



St Mary's C of E Primary School, Timsbury

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28th September 2018

Dear Families and Friends of St Mary's

One of our theme songs this term, to tie in with our value of Responsibility, has been **"What have you done today to make you feel proud?"** So I'm going to start this newsletter with an item that will enable everyone in the community to answer that question!

I am delighted to be able to share that St Mary's has been awarded the **Achievement for All Quality Mark**. This is a **National Award** and is given in recognition of work in improving the well-being, resilience and self-esteem of its pupils who are vulnerable to underachievement.



Mike Donovan, Deputy Regional Lead for Achievement for All, visited the school towards the end of the summer term to make the assessment, but we had to keep it under wraps until the official report came back! This is what he wrote:

"My abiding memory of my visit is of a cheerful, purposeful and well ordered school with a very happy set of pupils. Staff have put an enormous amount of effort into developing pupils' resilience, confidence and independence. They have striven to remove pupils' fears of "getting it wrong", encouraging pupils to explore, investigate, reason and explain; and going on to support pupils in self and peer assessment within a carefully planned, constructed and enabling environment.

As a result of significant staff development and careful consideration of parent/carer needs and circumstances, a range of varied and varying approaches and methodologies have been employed by the school to give parents and carers not only the background knowledge they need to understand the modern education system but also the tools and confidence to engage with it and support their child's learning in it. The multi-layered systems the school has put in place give parents/carers every opportunity to know about, understand and contribute to their child's development and progress.

Pupils are offered a host of opportunities to participate in activities which: broaden their life experiences, widen their horizons in terms of what is possible in adult life, raise their aspirations and, crucially, set their learning in context so that they can see WHY it's important to acquire knowledge and skills. Pupils are also given multiple scenarios in which to develop responsibility for themselves and others; developing attributes that will stand them in good stead when they face situations alone, as part of a team or as a leader.

Achievement for All believes that every child can progress, and through our programmes we hope to enable every child to be the best that they can be regardless of background, challenge, or need. Huge congratulations to teachers, parents and children at St Mary's for all their hard work. A truly deserved award."

This is a **fabulous** achievement for our school community, perhaps especially so when quality marks are not usually awarded to schools that OFSTED consider as "requiring improvement". It only serves to emphasise that we – parents and staff – are able to work together and do GREAT things for ALL the children who attend St Mary's. We don't view this as an award for school staff but an award for the entire school community – so well done everyone, and THANKYOU!

THURSDAY 4th OCTOBER - WHOLE SCHOOL SPECIAL MEAL DAY

We would like to encourage everyone to try a school dinner on this day, even if they do not usually have one. This is at no cost to families in KS1 or those registered as eligible for Free School Meals.

Our level of school funding varies according to the numbers of children in KS1 who are booked in for a dinner on that day, so if all children in Ducklings, Rabbits and Badgers could be booked in, that would be incredibly helpful to us. **Even if you also send in a packed lunch!** Your support with this is very welcome.

The menu is on Live Kitchen. If you are not sure how to use Live Kitchen, please call Mrs Platten in the school office and ask for her assistance. (Please note, she only works in the mornings)



SOMETHING RED?

Immediately after half term we will be completing some special art work to mark the **100 year Armistice Day**. To do this, we need lots of red wool (and some black/brown), red fabrics, red paper, red cellphane, red ribbon etc. (The things we need don't have to be *plain* red – just *predominately* red. Old T-shirts, dresses, wrapping paper etc would all be helpful). If you have any spare items that you think would be suitable and you are willing to donate to us, please can you send it to school for the attention of **Miss Morris**, before the October break? Thank you.

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). In her absence, please speak to **Mrs Purnell or Mr Finlay** (Deputy DSLs). The safety of our young people is the responsibility of us all.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT

This year, we have several areas of focus to help St Mary's become an even better school for your children.

Teachers have begun to **review the curriculum** we offer and to consider how we can improve it to ensure that children are given every opportunity for success. This work began in the summer term, when teachers listed the values and skills that we (as educators) wanted children to have by the time they left us. From this work we identified three "curriculum drivers" which were agreed with Governors in July. To put it simply, these are three things that we will make as explicit as possible in all learning activities. The drivers we have chosen are: **curiosity, citizenship and enterprise**. Our definitions of these three terms can be found at the end of the newsletter.

Another area of focus is to improve children's **mathematical fluency**, particular in number. This means we want them to be able to have really deep understanding of numbers; to be able to work efficiently and accurately; and to be flexible in approaches to problem solving. Your child will experience even more practical work in mathematics as they explore number in depth; and from year 1 to 6, they will also have an addition 10-15 minutes a day on this specific aspect of maths using a programme called "**No Nonsense Number Facts**". Mrs Daone, Year 3 teacher, is the lead teacher for Mathematics.

We are also changing the way we teach **spelling** and trying different ways to help our children learn these. We are maintaining our approach to Phonics, but are introducing a separate "**No Nonsense Spelling**" programme from Year 2 onwards, as well as reviewing how school approaches can be enhanced with support from parents. Research evidence shows that learning ten spellings for a weekly test doesn't allow children to truly know the spellings because when children come to write it in their own writing, the spellings are often still incorrect. From now on, each child will come home with 3-6 spellings which follow a particular phonic sound, spelling pattern or rule; and each child will be given a range of fun spelling activities in a '**Spelling Passport**'. Each week, children choose from one of the spelling activities, apply it to their focus spellings, and colour it in to show it has been completed. Rather than testing whether they can spell these particular spellings at the end of the week, children will be discreetly assessed during a writing task to see if they have learned the sound, pattern or rule of the week. We hope that this will teach the children the importance of spelling in all writing and not just for a spelling test. **Spelling passports will be handed out during the forthcoming parent consultations; and your support with these activities at home will be influential in your child's success.** Copies will also be available to download on your child's class page by the October break. If you have any questions regarding our new approach, please discuss this with your child's teacher in the first instance. Miss Riddell, Year 2 teacher, is the lead teacher for English.

REMINDER: CHANGE TO FIRST AID PROCEDURES

In an effort to improve communication about minor bumps (and reduce paper wastage) we will no longer send home a letter for every **minor** injury/scrape that your child may have during their active playtimes. Your child will still have first aid (on the playground) and be given a notification sticker instead of a paper letter – hopefully this is more likely to remain attached to your child. Anything that requires more comprehensive first aid will still be managed at the designated First Aid Station. We will continue to notify you of **ANY** bumped head incidents by telephone and also direct you to a website where you can find advice on how to manage this.

SCHOOL FUNDING MEETINGS

Please consider attending one of the School Funding Meetings being held next week (see earlier ParentMail for details). B&NES has seen a 46% cut in funding allocation from central government since 2010; and that impacts upon schools. As funding to other services is also slashed, such as for health and social care, the provision for children is shrinking – putting further pressure of staff here who are already working well beyond their job expectations.

This week I have learnt that School Nursing will no longer be able to deliver PSHE sessions in school. This means that teachers will have to step in and deliver Sex and Relationships Education in Year 5 and 6. Whilst I have every confidence that they will be able to do this, it is only fair that they receive appropriate update training before being expected to – which means we will need to source and finance that. As the change was unexpected, we have no budget set aside to cover the cost. This is just another small example of the “invisible pressure” that we are experiencing as a direct result of government spending decisions.

Politicians don't listen to teachers when we articulate the impact of cuts.

They might listen to parents.



THANK YOU to Mr Daniels, Mrs Beck and Mrs Barnes for giving up a week with their own families to enable the Eagles to go to **PGL**. And THANK YOU to all the staff who stayed at school. With so many staff out, everyone did extra work to keep everything running smoothly and it is very much appreciated.

We hope that the Otters, Mr Finlay and Mrs Game have as much fun at **Folly Farm** next week; and look forward to working with Jane (Timsbury's new Youth Worker), who will be joining you too!

DIARY DATES 2017-2018

| | |
|---|--|
| Thursday 4 th October | Special Meal Day We would like all children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 to have a school dinner today if at all possible please. Thank you. |
| Thursday 4 th and Friday 5 th October | Otters class RESIDENTIAL |
| Thursday 11 th October | Badgers (y2) and Bees (y3) lead School Harvest Festival at St Mary's Church (Y1-6). 9.20am. |
| Tuesday 16 th October | Parent Consultation Meetings 3.30-5.40pm |
| Thursday 18 th October | Parent Consultation Meetings 3.30-7pm |
| Friday 19 th October | Term 1 AWARDS. 9.05am – all welcome. Please use Crèche for non-school age siblings |
| Tuesday 23 rd October | Lions Lead collective worship – Y5 parents welcome 9.05am |
| Thursday 25 th October | Term 1 Ends |
| Friday 26 th October | INSET DAY 2 – SCHOOL CLOSED TO PUPILS |
| OCTOBER BREAK | |
| Monday 5 th November | Term 2 starts |
| Tuesday 6 th November | Otters begin Swimming Lessons |
| Thursday 29 th November | Otters Lead collective worship – Y4 parents welcome 9.05am |
| Sunday 2 nd December | Year 5/6 Royal Albert Hall Trip |
| Thursday 13 th December | Ducklings (EYFS) and Rabbits (Y1) - Nativity |
| Wednesday 19 th December | Term 2 AWARDS. 9.05am – all welcome. Please use Crèche for non-school age siblings. |
| Friday 21 st December | Term 2 ends at 2pm |

TERM DATES 2018-2019

*** One INSET day still to be set ***

| | INSET DAYS (School Closed to Pupils) | Start for pupils | Finish for pupils |
|--------|---|--|--|
| Term 1 | Monday 3 rd September 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 | | Tuesday 23 rd April 2019 | Friday 24 th May 2019 |
| Term 6 | Friday 28 th June | Monday 3 rd June 2019 | Tuesday 23 rd July |

ST MARY'S CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

CURRICULUM DRIVERS 2018

Curiosity is a quality related to inquisitive thinking such as exploration, investigation, and learning, evident by observation in humans and other animals.

1. When you are **curious** about something, your mind expects and anticipates new ideas related to it. When the ideas come they will soon be recognized. Without curiosity, the ideas may pass right in front of you and yet you miss them because your mind is not prepared to recognize them. Just think, how many great ideas may have lost due to lack of curiosity?
2. **It opens up new worlds and possibilities**
By being **curious** you will be able to see new worlds and possibilities which are normally not visible. They are hidden behind the surface of normal life, and it takes a curious mind to look beneath the surface and discover these new worlds and possibilities.
3. **It brings excitement into your life**
The life of **curious** people is far from boring. It's neither dull nor routine. There are always new things that attract their attention, there are always new 'toys' to play with. Instead of being bored, curious people have an adventurous life.

Citizenship is being aware of and understanding the wider world - and their place in it. Good citizens take an active role in their community, they communicate with clarity, reason and respect, working with others to make our planet more equal, fair and sustainable.

An **enterprising** person is one who comes across a pile of scrap metal and sees the making of a wonderful sculpture. An **enterprising** person is one who drives through an old decrepit part of town and sees a new housing development. An **enterprising** person is one who sees opportunity in all areas of life.

To be **enterprising** is to keep your eyes open and your mind active. It's to be skilled enough, confident enough, creative enough and disciplined enough to seize opportunities that present themselves...regardless of the economy.

A person with an **enterprising** attitude says, "Find out what you can before action is taken." Do your homework. Do the research. Be prepared. Be resourceful. Do all you can in preparation of what's to come.

Enterprising people always see the future in the present. **Enterprising** people always find a way to take advantage of a situation, not be burdened by it. And **enterprising** people aren't lazy. They don't wait for opportunities to come to them, they go after the opportunities. **Enterprise** means always finding a way to keep yourself actively working towards your ambition.

Enterprise is two things. The first is **creativity**. You need creativity to see what's out there and to shape it to your advantage. You need creativity to look at the world a little differently. You need creativity to take a different approach, to be different.

What goes hand-in-hand with the creativity of **enterprise** is the second requirement: the **courage** to be creative. You need courage to see things differently, courage to go against the crowd, courage to take a different approach, courage to stand alone if you have to, courage to choose activity over inactivity.

And lastly, being **enterprising** doesn't just relate to the ability to make money. Being **enterprising** also means feeling good enough about yourself, having enough self-worth to want to seek advantages and opportunities that will make a difference in your future. And by doing so you will increase your confidence, your courage, your creativity and your self-worth—your **enterprising** nature.

Jim Rohn

Raise Money for the PTA just by shopping online!

Users of Easyfundraising have raised £1200 for the PTA so far. Can you help get us to £1500 before Christmas? 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!