

March 21st 2018

Dear Parents

Many thanks to those of you who were able to attend the parent meetings last week. It was a very important opportunity for us to meet so many of you and put names to faces.

There was a positive sense running through both evenings and immediate feedback from some parents was encouraging.

We want your children to be rounded learners and we want them to be confident individuals. There is a strong sense of community within the school and also from you, the parents and families of St Mary's. We feel very honoured to be working here. We want to continue to build on its strengths and to ensure that it is a community that is the best that it can be.

Parent Questionnaire

During the parents' meetings we invited parents to complete a questionnaire. Please find attached a summary of the questionnaires which were filled in over the two afternoon/evenings.

Thank you to those parents who, if they had concerns, were able to identify in a note or discussion what these concerns were. We understand that some of these concerns are historical and in some cases parents identified that due to lack of information on current practice parents responded appropriately 'not true.'

If you do have any outstanding concerns or new ones occur, then please do make an appointment either to see your class teacher or Mrs Burt/ Mrs Mannix. **One child who is not confident and feeling safe at St Mary's is one too many.**

To parents who ticked 'not true' because they do not know about current practice has alerted us to the fact that we need to be more explicit regarding our procedures in relation to children's safety.

We hope the information below will help to update you as to what has been happening but if you do have any questions our door is always open.

Policy Updates

Since January we have been working in school with pupils and staff to introduce a whole school behaviour system which the children know as the 'behaviour cloud' and the 'behaviour zone'. Both of these are on the school website within the newly update Behaviour Policy in 'statutory Information'. Other policies that support this include the Child Protection Policy and the Anti Bullying Policy.

Whilst we seek the best in every individual at St Mary's, we will not and do not support any form of persistently poor behaviour.

The Right to say be safe and happy: Stop and Tell

We have talked to the children about the importance of knowing when and how to ask for and seek support. With this support every child should be able to enjoy the benefits of friendship and developing social and emotional skills,

We are training the children in 'stop' and 'tell'; **their right to feel safe and to take actions to stay safe.**

We talk to the children about ensuring that whatever someone else is saying or doing, if it makes you feel unhappy, unsafe or wrong then tell them to stop. If they don't stop they must tell someone else. We have also talked about, and every child has named, at least one person in school and at home whom they would feel safe to tell.

We know that in its early days this can result in some children telling about everything; sometimes events that have happened a long time ago. It is however important to work through this and to develop a listening and supportive community that allows children to seek support when they need it.

We have communicated with every child that if another child 'tells' then it is not trying to get someone in to trouble; it is because they need support to make things better. This is important, as sometimes 'telling' can be presented as getting others into trouble.

Creating a culture where every child is truly valued and respected by others and by themselves does take time – but it is so important.

Our School Values

We have also been updating and naming our school values. We have used the school motto; Living, loving and learning with God, to explore with the children what loving and learning look like as positive actions. These are still being discussed and explored and once they are agreed we will share these with you and ask for any feedback.

Thank you for your continued interest and support.

Amanda Burt

Interim Headteacher

Elaine Mannix

Interim Deputy Headteacher