27th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,

I hope that you all enjoyed the Christmas break and were able to spend some quality time with your loved ones. It seems a long time ago now as we are already in the fourth week of the Spring term.

On behalf of all staff, I would like to say a huge 'Thank You' to the children and parents who brought in Christmas cards and gifts at the end of last term. We all really appreciate your thoughtfulness and generosity, especially at such a busy and costly time of year.

Wellbeing Newsletter

Following receipt of our Optimus Well-being Award last term, we have attached a wellbeing newsletter with some useful advice, activities and support for families at the end of this letter. If you have any worries or concerns about your child's emotional behaviour or well-being, then please let school know by contacting your child's class teacher or Mrs Perkins our Family Support Worker.

Parents' Evening

Parents' evening this term will take place during the week beginning 10th March. We will send appointment slips closer to the time.

School Uniform

Please can you ensure your children wear the correct school uniform every day. If you are struggling to provide uniform for your child, please contact school and we will be happy to help you out. Please also ensure your child wears correct PE kit on PE days. Again, if you have any problems let us know and we can help. **Just a polite reminder that earrings must be removed on these days.**

Attendance

As mentioned in previous newsletters, your child's attendance at school is incredibly important. This means that I am unable to authorise any holiday during term time.

Currently our overall whole school is averaging 94.8%. Please help us to raise this percentage further by ensuring your child's attendance is good or better. The playground gates open at **8.40am** when children line up. We expect the children to be in their lines by **8.45am**.

From tomorrow the gates will be locked just after 8.45am so please encourage your child to be on time. Anyone arriving after this time will need to enter school via the main reception area. Unfortunately, punctuality since Christmas has slipped quite considerably. To encourage the children to be on time we will be running 'Spring into School Attendance Incentives'. All children who are punctual for a week will be entered into a weekly prize draw.

Communication

Here at St Mary's we are firmly committed to the view that a close working relationship with parents and carers will benefit your child's education. Furthermore, good communication between home and school contributes to the quality of this partnership.

If you have any concerns please speak to your child's class teacher in the first instance. Their email addresses are on the school website under Class Pages. Alternatively, ring the School Office and a message can be passed to your child's class teacher by a member of the School Office team.

I am always available in the walkway at the start or at the end of school to speak to parents or you can make an appointment to see me through the School Office. I do ask however, that all communication is respectful and in line with our Christian Values. Our **Parent Code of Conduct** on the school website further outlines these expectations.

Contact Details

If you have changed your mobile number over the Christmas break, please let the school office know, so that we are able to contact you should there be an emergency. Any other details such as change of address; email or other emergency contact or collection information should be given to the office too. Many thanks.

Nut Allergies

As I hope you are aware St Mary's is a **no nut** school. Therefore your child should not have any nut-based products in their lunch boxes or during break in KS2. Please **do not** send your child with chocolate and Nutella spread sandwiches at lunch time. This could result in a serious reaction for a child with a nut allergy. Thank you for supporting the welfare of all of our children.

Collection at the end of the school day

At the end of the school day, please can the parents of Kahlo Class walk around the outside of school to collect their children from the bottom playground rather than cutting through the Key Stage 2 lines. Alternatively, your child can meet you on the top playground providing you have spoken to your child's class teacher.

Pupil Premium Funding

If your child is eligible for 'free school meals' and you register them, school will receive extra funding called 'pupil premium'. We use this extra money to improve the educational provision and resources at the school. Even if your children are in EYFS or Key Stage 1- you can still apply!

What is pupil premium funding?

Pupil premium funding from the government is given to schools to help pupils achieve their best regardless of their background or financial situation. It's provided for pupils who:

- Are registered for free school meals
- Have been registered for free school meals at any point in the past 6 years
- Are, or have been, in care
- Have parents in the armed forces

At St Mary's, we get an extra £1,480 funding from the government for every eligible pupil who is registered for free school meals. This extra money makes a real difference to the quality of education we offer.

For example, we have previously used pupil premium funding for:

- Educational provision/resources
- Academic interventions
- Wellbeing and self-esteem building interventions
- Support towards costs of trips and residentials
- Support towards costs of school uniform

Is my child eligible for free school meals?

Your child might be eligible if you access:

- Income Support
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Employment and Support Allowance
- Support under part VI of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999
- The guaranteed element of Pension Credit
- Child Tax Credit (provided you're not also entitled to Working Tax Credit and have an annual gross income of no more than £16,190)
- Working Tax Credit run-on
- Universal Credit, provided you have an annual net earned income not exceeding £7,400 (£616.67 per month)
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Please pop into the school office if you think you might be eligible to apply. Mrs Dennington-Morris, Miss Tydeman or Mrs Sutton will be happy to help and support you.

Finally, we are looking forward to welcoming you into school this term. A letter with dates on will be sent home this evening. Please join us for as many events as possible.

Thank you as always for your support.

Best wishes,

R Ayres

Mrs Ayres