start for pupils	Finish for pupils
Term 5	Monday 9 th April	Tuesday 10 th April	Friday 25 th May
Term 6	Friday 29 th June	Monday 4 th June	Tuesday 24 th July

TERM DATES 2018-2019

	INSET DAYS (School Closed to Pupils)	Start for pupils	Finish for pupils
Term 1	Monday 3 rd September and Friday 26 th October	Tuesday 4 th September 2018	Thursday 25 th October 2018
Term 2		Monday 5 th November 2018	Friday 21 st December 2018
Term 3		Monday 7 th January 2019	Friday 15 th February 2019
Term 4	Monday 25 th February	Tuesday 26 th February 2019	Friday 5 th April 2019
Term 5	2 INSET DAYS STILL TO BE SET	Tuesday 23 rd April 2019	Friday 24 th May 2019
Term 6		Monday 3 rd June 2019	Tuesday 23 rd July