



Dear Families and Friends of St Mary's

POST OFSTED UPDATE

1. HOME LEARNING POLICY REVIEW

Last week, teaching staff reviewed our Homework policy and made a few changes which should make the expectations and purpose clearer for both teachers and parents. I have shared the draft with a few parents (from across the school) to obtain a parental perspective on our expectations. Finding agreement on homework expectations is very tricky, as it is a subject which definitely divides opinions! However, I believe that through this process we will have a policy which can be ratified by Governors at their next meeting in March. As there are no *significant* changes from our current policy, teachers are already now working to the guidelines described with in it. This draft version is available on our school website – so if you have a particular interest in this, please take a look and let us know what you think before the February break.

2. STAFF TRAINING – CONSISTENCY, PROGRESS and SEND

On Friday 19th January, staff attended a training day in school. The morning was focussed on developing our understanding of Autism and in particular, how it may present in girls. During the afternoon, teachers focussed on developing consistency in the codes used in our assessment system. This week, Miss Morris and Mr Finlay have both attended training in London, looking at how to demonstrate pupil progress by making better use of Assessment for Learning strategies; Mrs Brewer has attended a Better Maths morning meeting with subject leaders across the local authority; and Mr Finlay has been learning about free Apps that we can use on the school i-pads to enhance learning. Mrs Brewer has also led a session in school for teachers on “Subject Leadership” so that expectations in this regard are explicit and consistent for all. Next week we will be revisiting our handwriting and presentation expectation documents.

3. ATTENDANCE

On Monday 22nd January, we only had 88.5% of children at school. We know that some children were suffering from bad coughs, but also that some children had been taken on holiday that was not authorised. We know this because the children have since told us about their long weekends away! In some cases, children have become quite distressed about being asked not to tell the truth to their teachers – and this is not something that should be happening. I worry about the implicit – or even explicit - messages that children are receiving about honesty and responsibility. If your child is absent, please be honest about why.

For clarity, children need to be in school every day that we are open, unless they are very unwell or the absence has been authorised for other reasons, by the Headteacher. That is the law. As attendance has been identified by OFSTED as a key area that the school needs to improve, please be aware that we will ask to see evidence of dentist, doctor or other appointments that are made during the school day – and may request evidence that a doctor has been consulted about the need for absence from school because of illness lasting more than 2 or 3 days.

Monday 22 nd January	Presents
Ducklings	87.0
Rabbits	86.4
Badgers	88.9
Bees	84.6
Otters	95.5
Lions	92.9
Eagles	84.6

4. SCIENCE INVESTIGATIONS - SAVE THE DATE!

Last year we held a tremendously successful **Science Fair** at St Mary's, thanks to the amazing organisation and support of Jenny Scott. This year we have planned to extend the experience by asking scientists from the University to come and work with classes to design their own investigations, which they can carry out over a few weeks. Each class will have their first visit from a scientist before the February half term break. On **Friday 9th March** there will be an **Open Classroom Science** event from 1.30pm – 3pm in the afternoon, which families are invited to. Once again Jenny has been working incredibly hard behind the scenes to organise this for us, in consultation with Mr Daniels who is our Science Leader.

Our event is funded by



5. PHONICS MEETING

We would like to invite parents/carers of EYFS and years 1, 2 and 3 to a phonics workshop on **Tuesday 20th February** at 5pm. It will be an opportunity to learn more about phonics in school and what you can do to help at home. If you would like to attend please can you let Miss Smith/Mrs Platten know before the February break.



KS1 and 2 DANCE UMBRELLA – BATH FORUM - WEDNESDAY 14th MARCH

Rehearsals are going well, and we have purchased 51 adult tickets for the families who have pre-booked them. Mrs Platten will make these available on ParentMail next week.

THURSDAY 1st MARCH – WORLD BOOK DAY. Children will be invited to dress up for this event. Further details will follow as your child's Learning Log will be linked to this event.

Our **LUNCH TIME REVOLUTION** seems to be a success with children enjoying the opportunity to play in all areas of the playground and play more actively. **DOLCE** meals also appear to be going well. The food is certainly very tasty and there has been a noticeable decline in food waste as a result. We still have a few teething problems that we would like to make you aware of.

- All meals need to be pre-ordered directly on the live kitchen by 9.30am – even if your child is in EYFS or KS1.
- If your child is absent from school, or if you decide at the last minute to provide sandwiches, it is your responsibility to cancel any pre-booked meals by 9.30am – *even if your child is in Key Stage 1*. We cannot do this for you. If you have booked a meal for your child, which is then not taken, you will still be charged for it as it has been cooked. St Mary's cannot pay Dolce for meals ordered (KS1 or 2) which are not eaten.
- If your child is going to be late arriving at school – perhaps because they have an authorised appointment to attend - but you still wish them to have a dinner that you have booked, please let the office know in advance that your child will be late in but will still be having a school meal.
- Please ensure you keep your Live Kitchen account in credit. Dolce will not serve a meal for a child whose account is in debt.



It is a requirement of the Food Standards that schools allow children to drink **milk** during the school day. However, there is no expectation that this will be provided by Dolce. If you wish your child to have milk in the day, and they are over 5 years old, you will need to order this direct from the School Milk Service (details included).

If your child is currently registered as being eligible by benefit for free school meals, and you wish your child to have milk every day, we can help with the cost of this. Please let Mrs Patten know (in confidence) if this is something that you would like to arrange.

With best wishes for the weekend
Miss Brown

Percentage of children who were at school <u>and</u> on time, between 2 nd and 26 th January 2018						
Ducklings	Rabbits	Badgers	Bees	Otters	Lions	Eagles
91.6%	92%	96.5%	92.2%	92.9%	94.5%	93.8%

Only one class has attendance that is broadly in line with expectations. Well done Badgers.

Our Persistent Absence rate (which is the percentage of children who have missed 10% or more of the school year) currently stands at 8.57%. This is more than double the national average.

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.

DIARY DATES 2017-2018

Tuesday 30 th January	Ducklings Lead Collective Worship 9.05am EYFS parents welcome
Tuesday 30 th January	Year 1 Parent Consultations with Mrs Savage and Mrs Brewer 9-2.30pm
Wednesday 31 st January	Year 2 Family Craft Afternoon
Thursday 1 st February	PTA DISCO – £3 TICKETS FROM PTA AFTER SCHOOL KS15.00 – 5.55pm;KS2 6– 6.55pm
Thursday 8 th February	Spring AWARDS 9.05am. Crèche available
Friday 9 th February	Year 2 Family Event 11am End Term 3
Tuesday 20 th February	EYFS, Y1, Y2, Y3 Parent Workshop – Phonics. 5pm
Wednesday 21 st February	Parliament Outreach Visit and Y6 Workshop
Thursday 1 st March	World Book Day – Dressing Up!
Tuesday 6 th March	Year 2 Fire Safety Talk
Thursday 8 th March	Helen Peake – Dogs Trust Visitor KS2 Workshops
Friday 9 th March	Open Classrooms – Science Event
Tuesday 13 th March	Rabbits Lead Collective Worship 9.05am Y1 parents welcome
Wednesday 14 th March	Dance Umbrella – KS1 and KS2
Thursday 22 nd March	PTA Easter Bingo TBC
Friday 23 rd March	EASTER Service led by Year 4 and 5 (NO AWARDS this term) End of Term 4 – usual time of 3.15pm
14 th – 17 th May	Statutory Key Stage 2 Assessment Week
21 st – 25 th May	Healthy Choices Week
Wednesday 23 rd May	Term 5 AWARDS TBC
24 th and 25 th May	Life Education Van visit to School
Tuesday 19 th June	Tulip Class Photographs
Friday 22 nd June	PTA Summer Fair
Thursday 28 th June	Year 6 Production 6pm
Friday 29 th June	Sports Day TBC
Thursday 5 th July	B&NES Secondary School Transition Day for Year 6
Monday 9 th - Friday 13 th July	Year 6 Residential
Friday 20 th July	Term 6 AWARDS and Family Open Afternoon TBC
Tuesday 24 th July	Leavers' Service

TERM DATES 2017-2018			
	INSET DAYS (School Closed to Pupils)	Start for pupils	Finish for pupils
Term 3	Friday 19 th January	Tuesday 2 nd January 2018	Friday 9 th February
Term 4	Two Further INSET Days yet to be set	Monday 19 th February	Friday 23 rd March
Term 5		Monday 9 th April	Friday 25 th May
Term 6		Monday 4 th June	Tuesday 24 th July

TERM DATES 2018-2019			
Term 1	INSET DAYS yet to be set	Monday 3rd September 2018	Friday 26th October 2018
Term 2		Monday 5th November 2018	Friday 21st December 2018
Term 3		Monday 7th January 2019	Friday 15th February 2019
Term 4		Monday 25th February 2019	Friday 5th April 2019
Term 5		Tuesday 23rd April 2019	Friday 24th May 2019
Term 6		Monday 3rd June 2019	Tuesday 23rd July 2019

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 of a term time absence because they feel it is an exceptional circumstance, they are asked to complete and submit a **Leave of Absence Request Form** in advance, stating the reason why they need to take their child out of school. Even where exceptional circumstances do exist, the school may decide not to exercise its discretion to authorise leave. Should any request for absence be refused the absence will be recorded as unauthorised in the school register. On returning from this absence, no matter what the length of that period of unauthorised leave, 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 (which is 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.