



## St. Mary's Church of England Primary School

### Newsletter

Spring Term 2018

4<sup>th</sup> January

Mardle had established for the Spring Term. I am sure you will make

#### Dear Parents/Carers

Happy New Year!

I'm sure Christmas feels like a long time ago for many of you. However, I'd like to say a huge thank you for the many gifts sent in. I am sure I can say a huge thank you, not just for myself, but on behalf of all my team who felt treated so specially during the festive season. Your gifts were most appreciated.

#### Christmas Events

I've been very grateful too to receive so much positive feedback regarding the Nativity and our Christingle Service. They were truly delightful evenings. It was lovely to see so many of you there and to hear the children sing so wholeheartedly. I was also really pleased to hear the children read and perform so well.

My thanks to Mr and Mrs Dennison of **Adorable Photography** for giving up their time and resources to create the CDs full of photographs of our Nativity, and thanks too to Mrs Adams and her husband for the time spent in burning so many copies to make them available to one and all. There were certainly many memorable images contained therein – many of them were loveable, gorgeous shots, but I also feel we could have run awards for the pupil wearing the most of their school lunch as well as biggest yawn or most tired shepherd (well, they had been watching their flocks all night)!

#### State of Play Meeting

Having been in-post as Headteacher for a term, the governors and I feel it is high time that I shared with you the discoveries that I have made about St. Mary's, the actions the staff, governors and I have been taking and something of our plans for the future. Therefore, I am inviting all of our parent body along to a 'State of Play' presentation on the evening of Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January at 7pm. I hope you can make it.

#### Mr J Beckett to join our staff team

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Mr Beckett to the staff team. He will be taking on the role of Maternity cover for Miss Mardle (hopefully beginning after February Half-Term as per our plans). He joins us having a wealth of experience having taught in schools throughout Sussex and Wiltshire during his career. He will also be taking on responsibility for English co-ordination throughout the school alongside Mrs Whiting, as well as continuing to run the Art Club that Miss

him very welcome and am aware that he will be in contact soon after starting to organise a 'Meet the Teacher Event' for our Year 5 parents.

#### Mrs Chandler and Mrs Huisman off to Pastures New

While on the subject of staffing it is with regret that I also announce the departures of Mrs Chandler and Mrs Huisman.

Mrs Chandler has worked with great enthusiasm overseeing groups of pupils from classes throughout the school, working alongside many of our Pupil Premium children and serving diligently as a Midday Meals Supervisor to boot. Mrs Chandler leaves for pastures new having secured a full-time post as a Learning Support Assistant at Millais School.

She will be sorely missed. Our current team of Midday Meals Supervisors have managed to fill the gaps left by Mrs Chandler, for which I am most grateful.

We shall of course aim to have somebody else in place to work with our Pupil Premium children as soon as possible.

Mrs Huisman leaves after ten years of dedicated and loyal service to the school. Currently working as a Teaching Assistant in Year 2 she has also been one of our go to HLTAs having previously qualified as a teacher. Mrs Huisman leaves us to join the team of a local travel / tour company.

Both ladies will be working their notice periods and so we have a few weeks to make arrangements regarding the staffing in school once they are gone.

#### Midday Meals Supervisor Cover Needed

Having lost Mrs Chandler, we do find ourselves somewhat short of cover in case of emergency. Currently, Mrs Blackburn is on stand-by to jump into the breach should one of our current team be unavailable, but just having one cover supervisor available is not really adequate.

So, if you'd be interested in taking up the mantle, please do contact the school office to ask about application procedures and for an applicant's pack. Of course, St. Mary's is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, so all jobs are subject to fulfilment of satisfactory pre-employment checks including: enhanced DBS checks and background references. The

successful candidate would be required to sign a declaration form declaring they are not disqualified from undertaking this work under the "Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2009".

### **Library**

My thanks to the HSA for the money that they've given to us during the course of last term which has funded provision of a much greater selection of books for our children to enjoy. I hope that you have enjoyed reading them at home when you've had the chance as well.

### **Clergy Worship & Class Assemblies**

The main theme of our Worship assemblies this half-term is Courage. We will be looking at what the Bible says about courage in relation to perseverance, encouraging others and telling the truth; learning lessons from Peter, Paul and Nehemiah, as well as looking at other historical exemplars from Florence Nightingale to the conduct of the people of Eyam during The Plague.

The Reverend David Bouskill will be joining us on Tuesdays to lead our assemblies and will also be trying to fit with our overarching theme of courage. You are of course, as ever, welcome to attend these sessions – we begin our worship at 9.15am.

If your child's class is due to lead a Friday assembly, you are also most warmly invited to be present. These take place at 8.55am on a Friday. This term, Year 1 are scheduled for the Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> February, Year 4 Friday the 2<sup>nd</sup> March and Year 3 the 23<sup>rd</sup> March.

### **West Sussex Education Awards**

I am enclosing a link below for the West Sussex Education Awards 2018 – being run by Sussex Newspapers (including the County Times) and supported by WSCC. I have simply cut and pasted some of their promotional explanation below:

They would like the best schools, pupils and teachers in the area to be in line for countywide recognition, courtesy of their new award scheme. The campaign will recognise the achievements that schools and pupils make within the education sector on a daily basis. There are twelve categories in total, closing date is 16th February 2018.

A panel of independent judges will examine all nominations and select shortlisted finalists in each category. All finalists will be invited to a prestigious presentation event at Fontwell Racecourse on March 20th, where the winners will be announced.

How would you like to be involved? enter via the link <http://www.jpeventssouth.co.uk/events/west-sussex-education-awards/enter.php>

The teaching staff of St. Mary's would really love to see our cleaner Vitus nominated as the unsung hero – and I have to say this really is the cleanest school I have ever worked in.

### **Hockey Tournament**

You'll recall from my last newsletter that our Year 5 and 6 Hockey Team had qualified for the A League of the District Hockey Tournament (the top flight) as one of the best teams in the area. In their final round of matches, the team lost by the odd goal in three of their games and

drew their fourth (Leo Edwards-Cox scoring his first goal for the team) to seal 5<sup>th</sup> place overall out of the seventeen teams represented. Mr Tombling was every bit as delighted with their sporting prowess as he was with their conduct. My congratulations to them all!

### **Reading Record Books**

In response to the feedback received from parents we will be trialling a new system in Year R regarding the completion of the SMART Reading Record Books. We will inform you on a regular basis of the key foci that we have been learning about in school via a note or sticker in the Reading Record. We hope this will enable you to support your child at home by discussing these things or prompting them to do the same sort of things in their reading time at home. We would really appreciate your feedback about this new system once it has been running for a few weeks.

### **Severe Weather Plans**

In the event of severe weather forcing us to close the school we shall ensure that a notice is provided on the homepage of the school website and I shall also be in contact with BBC Radio Sussex so that they can broadcast this information too.

### **Prospective Parents for September 2018**

If you are thinking of school for a new starter this September, or know someone who is, there will be an opportunity to tour the school on Wednesday 10th January from 10:00am.

### **Coffee and Cake Social for Prayer Group**

The School Prayer group would like to invite you to a social in order to get to know others and to find out what happens in their monthly prayer meeting (the first Tuesday of each month at drop-off time) in the Leslie Room (upstairs at St. Mary's Church overlooking the path). There will be coffee and cake provided as well as an area for little ones to play. All who have children at the school are warmly invited to attend. For further details, please do speak to Davina White or Fiona Prentice.

### **Ukulele for Adults – School Fundraiser**

Mr Gladman, who currently comes in to teach Ukulele has asked if he could offer Ukulele lessons here to our parent body, not only so that you can learn a great new skill enabling you to help your offspring learn the instrument, but as something of a fundraiser for us here at St. Mary's.

He is offering a one off lesson for the grand charge of £7 per person: all proceeds going straight to the school.

He will take you through the basics and have you all playing songs together by the end of the lesson. Mr Gladman of B Sharp Guitar School will also provide all of the instruments for you to use.

This opportunity will be available on the evening of Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> February from 7pm to 8pm.

If you would like a place, which will be offered on a strictly first come first served basis then please email Mr Gladman directly on: [info@bsharpguitarschool.co.uk](mailto:info@bsharpguitarschool.co.uk)

If there is sufficient interest B Sharp Guitar School will be keen to look to set up a regular evening club for our parents to attend in the not too distant future.

### **Thanks a Million Project**

I am delighted to share with you a recent project undertaken by the St Mary's Church family. For those who do not know about it, the organisers sold inspirational Biblical quotes which people then illustrated; these works of art have now been made into a book.

The book is available for sale for £10, with all profits going to "Thanks a Million." Richard Pearson will be in Church on Sunday after the 9:30am service if you would like to purchase one and support the Church's fundraising efforts. Copies are available in the Church Office or you can email Richard and Jeannine Pearson at [yotb@pearsonuk.net](mailto:yotb@pearsonuk.net) with your order.

Please excuse the length of our first newsletter back!  
Here's to a great Spring Term!  
Best wishes

Mr A Bird

### **Other Diary Dates**

Please do make a note of these dates as reminders will not necessarily be sent.

#### **January**

9 Prayer Group (Leslie Room in St. Mary's Church 9am)  
11 Year 3 Swimming Starts  
15 Closing Date for Starting School September 2018  
19 Year 5 Forest School starts  
22 After-school clubs start

#### **February**

5 Parent Consultations (3.45pm onwards)  
6 Prayer Group (Leslie Room in St. Mary's Church 9am)  
7 Communion in St. Mary's Church 2.00pm  
8 Parent Consultations (3.45pm onwards)  
12-16 Half-term  
19 INSET Day

#### **March**

6 Prayer Group (Leslie Room in St. Mary's Church 9am)  
28 Communion in St. Mary's Church 2.00pm  
29 INSET Day  
29 End of term – school breaks up for Easter