



St Mary's Catholic Primary School School Bulletin

Friday 11th December 2020

SUBJECT	YEAR GROUPS RELEVANT TO	STAFF CONTACT
Message from Mrs Scanlon	All	Liz Hills

As you know Mrs Scanlon will be starting her leadership of St Mary's in the New Year and she has already been working closely this term with members of staff and governors by visiting the school, attending meetings and also by keeping in contact remotely. She had planned and hoped to visit the school again in the last few weeks to see the children, staff and parents/carers before the end of term, but unfortunately due to the Covid19 response, this is now not possible.

However, Mrs Scanlon has called me again this week and has asked me to pass on her best wishes to you all for the festive season and to let you know that she is very much looking forward to joining the team and the whole school community in the New Year.

A Christian Christmas	All	Liz Hills
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Over the last few weeks I have been working hard to remind myself on a regular basis how very fortunate I am, now more than ever, to work in service to the St Mary's School Community. It actually does not take much for me to find evidence of the blessings I have every day. I get to serve a community that values education and supports our school. I get to work with staff and governors who are relentless in their commitment and care. But most importantly, I get to work with your wonderful children every day.

The children are understandably very tired at the moment, and this brings challenges for us all. Many children are clearly struggling and are finding it hard to maintain a sense of perspective and to regulate their emotions. We are seeing more squabbles, tantrums and tears than we usually see at this time of year but under the current circumstances, and bearing in mind the truly spectacularly difficult year this has been for everyone, I am not surprised. In fact, I would be so bold as to say that this is 'normal' and expected.

It is no doubt difficult for you as parents/carers to see your children upset or to hear about difficulties they may have experienced over the course of the day, but I ask you now to dig deep to try to keep a sense of perspective yourselves, to ensure that you regulate your own emotions and to take some time to find some calm and compassion before you respond. Unfortunately, just like children, as adults we can cause upset and distress if we are not mindful and measured in our response. Talking negatively to others about children within our community is not a Christian way to behave and so I ask everyone to ensure that you fulfil your role as citizens to safeguard ALL the children in our community and to afford ALL our children the opportunity to learn and develop with ALL our support.

Having worked in many, many schools in my career I have to say that I really do feel blessed to work in service to the St Mary's School Community and I think our community is so special because it is a Christian community where there is a strong commitment to one another. So please can I remind you all of the importance each one of you plays in the success of our community and how special your contribution is in our mission to be the Christian community so clearly described below:

"A Christ-honouring community displays loyalty, dependability, mutual support, respect, and grace to one another. They are not just unified. They have a strong sense of the priority of unity. They make unity work. They know it takes effort. It means letting go of petty differences and self-centered agendas. It also results from the core culture of the church believing that what we are to one another is as important as what we're doing together."

As we move into the final week of term, I will continue to count my blessings every day and as I enter my last week of leadership of this special Christian community, I am sure I will have much to remind me of why I am so proud to be in service to you all.

Farewell

All

Liz Hills

It is with great sadness that I announce that today was Mrs Botterman's last day as a member of staff at St Mary's School. With over thirty years' service to the school there is no doubt that Mrs Botterman's contribution to St Mary's Community is impressive. Over the course of her time at the school, Mrs Botterman has not only contributed as a member of the teaching staff, she has supported the school as a parent herself, has worked as part of the FSM team, she has served as a Governor, been responsible for many different areas of the school and has served on the Senior Leadership Team. She has taught hundreds of children and touched the lives of many families in the Crowborough Community. Her loyalty and commitment to the school is unquestionable and her passion for education and the development of children is inspiring. There is no doubt that she will be very greatly missed as a member of the staff team, but I am sure that, while she embarks on new adventures, she will still continue to find ways to support the school and our community in the years to come. There has never been a more appropriate time to say ... *Once St Mary's - Always St Mary's*.

Christmas Fun

All

Liz Hills

A huge thank you to everyone for making today – **so special**. Thank you to all the children for coming in today in their festive clothes. We have seen all the traditional Christmas characters appearing in school today, along with the odd shark, sloth, cat, dog and dinosaur! Thank you to the parents/carers who supported the children in dressing up today. Thank you to the FSM who supported the Christmas Fun Run in which the children completed laps of the running track to earn their Christmas decoration to add to the wall art created in the playground today. Check out the pictures on Facebook. Thank you as well to Father Christmas, who not only sent each class a special Christmas video message and class gifts but even took some time out of his very busy schedule to visit in person to give the children a wave! How lucky and fortunate we all are to be in the position to be able to bring a little Christmas magic to the children this week. Thank you to everyone who has made this possible.

Fundraising from Christmas Cards

All

FSM

The Friends of St Mary's are delighted to report that the children's designs that were made into Christmas cards and other items raised a huge £292.60. Thank you to all that ordered the cards and other items and supported the fundraising efforts for our school. I am sure the children loved seeing their artwork in print, they were all really lovely.

Changes to the 2021 National Curriculum Assessments

Years One, Two, Four and Six

Liz Hills

On Thursday 3 December, the Secretary of State for Education announced [measures to support pupils taking exams and assessments in 2021](#).

They have recognised the difficulties that primary schools are facing in light of the ongoing disruption caused by coronavirus (COVID-19). Therefore, they have altered their approach to the 2021 national curriculum assessments, and will focus on the most important summer assessments for schools, pupils and parents.

For 2021, they have removed:

- all key stage 1 (KS1) tests

- the key stage 2 (KS2) English grammar, punctuation and spelling test
- the requirement to make and report teacher assessment judgements for science at KS1 and KS2

To further support schools, they:

- have delayed the statutory introduction of the multiplication tables check – schools may choose to take part on an optional basis
- have extended the timetable variation periods for phonics and KS2, to allow schools greater flexibility if pupils cannot take the tests on the scheduled dates because of coronavirus disruption
- have removed the requirement for schools to submit applications for pupils who need additional time in KS2 tests or notifications that they used an aid (such as a scribe or word processor)

This means that the following statutory assessments will continue in 2021:

- **the phonics screening check for year 1 pupils (and year 2 pupils who have not met the expected standard previously)**
- **KS2 English reading and mathematics tests**
- **KS1 and KS2 teacher assessment (excluding science)**

Updated Government Guidance	All	Liz Hills
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On 7th December 2020, the Government updated its guidance for parents/carers regarding schools. A copy of the updated guidance can be accessed on the school's website and a copy has been sent out with this bulletin.

Government's Covid Winter Plan	All	Liz Hills
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At the end of November the Government published its Covid Winter Plan. If you are interested in this, a copy of the document has been sent out with this bulletin.

Track and Trace – Christmas Holiday Procedures	All	Liz Hills
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The Government have asked that school leaders make their communities aware of the following information before the end of this term:

- Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.
- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school is asked to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school. Please make direct contact with Liz Hills, who will be checking emails on a daily basis for the first six days of the school holidays, up to 24th December. Contact Liz via email: head@stmarysrc.e-sussex.sch.uk
- If the school receives notification of a positive case, it may be necessary to contact parents/carers and advise close contacts to self-isolate. This will be done by email/text.
- If pupils are required to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case after the first 6 days following the end of term, schools do not need to be informed about the pupil's absence until the first day of the new term (Monday 4th January 2021).

End of Term Two	All	Liz Hills
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Please note: the last day of term two is **FRIDAY 18th DECEMBER**.
 You are welcome to collect your children from school at **1.30 pm** on this day to begin your Christmas break. However, school will remain open until 3.15 pm and children can be supervised until this time, so please do not worry if you are not able to collect your child at the earlier finish time.

Start of Term Three	All	Liz Hills
Please note: ALL children will be expected back in school on MONDAY 4TH JANUARY 2021 for the start of term three.		
Crisp Packets Collection	All	Miss Ticehurst
On behalf of the East Sussex charity, Warming up the Homeless, Miss Ticehurst is asking for you to bring in empty crisp packets. These that can then be made into blankets to help support the homeless this winter. The crisp packets need to have been cleaned with soap and water please and brought in by Thursday 17 th December. Thank you for your kindness.		
Mass at St Mary's Church & Christmas Services	All	Fr Dominic
Please see attached poster regarding the mass times at St Mary's church. The Christmas services have been confirmed and bookings are essential. Tickets can be booked via the website. Please follow this link. https://www.stmaryscrowborough.org.uk/recent-announcements/christmas-other-services		
Christmas Hamper	All	Office
The Friends of St Mary's have received a donation from Tesco's of a lovely Christmas Hamper that they are offering in a lucky number give away. The cost per number is £1 and you can buy as many as you want. Please send in cash to the school office in an envelope marked Christmas Hamper and don't forget to write on the envelope your child's name. The office will then allocate your child's name to the numbers list for the amount that you have contributed. No tickets will be issued and a lucky number will be drawn at anonymously at random next Wednesday 16th December at 4pm and one lucky person will win the hamper of Christmas goodies to take home before the Christmas holidays. All proceeds raised will be added the Friends of St Mary's fundraising for the children and new equipment. Good luck everyone and please get your money in by next Wednesday 16th.		
Cool Milk	Reception Class	Office
Once you child turns 5, they will no longer be eligible for free milk in school that is funded by the Government. However, if you wish for your child to continue to receive milk in school at their morning break, you can register them through the Cool Milk scheme and you child can receive milk at a subsidised rate. If your child is over five... <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Register your child online at 2. www.coolmilk.com/register or request a registration form from the office and return it to FREEPOST COOL MILK (no other details required). 3. Milk usually costs around just £15 a term. By registering online, you'll be able to make a payment straightaway. If however, you return a registration form by post Cool Milk will send you a payment request. If your payment is received by them by 5pm on a Tuesday, your child will receive milk the following week. 4. Your child will start to gain all the nutritional benefits from a daily serving of chilled milk in the classroom. 		
Cool Milk	Persons eligible for Free School Meals	Office
If you are receipt of Free School Meals, your child in any year group can receive a portion of milk in school free of charge. Please contact the office directly if you would like your child to receive milk daily in school.		

Dance Club	All	Office
Please see attached letter regarding Dance Club for terms 3&4.		
Foodbank Vouchers	All	Office
We are currently being registered as a referral agency for the Crowborough Foodbank for the provision of emergency foodbank vouchers. The foodbank has been established to provide short term, emergency food to individuals and families in crisis. If you are in need of help in this way, please email Mrs Hills in confidence and we can make the arrangements for the Foodbank vouchers to be issued to you directly. head@stmarysrc.e-sussex.sch.uk		
Christmas Lunch	All	Office
A reminder that the Christmas Lunch menu will be served on Wednesday 16 th December. Orders have already been taken. If you have to pay for school meals please pay through ParentPay in the usual way.		
Nut Free School	All	Liz Hills
A reminder that we are a NUT FREE SCHOOL. Please do not send your children into school with any nut or nut-based products. We have children in school for whom nuts pose a serious health risk. Your support with ensuring we do all we can to keep all the children safe in school is greatly appreciated. Thanks.		
Documents attached to this bulletin Covid Winter Plan Gov Doc St Mary's Advent Poster StudioNDance for Terms 3&4 What parents and carers need to know – Gov Doc		