



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

# Newsletter

Spring Term 2018

19<sup>th</sup> January

### Dear Parents/Carers

Thanks to all who attended the 'State of Play' meeting last night. I hope you found it useful and informative. I so appreciate the concern of so many of you to get behind the staff team in our school development efforts.

### Parent Consultations

This term the Consultations are scheduled for Monday 5<sup>th</sup> February from 3.45pm to 7pm and Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> February from 3.45pm to 7pm. Appointments can be made from 8pm on the 22<sup>nd</sup> January and will close the day before the respective evenings take place.

Please visit:

<https://stmaryshorsham.parentseveningsystem.co.uk> to book your appointments.

The link for the parents evening system is also given on our website on the 'Parents' Notice Board' page.

If you wish to amend an appointment that you have made you will need to do so online as you will be the only person able to edit your details.

### SATs Meeting

There will be SATs Information Evenings for parents of both Year 2 and Year 6 children this term.

We have arranged the Year 6 SATs Evening for the 29<sup>th</sup> January at 6:30pm. This will be a chance for you to understand the current nature of the tests and the arrangements for them, as well as to ask any SAT related questions. I am sorry that this is slightly short notice. However, I felt it much better to bring this forward from its previous date in March, in order to ensure that you were as well informed as possible about what to expect regarding this year's arrangements.

The Year 2 SATs Evening will take place on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> February also at 6.30pm.

### Writing Award

Back in the Autumn Term Year 6 had the opportunity to enter a writing competition held by the Novium Museum in Chichester, the grand prize being a sleepover at the museum. I am delighted to announce that Millie Boulter won this prize for her and the rest of the class to enjoy! She wrote an impressive story about a mistreated giraffe named Montague, who was smuggled out of the circus onto a pirate ship in the hope of finding a better life as

their look out! This is obviously a very exciting opportunity for the whole class. Well done Millie, the whole school (especially Year 6) are proud of your creative story writing achievement. Details of the trip will of course follow for our Year 6 parents in due course.

### Artwork Competition

Mentioning competitions, I've been thinking about ways of engaging the children even more in thinking about our school values and promoting these further. So have come to the conclusion that I would like to run a half-termly art competition. I would love to give the children the chance to express the latest values that we are focusing on by producing a piece of Artwork of their own choosing. I shall then devote at least one of our central display boards to celebrating their entries and shall think of some suitable certification to reward their efforts too. As mentioned in my last newsletter, this term we are focusing on Courage and as I type I have been presented with a piece of art about that very value prior to even launching this initiative!

### School Libraries Service

I have taken the decision to cancel our School Library Service – Service Level Agreement in order to cut costs. This will save the school £1461 annually. However, it does mean that we will have to give back the books that we currently hold at St. Mary's which belong to the School's Library Service. We will need to be ready for the agreement to end as we finish our summer term – so I will be asking for donations of books to go into our classroom reading corners in the summer term.

Obviously, this decision does not fill me with joy, but it is one that we took at my previous school, where we were overwhelmed by the parental support in providing good as new / nearly new books to take their place in our collections instead. Therefore, I shall be writing to you again in the summer term with requests for books. I hope to be able to provide you with a list of books/authors the children would love to have represented in their classrooms at this time too.

### Bags of Support

This morning the children enjoyed a presentation from Sussex Green Living helping them to understand how we can be good stewards of our planets resources. On the back of this each of them has come home today with a bag from the charity Bags of Support who are seeking our cast offs / unwanted textiles, handbags and shoes

for the benefit of supporting orphanages in Romania and Uganda through raising money via recycling and redirecting these donations. They in turn will be giving the school 50p per kg. So if you have any unwanted clothes, shoes, curtains, sheets or handbags then please bag them up and return them to us here at school for collection on the 30<sup>th</sup> January.

### **Watches, Fit Bits, etc. and PE**

Please be aware that it is school policy not to allow children to wear watches (including Fitbits), jewellery or anything that could cause injury, snag on another child or even restrict their blood flow during PE lessons or sports clubs. Earrings may be taped if necessary (especially in those first few weeks following piercing), but it is safer for the wearer for them to be removed as well. If your child's ears do need taping, please could you send them in with a suitable plaster / tape. If children cannot remove their earrings for themselves – it would be really helpful for them not to wear these into school on the day of their PE lessons. Thank you very much for your help and support in this matter.

### **Environmental Health and Licensing Rating**

Congratulations to Easy Lunch and our Midday Meals Supervisors on achieving a 5-Star Rating from the Food Hygiene Inspector. What a great place to eat!

### **Dancing in the Park**

I understand that the tradition at St. Mary's has been for just Year 4 to take part in the Festival 'Dancing in the Park'. However, I am concerned that the time devoted to learning ten new dances each year by this one class means that time is lost from other academic areas of the curriculum. Therefore, the staff and I would like to share the dances beyond Year 4, so that Year 4 can really enjoy this aspect of the year still, but not at the expense of other learning too.

To solve the issue, we have agreed that we would like to offer a Country Dance Club after school on a Monday afternoon, so that those children who love this sport can learn some of the dances, while Year 4 take responsibility for those that can be managed sensibly in their PE lessons.

Mrs Whiting and Mr Tombling are prepared to run this club, if needs be (out of the goodness of their hearts), but my preference would be to ask for volunteers to step in to run such a club for us. I am asking now as training in this year's dances is offered in February for all Horsham District schools to attend. So, if you'd be willing to get involved do let me know and we can get the right person or persons for such a role along to the training with Miss Fandrejewski. (This training will take place at St. Peter's School, Cowfold on the Tuesday 6th February from 4.00pm to 5.00pm.) Obviously, this volunteers' role will be subject to the usual Safeguarding Procedures, DBS checks and volunteers induction process with Mr Ellis.

### **Charity Support**

Rather belatedly, I am pleased to report that the school's collection for poppies managed to raise £94.56 for The Royal British Legion. It is great to be able to support their vital welfare and benevolent work.

While the collection at the Infant Nativity raised £119.57 for Canine Partners (after covering our costs).

Thank you for your support of both charities.

### **School Budget & Cutbacks**

Currently we are overspending our termly stationery budget and so to help with this situation I have taken the decision to follow many other schools in asking for children in Key Stage 2 to come in armed with their own stationery. To function well, they will need named equipment including a small zippered pencil case containing: an HB pencil, a glue stick, sharpener, rubber, 15cm ruler and in years 4,5 and 6 a Berol Handwriting Pen (blue ink please), They may bring a few coloured pencils too if they wish. However, do please note that these will need to fit into a fairly petite sized pencil case, as they will need to fit into their shallow personal trays alongside their school books. Please do send them in with 'standard' appropriate sized items avoiding the novelty stationery items too, as this will help prevent them becoming too much of a focus / distracting in class. I would like to say a huge thank you, in advance, for your support in this matter and appreciate that it may take some time to achieve.

### **Pick-up and Drop-off**

I am delighted to have seen how keen our children have been to take part in the 'Living Streets Walk to School Initiative'. I am aware many of them are insisting on walking, riding or parking and striding. It is great to hear and I am most appreciative of your efforts in enabling your children to support the initiative.

However, from a more negative point of view I have had several parents and neighbours comment on the poor parking of just a few of our parents at pick-up and drop-off. Please can we all avoid parking on the zig-zags or on the corner of Denne Road and Normandy on the double yellow lines, as well as Normandy Gardens which is a private road.

### **Ukulele for Adults - Only 4 more places!!!**

We have eight of you booked in for the special Ukulele Lesson for Parents with Mr Gladman. He is keen to have four more of you.

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.

### **First Steps to Adulthood**

This may seem a bit premature for you having children in primary school, but it may be of interest to any of you who have older children with additional needs and disabilities.

First Steps to Adulthood is a free information drop in event for young people aged 14+ with additional needs and disabilities, and their parent carers. It will be held in the Conference Hall at Chichester College on Monday, 29 January 2018, between 6.00pm and 8.00pm. There will be over 35 information stands offering advice on housing, supporting young people into employment,

support for parent carers, benefits, leisure activities and much more. Paul Morrison will be there, representing the Local Authority's Special Educational Needs Team. The event is arranged jointly by the West Sussex Parent Carer Forum and West Sussex County Council.

Best wishes  
Mr A Bird

### **Other Diary Dates**

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

### **January**

22 Appointments open for parents evening 8.00pm  
29 SATs Evening for Year 6 Parents 6.30pm

### **February**

1 Ukulele for Adults Fundraiser 7.00pm  
5 Parent Teacher Consultation Evening 3.45pm to 7pm  
6 Prayer Group (Leslie Room in St. Mary's Church 9am)  
6 Chinese Dragon Dance Workshop in Year R  
7 Communion in St. Mary's Church 2.00pm  
8 Parent Teacher Consultation Evening  
12-16 Half-term  
19 INSET Day  
20 SATs Evening for Year 2 Parents 6.30pm  
27 Year 2 Trip to Bockett's Farm

### **March**

13 Year 1 Jamaican Drum Workshop  
19 Year 5 Boys Football Workshop @ Forest School  
23 Friday Fairy Tale Ball in Year R  
26-28 Prayer Spaces  
28 Communion in St. Mary's Church 2.00pm  
29 INSET Day  
29 Easter Holiday