

St Mary's Newsletter

Autumn Term – Friday 3rd December 2021

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Email: info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk



Website: www.stmaryssw.org.uk

Attendance Weekly - 95.1%

Attendance Year - 96.3%

Let Your Light Shine... as You Grow Matthew 5: 15-16

Friendship
Trust

Truthfulness
Compassion

Perseverance
Respect

Dear parents, carers and friends of the school,

It has been another busy week at St Mary's, as we wind our way ever closer to Christmas and it has been a week rich in history!

As part of our **creative curriculum**, on Monday, Year 4 (Fireflies Class) were visited by Ninius (real name Mark!) from **Portals to the Past** (as part of their history topic on the Ancient Greeks). During the day the children discovered some fascinating facts about the Greek civilisation and were completely entranced throughout the day and proudly told me that they learnt lots and lots!



On Tuesday the PTA kindly hosted a Film Night for Key Stage 1 and Reception pupils. Over 60 pupils turned out to watch Arthur Christmas in the school hall. Thank you to Gemma Connell and Meg Byrne as well as Mrs Slade and Miss Flack (and Riley) for kindly helping out and raising money for the school.

BusyBee Class (our Year 5 pupils) took an early coach to the Natural History Museum on Thursday and the children had an absolutely fantastic day. I interviewed Hayden, who told me that when they arrived at the museum the children took part in a Submarine Experience which was really fun; they found out about coral reefs and how these have been badly affected by Climate Change. They saw a cute picture of a really tiny type of squid with bulging eyes and they also learnt that 'compies' (which are a type of small dinosaur) could grow to roughly the size of a chicken. These were carnivores and hunted in packs and could be quite dangerous! Hayden said it was a really cool trip and the coach was great (and it even had reclining seats - the lap of luxury!)



This morning, Year 3 (Grasshopper Class) were visited by the eminent Egyptologist and Archaeologist Howard Carter, who arrived to speak to the children about his amazing 1922 discovery of Tutankhamun's tomb (in the Valley of the Kings) - including that King 'Tut' was buried in a Sarcophagus made up of three coffins and that it was nearly 8 metres wide and 4 metres high!

There were clearly a lot of undercover Egyptologists in the room – and Mr Carter told me he was so impressed that he gave out quite a few house points to the knowledgeable pupils! He even asked if he could take some of them with him (as apprentices on his round the world tour). Miss Allin said that she would have to check with their parents/carers and let him know.

This afternoon, Year 6 (Dragonfly class) were graced by a Plague Doctor from the medieval times, who talked to them about some fascinating (and gruesome) facts as part of their topic on The History of Medicine. This strangely dressed visitor explained how people in the medieval times believed



that there was bad air and bad smells that came from the gods and which caused illnesses and that when they wanted to get better they went to the barbers to have their wounds seen to (yuk!). They thought you would be safe from disease if you wore a mask (rather apt) but it was in fact rats and fleas which actually caused the disastrous plague (Black Death). The children also found out that people threw their sewerage waste into the streets, not realising that this also spread nasty diseases and ended up being trodden into people's clothes and shoes and homes. All in all, an inciteful and informative lesson! Our Year 6 pupils are still wondering who this mysterious visitor actually was...

Nativities!

I am sure you have all read all of the reams of information out there in the news at the moment about School Nativities and the challenges that schools are currently facing trying to stage these this year – either in person, recorded or live via video link. At St Mary's we are very much intending to perform our EYFS and KS1 Nativity this year, (which has been pencilled in for Wednesday 15th December at 6pm in St Mary's Church) but we are deliberately keeping our options open. Our current plan is to go ahead with this performance to parents/carers, but this very much depends on the current infection rates and the number of pupils and staff members affected by the current batch of seasonal ailments (including the current rise in local COVID cases). We are recording this performance at school during the morning of Wednesday 15th December as a back up option to share with parents/carers afterwards. **We will keep you in the loop as to any changes to these plans next week.** Please do bear with us as the logistics are rather challenging!



Lovely news!

We have had some wonderful news, lovely Emily Milne, one of our Midday Assistants has given birth to a **Beautiful Baby Boy**. **Baby George** was born on the **19th November** weighing **7lbs 9oz**. Mum and baby are both doing well.

CONGRATULATIONS TO Emily & all the family



School uniform – New Guidance



The Department for Education has published new statutory guidance for schools which seeks to make school uniform more affordable for families. The Education (Guidance about Costs of School Uniforms) Bill, includes measures on second-hand uniforms, schools' arrangements with suppliers, and ensuring parents have access to clear information about uniform policies.

We will be reviewing our uniform policy over the coming months to ensure we adhere to the new guidance in preparation for September 2022. We already have a large selection of pre-loved uniform available for free (or for a small contribution). We are also really fortunate to have access to the Uttlesford Clothing Bank who can provide pre-loved and new unbranded school items to families, including school shoes and trainers. If you would like further information or have a request for preloved items, please email the school office in the first instance at info@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk

Joanna Crocker

Welfare and Support Officer

Message from the Chair of Governors



Dear Parents & Carers

I would like to welcome two new Governors: Rob Twell and Will Coldwell; both Rob and Will are parents at the school and joined us in September. I would like to thank them for joining us and getting involved; if you would like to know more about them, please check out their profile sections on the school website.

<https://www.stmaryssw.org.uk/governor-profiles/>

I would also like to thank Richard Freeman for all his hard work and support of the school, as his term as Governor ended last month. His local knowledge and input into various School building projects has been very beneficial and greatly appreciated.

It is with sadness that I must announce my own resignation after five years as a Governor and just over three as Chair. I have recently returned to work full time and regrettably need to take a step back. The good news is that our brilliant and capable Vice Chair, John Westnedge, will be replacing me. The official hand over date will be the 5th January, the start of the new term. I would like to thank all my fellow governors and the staff of the school for their support over the last 5 years.

As you may have guessed this means that there will be a Parent/Carer Governor vacancy from January; if you would like to join the team, please either speak to the school office or contact the e-mail address below, it is very rewarding - I promise.

chairofgovernors@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk

Kind regards

Victoria Boraster-Sharpe

Let Your Light Shine as You Grow Matthew 5:15-16

Reverse Advent Calendar

Every year, Uttlesford Foodbank give out Christmas hampers full of both basics and Christmas treats to families and individuals living in isolation or poverty. The Reverse Advent Calendar is a way for our children and families to give to others and let their light shine, as well as enabling children to join in with the true spirit of Christmas. To ensure they receive the correct items they have provided us with information to help us. If you could donate some of the items, we would be really grateful.



How?

From **Monday 22nd November to Thursday 9th December**, please bring in the suggested items from our list.

What?

Monday 22nd Nov - Tinned Vegetables, Tinned Potatoes or Tinned Soup.

Tuesday 23rd Nov - Long Life Fruit Juice, Coffee or Tea.

Wednesday 24th Nov - Custard, Jelly or Christmas Puddings.

Thursday 25th Nov - Cooking Sauces, Gravy or Stuffing.

Friday 26th Nov - Savoury Crackers or Crisps.

Monday 29th Nov - Christmas Cake or Yule log.

Tuesday 30th Nov - Boxes of Christmas chocolates or Boxes of Biscuits.

Wednesday 1st Dec - Mince pies or Rice Pudding.

Thursday 2nd Dec – Christmas Crackers.

Friday 3rd Dec – Part Baked Bread Rolls.

Monday 6th Dec – Small Toiletry Items (shower gel, shampoo, hand sanitiser etc).

Tuesday 7th Dec – Jams and Spreads.

Wednesday 8th Dec – Tinned ham, salmon, sardines.

Thursday 9th Dec – Anything from the list

Where?

Collective Worship, St Mary's C of E Primary School. Items will be collected during Collective Worship.

When?

Please make sure all food is with us **by Thursday 9th December 2021**. Children can bring their donations to their classroom to donate.

Thank you for your continued support for these important causes



Christmas Sweets Raffle (PTA)

On the last day of term we will be holding a Christmas sweets raffle for each class. It was such a success last year, and so nice to send all the children home with a treat that they have won.

Any nut-free chocolate or sweets donations that can be used as prizes would be hugely appreciated please. Please send these in with the children over the next week, **by the 10th December**.

It can be anything from a small bag of sweets, to a star prize, which would of course be welcomed, to add to the excitement. All raffle donations need to be **NUT FREE** please, as we are now a nut free school.

Please let us know if your child has any allergies or problems with chocolate and we can make sure we have alternatives ready for the raffle. Email pta@st-maryscofe.essex.sch.uk

As there is no Christmas fair again this year, the chocolate/sweet raffle is a treat for all classes, to give them something to look forward to. This will happen in school time, just before they head home on the 17th December. Thanks as always

Ruth & Gemma

On behalf of the PTA events and fundraising team

Diary Dates



Mon 6th December	-	Y6 Harry Potter World
Wed 8th December	-	Jack & the Beanstalk Pantomime (KS1-9.15am & KS2-10.30am)
Thu 9th December	-	Y3 Egyptian Day (Dress Up)
Fri 10th December	-	Christmas Jumper Day
Fri 10th December	-	KS2 Disco (PTA Event)
Wed 15th December	-	Nativity in the church - 6pm
Thu 16th December	-	Christmas Lunch
Thu 16th December	-	Carol Service in the Church - 2pm
Fri 17th December	-	End of Term - school finishes at 1.30pm
Mon 20th Dec - 3rd Jan	-	Christmas Holidays
Tue 4th January 2022	-	INSET Non Pupil Day
Wed 5th January	-	First day of Spring Term - Pupils Return