Newsletter 2019



We have had a most joyous and calming Advent season lifted by the children’s singing and performances. I hope that those of you who were able to attend any our events were able to share in the sense of joy and love that has run through the season.

We wish you a safe and happy Christmas time and look forward to the return to school on Monday 6th January.

**School Staffing Updates**

We are sad to say goodbye to Mrs Blathwayt who has become known to parents this year in her part time role in the office. We have all enjoyed getting to know Mrs Blathwayt and appreciated her work at St Mary’s. She is moving on to take a role in a local organic farm project.

Mrs Newcombe will be taking up the hours worked by Mrs Blathway so will be in the office each day.

Mr Wilson our caretaker, who works for Devon Norse, is also leaving us this week. We have very much appreciated his hard work in all areas of the school. We are very pleased for him that he has found a job that allows him to have more time with his family.

Devon Norse will provide interim cover until someone is found to take up the post.

Mrs Gibbs, our specialist music teacher, will go on maternity leave this week, returning to us in September. Her baby is due in early January. We wish her and her little one the very best in the coming weeks.

Mr Jacobs, a very experienced music specialist will be joining us next term to teach music to Eagle and Owl Class.

Mrs Hogarth will be teaching art to Woodpecker Class next term and Mrs Leah Stonex will teach them musical appreciation.

We wish those moving on every good wish in their next steps.

**Lollipop lady**

I am very pleased to confirm that Charlie’s mum will be taking up the post as Lollipop lady in January. We wish her well in her new post and thank her for agreeing to step into the post as a local hero.

**Winter weather**

Whilst we endeavour to offer school provision as planned in our school diary there are occasions when opening the school can put pupils and adults at risk.

Last year many schools in Devon were caught out by the sudden and severe extreme weather which was exceptional.

We are required to close the school where extreme weather or faults with heating and or loss of power mean that pupils are at risk.

If we were not opening the school then we would post a message on our school website which you can find at [www.stmarysaxminster.devon.sch.uk](http://www.stmarysaxminster.devon.sch.uk). Any message, stating whether or not the school will be open, will be available on the front page from **7.45am**.

We would also inform Devon County Council who regularly update their school closure website and Radio Devon are updated through this process.

If we have to close the school during the school day we will forward whole school e mails.

Please always ensure that we have up to date contact emails and numbers for you.

**Celebration Assembly-change of time**

Please note, next term, our celebration assemblies will be on Friday’s at 9.00am rather than 3.00pm.

**PTFA Thank you**

Our team of parent and friends volunteers have been working so hard for the school. We are extremely grateful for the work they do. Not only does it raise important additional funds but it also creates very memorable community events.

If you are able to give any time to future PTFA events or are thinking that perhaps you would like to contribute on a more regular basis, please do let the office know, or speak directly with one of the team. Miss Billie Mc Govern would be very happy to speak to you about this.

**Thank you to all**

We are so very grateful to all parents who continue to support school life in so many ways. Ensuring that your child arrives each day ready for learning, equipped with the items needed and there at the end of each day, listening and taking an interest in each day’s events is an important foundation.

**The primary school league tables** have been published this week. As you know the results that children achieve are a single measure of their success at school. At St Mary’s we continue to build a very active and positive experience of learning where every child feels valued and empowered. We are working continually to build and to move forward in all areas of school life. As you know our last year’s results were very strong and the performance tables allow you to see the progress we have made against all Devon schools. We would like to thank pupils, staff and parents for all their hard work and efforts.

Follow the link below to see our position against all other Devon schools and also to note the progress measures across all subjects are consistent whilst some higher achieving schools have dipped in some subjects. .

<https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/schools-by-type?step=default&table=schools&region=878&geographic=la&for=primary>

**Home Learning**

We continue to request that children read daily and work on spelling as well as number and times table skills. At other times children are given other specific tasks that will support school learning.

**Every child a reader**

Research identifies that developing a love of reading is one of the most significant skills we can give children in helping them secure future success. Children who read for pleasure develop their vocabulary and understanding of the world. This gives them a huge advantage. Read

If you have a child who is not yet a reader then please do try to make tern minutes as often as possible to hear them read and record their reading in the yellow school journal. Older children do need your support and encouragement to: reading with your children, sharing stories with them, taking them to the library, listening to story CDS, as well as hearing them read, will all keep up their skills and interests in reading.

If you have any questions, queries or concerns about your child’s home reading please urgently speak to their class teacher.

**Times Tables**

During the holiday please take the time to go onto times tables Rock Stars. It is a great way to learn and develop your child’s multiplication skills. When we return we will see who has been achieving the fasted times and playing the most.

**On line Safety – TikTok**

Some of our older children have been using a new app which when well used offers them a fun way to access videos and creates videos. Parents need to ensure that their children are old enough to access this app and have set their access and privacy levels to ensure that their child is safe.

The link below will answer all of your questions.

<https://parentzone.org.uk/article/tiktok-everything-you-need-know-about-video-production-app>

**Next term Spring 2020 -after**

**school activities**

Please see below for the clubs we will be running next term. There will be no clubs on the first week back. All clubs start week beginning 13th January.

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| **Club** | **Who runs it** | **Day and time** | **Year groups** | **Additional info** |
| Art Club | Mrs Walters | **Monday** **3.30- 4.30** | Years 1,2 and 3 | £2.00 per session. Please book space and pay on Parentpay**Max 12 spaces** |
| Superstars | Jack Bennett | **Monday** **3.30-4.30** | **INVITE ONLY** |  If your child has been previously invited they are welcome to come. |
| Drama Club | Miss Bethany Wood | **Monday 3.30-4.30** | Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 | No cost |
| Choir | Mrs Burrough | **Tuesday****8.15-8.45** | Years 3,4,5,6 | No cost |
| Taekwondo | Sharon Ward | **Tuesday****3.30-4.15** | Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 | £2 a session |
| Gymnastics KS1 | Emma Rowe | **Wednesday 3.30-4.15** | Rec, Yr1 and Yr 2 | Contact info@axminstergymnastics.co.uk to book on £2.50 per session |
| All girls Tag Rugby | Jack Bennett | **Wednesday 3.30-4.30** | Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 |  £2 a session |
| Running Club | Dan Murnane | **Thursday** **8.00-8.45** | Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 | Max 20. £2 per session |
| Music Seeds | Leah Stonex07850157520 | **Thursday** **8:20- 8:55** | Years R, 1, 2 | Contact Leah on 07850157520£2.20 per session. leah@musicseeds.co.uk |
| String Orchestra | Mrs Or-Ewing | **Thursday** **3.30 – 4.30**  | Years 3, 4, 5, 6 | No cost |
| Tag Rugby | Jack Bennett | **Thursday** **3.30-4.30** | Reception, Yr 1, 2 and 3 | £2 per session |
| Quicksticks | Dan Murnane | **Thursday** **3.30-4.30** | Kestrel and Eagle Class |  £2 a session |
| Running Club | Dan Murnane | **Friday 8.00-8.45** | Years 3,4,5 and 6 | Max 20 £2 a session |
| Gymnastics KS2 | Emma Rowe | **Fridays 3.30-4.15** | Years 3, 4 5 and 6 | Contact info@axminstergymnastics.co.uk to book on £2.50 per session |

**Hilary’s Lunch Saturday 11th January 12.00 till 2.00pm**

Come and enjoy soup and a sandwich and a muffin. The children will make their own sandwiches from a selection of fillings.

This will be our third Hilary’s lunch session. It really is a very happy community event. Join us if you can. There is no cost to attend. Some families choose to make a voluntary contribution which is welcomed but not necessary.

