St Mary’s Catholic Primary School

Newsletter Number 1

**New Term 2019**

Welcome back to all parents and an extra warm welcome to parents who have joined us for the first time.

It was lovely to have Wednesday, Thursday and Friday last week to give children time to settle into new routines and to mark the end of the week with both a mass and a celebration assembly.

Our youngest children, in Robin Class, start full time this week.

Over the summer we did much organising, re organising, throwing away of unwanted items from around school. You may have noticed that some repairs have been undertaken and some tidying up generally. It has been a busy summer!

We welcome Miss Wood in Woodpecker Class, Mrs Burrell and Mrs Hutton in Owl Class, all of whom have been busy with other staff getting to know our systems for safeguarding and for teaching and learning. We all feel very excited and positive about the year ahead.

**Post Ofsted**

Hopefully you have had a chance to read the very positive Ofsted feedback, which is posted on our website.

After two very intensive days it was very gratifying to hear so much positive praise about our children and the opportunities for learning that we have established. Whilst we did have a day of celebrating once the outcome was finalised we are now very much focused on how to continue to move forward.

Our year 6 children achieved excellent outcomes in the end of year assessments. Children can achieve at the expected standard or by achieving higher scores, achieve what is called greater depth. In all areas St Mary’s pupils achieved above national standards.

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| **Year 6** | **Reading** | **Writing**  | **Maths** | **Reading, writing and maths**  |
| Expectedstandard  | Higher standard  | Expectedstandard | Higher standard | Expectedstandard | Higher standard | Expectedstandard | Higher standard |
| **National 2019**  | 73% | 27% | 78% | 20% | 79% | 27% | 65% | 11% |
| **St Mary’s** **2019**  | 92% | 30% | 84% | 38% | 100% | 30% | 76% | 23% |

We are all aware that Year 6 results are significant for a school and we are delighted that the children did so well. As I said in the end of term newsletter, it is so pleasing that our children want to work hard and want to do well for themselves. At the same time we work to be a school where children are more rounded and have wider experiences, as well as being able to see beyond their own needs and support others. We have worked to ensure that children at St Mary’s want to do well for each other. The feedback from the Ofsted inspector was extremely positive about the relationships, team work and sense of care that ran through the school.

**Communication with Staff**

We work very hard to be an efficient and effective teaching team but we are humans and we do get things wrong. If you have a worry or a concern please do let us know. Never sit on something. We work to be a listening team and we have worked with the children so that they know to tell if there is a problem. For a variety of reasons it is true that children can hold in their thoughts and appear to be perfectly fine until they are two minutes from school. Parents should be the first stop, safe people, so it is natural that children will sometimes tell you first if there is something on their mind.

In the mornings I endeavour to be in the playground and on Thursday and Friday I am joined by Miss Clyst. If for any reason I am unable to be on the playground Mrs Gill should be on the playground.

At the end of the day your child’s class teacher should be with the children and this is always a good time to catch them if you need to speak to them.

At any time if you have a worry or concern, please do phone in, or e mail admin and we will respond at the earliest opportunity.

**PE KIT Changes to routine**

To simplify your organisation we now ask that children keep their PE kit in school during the week. If children can bring in their kits on a Monday, leave them in school in a PE bag during the week and take them home on Friday to be refreshed for Monday.

This means that children will come into school in their uniform every day.

**After School Clubs**

All after school clubs will begin this term from the week beginning 23rd September. This was to ensure that we did not have the confusion of some clubs starting, whilst others had not begun.

Please register your child for clubs via parent pay.

During the year to extend opportunities for children we do offer a range of sport, music, science and maths activities through our partner schools. Many of these run in the school day. Letters will go directly to parents and carers about these.

Thank you in advance for your support with returning relevant forms promptly.

**Music Lessons**

If your child has expressed an interest in exploring musical instrument tuition then please do speak to Mrs Burrough who can explain the options for your child.

**Everyone a leader**

Kestrel and Eagle Class have stepped quickly into their responsibilities as leaders at St Mary’s. Our year 6 have taken up their role as play leaders and will begin their work as buddies to our newest pupils this week.

Year 6 lead us beautifully through mass, with the support of year 5 and Kestrel Class.

Last week and into next week classes will be voting for their school councillors and these will be announced in our celebration assembly next week.

Last year as part of our work to achieve the Rights and Respects Award Year 5 and 6 all took part in deepening their understanding of the UNICEF Children’s Charter and of the work of parliament. They all took part in leadership training as well as taking part in a restorative justice course. This term Eagle Class will be going to Parliament to take part in some debate workshops and some of them will be nominated as restorative leaders to work with older children in solving problems.

**Our Common Home**

Last year more and more children in school were talking and asking about recycling and the environment, particularly plastic waste and the damage to sea environments. Our school council lead a series of workshops about waste and with the help of Mr Wilson our caretaker, we began to recycle more and more of our waste.

We are aware that it is constantly in the news and headlines suggest it is a crisis could make some children anxious. What we want to do is help children to feel empowered and to make changes where possible.

In response to all of this we are developing this further this term and this year with a focus on a letter written by Pope Francis to all young people, inviting them to take action. The letter is called ‘Our Common Home’ and the Pope invites us to ’live wisely, think deeply, love generously, which we think reflects our own values very closely. Children will access this at the right level for them. We will keep you updated as the term develops.



**Volunteers**

We have a wonderful team of volunteers who offer a wide range of skills and support.

If you would like to find out about volunteer opportunities either to give something back or to develop your own skills in readiness for paid work then please do call in at the office to find out more.

**Pupil Premium**

Some of our families qualify for additional funding which ensures that we can support these children in all areas of their school life. If we receive this funding for your child and you are unclear about how it is used to support them please do speak to me or make an appointment via the office.

If you think that your child could be eligible for this funding please do ask at the office or contact Devon services using their portal.

**Lunch at St Mary’s School Saturday 21st September 12.00 – 2.00pm**

Hilary Sharp, our safeguarding governor, is working to re establish a monthly lunch event which was originally organised by Liz Berry, a parish member.

Lunch being offered for free.

Hilary wants this to be an occasion where people can share a meal together and enjoy time with each other. Hilary is a very good cook so if for no other reason please do consider coming along. She stresses that whilst there will be a pot available for voluntary contributions this is not a fund raiser. It really is just a community event.

If you have any questions you can contact Hilary directly 0773 863 0186

If you are planning to attend please let Hilary or the office know for catering purposes.

St Mary’s Catholic Primary School

Living, loving and learning with God

