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September 2016 Newsletter

Dear Parents, Carers and friends of St Mary's,

Welcome back to the start of another very busy term. It's amazing how quickly the summer holidays go, but it seems that everyone has really enjoyed the summer. Children have been full of stories – telling us all about their many adventures over the summer. It is lovely to see how calmly they all returned to school and excited to be in their new classes.

Good news for the building

Our internal space looks a little different in key stage 1. We are delighted that we have had 2 new walls built which should help teachers with noise levels. Our hall floor has also been treated and is so shiny you can see your face in it. A huge thank you to Martin our site manager who kept working all through the summer.

Staff News

We are delighted to welcome Miss Day who will be working in Year 5. Miss Day brings with her energy and enthusiasm and we know she will be welcomed by you all. Sadly Mrs Moss is not with us as the start of term, but we are hopeful that she will return in a few weeks. We wish her a speedy recovery and are grateful to staff who have rearranged cover to ensure that our children are taught by staff who know them. Mrs Brearley will teach in Year 1/ R whilst Mrs Hulse will pick up the Year 2 class full time.

Shoes

Wearing school shoes really makes our uniforms look smart. We do ask that if pupils want to access the field during break / lunch time, they have a change of footwear i.e. trainers. Pupils no longer change into pumps for indoors. Pumps may however be needed by some year groups for indoor PE. Please talk to your class teacher if you are not sure.



Communication

Communication with parents is really important to us and we are always looking to improve. We try really hard, but know that we don't always get it right. This year our aim is to improve communication, so if you have any ideas / suggestions please let us know. We currently run 3 parents evenings – one a term. You are always welcome to make an appointment to talk to a member of staff.

Mr Hilton will oversee the running of after school clubs and aim to minimise any communication problems. Mrs Tainsh will work alongside the SENCO's (Mrs Moss & Mrs Brearley) to ensure parents are kept fully up to date with current provision. In addition we aim to have some informal coffee mornings for groups of parents where you will be able to speak with certain members of staff.

Midday Assistant Vacancy

We have a vacancy for a caring, enthusiastic Midday Assistant (MDA) to supervise, look after and play with the children during the lunch break and assist in the dining hall. If you or someone you know is interested in applying for the position please contact the school office.

Parent Forum.

At St Mary's we value the views and opinions of our children and are constantly seeking opportunities to include children in our decision making process. Last year we also set up a Parents Forum. One parent represented each class. We met once a term to discuss and share views on subjects that affect the children of St Mary's. It is different from the Governors as it is used as a fact finding meeting – ascertaining parent views. The representative parents are responsible for gathering the views of the parents of the year group they are representing. I want to thank those parents who gave up their time last year, but it is now time to elect a new forum.

Please let school know by 25th September if you are interested and have the time to commit to this venture. Meetings will be held at 2.15 pm on a day to suit. Unfortunately we will not be able to run a crèche at this time. If you just want to chat about what it entails please call into school for an informal chat.

Parent Governor

We have a vacancy for a Parent Governor, The formal ballot and paperwork will be issued in due course; in the meantime please consider whether this is a role that you would be interested in.

Meet the Teacher meetings

Week commencing 19th September there will be an opportunity to meet your child's new teacher. Learn about what they will be doing, raise any queries or concerns. Meetings will take place at 3 p.m. on the following days:

Monday 19 th September -	Y1/2	Mrs Macauley/Mrs Lamb
Wednesday 21 st September -	Y3	Mrs Perry
	Y6	Mr Smith/Mr Owen
Thursday 22 nd September -	Y2	Mrs Hulse
	Y5	Mr Hilton/Miss Day
Friday 23 rd September -	Y4	Mr Morris

Mrs Moss will arrange to meet with her Y1 parents upon her return.

Reception – Coffee afternoon

As a Welcome to St Mary's, parents of Reception children are invited to an informal coffee and chat to meet the teacher, leadership team and some of the school governors. This will take place on Monday 19th September at 2.15 p.m. We hope you are able to join us.



Macmillan Coffee Morning

Don't forget about this important event 29th September at 2.00 p.m. £1.50 entrance fee will buy you unlimited drinks and a cake. Any donations of cakes can be collected by the school office. Any parents willing to help run this parent event, please speak with Mrs Hughes in the school office. Monies raised will go towards this wonderful charity. Nursery will run their own event on the same day.

Roald Dahl Day

Tuesday 13th September was a whoopsy-splunkers, phizz-whizzing, gloriumptious day at St. Mary's, as we celebrated what would have been Roald Dahl's 100th birthday. Schools across the country took part in different activities to celebrate the works of Roald Dahl, famous for writing family favourites such as The Witches, The BFG and Matilda. In school, all of the children learnt more about who Roald Dahl was and the life he led during our assembly, where the children also watched part of George's Marvellous Medicine from Jackanory. Throughout the day, the different classes took part in a range of fun activities, such as making Twits' beards, completing word-searches, filling dream jars and listening to some of Roald Dahl's books. As an added surprise, the staff also dressed up as some of their favourite characters for the afternoon – something that entertained the children and staff alike. Thank you for all who helped to make this such a whoopsy-wiffling day!



School Photographer

The school photographer will be in school on Wednesday 5th October to take the children's photographs. Sibling photos will also be taken and there will be an opportunity before school if you wish to have a family shot taken with younger brothers and sisters who are not yet of school age.



Standards

As you know, primary assessment has been reformed so that the end of KS1 & KS2 data is completely different to previous years. At both key stages, the new 'expected standard' is a higher standard than in 2015. As in previous years the attainment measure at the end of KS2 is a combined one, and to be counted towards this measure, a pupil must have a scaled score of 100 or more in reading and a scaled score of 100 or more in mathematics, and have been teacher assessed in writing as 'working at the expected standard' or 'working at a greater depth in the expected standard'. To meet the attainment element of the floor standard in 2016, at least 65% of pupils must meet the expected standard in English reading, English writing and mathematics.

The previous 'expected progress' measure has been replaced by a value-added measure. Any amount of progress a pupil makes contributes towards the school's progress score. The school's progress scores in English reading, English writing and mathematics are calculated as the average of its pupils' subject progress scores. These scores give an indication of whether, as a group, pupils in the school made above or below average progress in a subject compared with pupils with similar starting points in other schools. In 2016 the progress requirement of the floor standard is that the school achieves sufficient progress scores in all three subjects, namely at least -5 in English reading, -5 in mathematics and -7 in English writing.

At St Mary's staff and pupils have worked incredibly hard to ensure good outcomes for all pupils. Below is a summary of attainment and progress for 2015 – 2016.

Please note that whilst individual subjects have done well, the combined measure is lower than we would like. This is because to count towards the combined measure pupils need to have scored well in all 3 subjects. In reality different children do well at different subjects and whilst one child may not reach expected standards for maths another could excel at maths but not do so well at writing. The progress data for St Mary's which measures the progress made from end of key stage 1 – end of key stage 2 is far more favourable.

	St Marys	Halton	National	Progress data St Marys
Good level of Development Reception class	77%	62%	69%	
Phonics test Year 1	89%	76%	81%	
Key Stage 1	70% reading 44% writing 66% maths Combined 44%	50%	60%	
Key stage 2	60% reading 86% writing 60% maths 77% SPAG Combined 43%	46%	53%	-1.4 2.2 -1.5

Drinks / Snacks and Lunches

Please ensure that your child brings a water bottle - filled - each day – regardless of the weather. As a school we have the Healthy Eating award. Please ensure that your child only brings a healthy snack to school and that lunch boxes do not contain sweets etc. Water bottles can be purchased from school if you wish.



PE Kits

A reminder that PE kits should be kept in school at all times and brought home to be washed on weekends. If children want to play on the large field at break times, they must bring trainers to school to change into.

Car park

Unbelievably some parents have seen others drive into our car park whilst talking on a mobile phone. This is a staff car park, so please do not use it. We politely request that all parents uphold the law and do not use mobile phones whilst driving. This is for the health and safety of all our children.

Family Assemblies

We are currently reviewing the frequency and content of our family worship time. All parent / carers are welcome to join us on Wednesdays at 2.30 pm. This is what is planned for this half term.

- September 7th Widnes Vikings Assembly
- September 14th – Looking ahead Worship
- September 21 Worship led by Hope Corner
- October 5th Harvest Assembly – details to follow
- October 12th Year 2 Class Assembly

Important dates

- Friday 16th – Y4 Norton Priory Science Visit to Norton Priory
- Week Commencing 19th September – Meet the teacher week (dates given above)
- Friday 23rd September – Nursery Wellie Walk
- Thursday 29th September - Macmillan Coffee Morning 2 p.m.
- Wednesday 5th October - School photographer Individual/Sibling photos
- Friday 21st October Break up for half term
- Week commencing 7th November - Parents Meetings

Secondary School Open evenings

- St Chad's Open Evening is 22nd September 16.00 p.m. to 7.30 p.m.
- The Grange School – 27th September 5.30 – 8.00 p.m. & 8th October (Saturday) 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 p.m.

LETTER FOR ALL



Parents/Residents,

Welcome back to the new school year.

The reason I am writing to you directly is at this time of the year with new pupils starting school we start to tend to receive complaints from local residents and parents in relation to parking around the location of the school during school drop-off and collection times.

I am sure you are more than aware that parked vehicles can make it difficult for children to find safe locations with adequate visibility to cross the road. This increases the risk of accident and injury. Local officers understand the pressures many parents are under juggling the school run with other commitments but I am sure you will support us in addressing this issue.

I am keen to avoid enforcement action in your area if at all possible however it is entirely likely that we will have no option but to start issuing parking tickets should the parking become an issue and this letter be disregarded.

In the interests of providing as much help and guidance as possible to parents in advance please consider the following when parking your vehicle:

- Do not park on yellow 'zig-zags'
- Do not park in designated bus stops
- Do not obstruct residential driveways or other access to property
- Do not park opposite or in close proximity to a junction – the Highway code recommends leaving a distance of 32 feet/10 metres, anything less than this can be seen as causing an unnecessary obstruction

I would hope that drivers will not be asking themselves "Am I risking a ticket?", when the more important question is "Am I risking a child?"

Thank you for your support in our efforts to ensure the safety of your child.

Kind Regards

Your Local Beat Team

Beat Manager – PC 5470 Zoe Bowden

PCSO 7338 Tracey Taylor

Cheshire Constabulary, Runcorn Police Station - 2nd Avenue, Halton Lea, Runcorn, WA7 2HG

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