

St Mary's Newsletter

Spring Term – Friday 15th July 2022

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Attendance Weekly - 96.6%

Attendance Year - 95%

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

Friendship

Trust

Truthfulness

Compassion

Perseverance

Respect

Dear parents and carers and friends of the school,

I would like to start this week's newsletter by congratulating the pupils and the staff on receiving the **School Games Gold award for 21/22**—a truly fantastic achievement! This award is presented to each academic year to schools which provide a very high level of sporting provision, which includes providing data around PE and Sports participation in school, the number of sporting competitions which the school pupils take part in, the clubs that we provide and the intra-school events which take place during the school academic year. I would like to extend particular thanks to Miss Driscoll (our Sports Coach) and Mrs McInnes (our PE Leader) for the sterling work that they continue to do behind the scenes to drive up the standard of provision in this vital area at St Mary's.



Parent Survey



Parents/Carers Survey 2022 Feedback Summary:

As you will know, last month the school conducted its annual Parents and Carers Survey – which this year, once again, was offered as an online version. I would like to sincerely thank every parent and carer who was able to complete this survey, as the information we gather each year from these surveys enables the school to see what is working well and also see where and when we can help pupils, parents and carers and also make

certain adaptations, when we can.

In this week's newsletter we will be providing specific and targeted feedback on this survey, focussing on some of the specific questions and feedback that we have received from our parents/carers. For this year's survey we received 48 respondents. After spending the last few weeks analysing the results, school leaders can report that the results were largely extremely positive, with a few areas for the school to focus more closely on. These will be discussed shortly.

These are the highlights of the Parents/Carers Survey 2022, which was carried out in June 2022:

96% of parents felt that their child's educational needs were met in the classroom

98% felt that they could approach the school with a question or concern

92% say that their child knows who to talk to if they have a concern (8% were unsure)

92% have noticed the emphasis that St Mary's places on wellbeing

96% say that their child enjoys being at school (4% said they were unsure)

98% said that their child finds work interesting at school

90% feel that their children are encouraged to work to the best of their ability (with 8% unsure)

92% stated that their child feels respected by their teachers (6% were unsure)

94% felt their child/ren respect their teachers (6% were unsure)

98% of parents/carers say that their children feel safe at school (2% were unsure)

98% felt that they were kept informed of what is happening in school

96% felt that the School deals effectively with any behavioural concerns

96% would recommend this school to other parents (4% were unsure)

School Leaders studied some of the questions where more comments were provided and we have provided some feedback on some of the suggestions and comments given.

On the question regarding '**Does St Mary's provide enough variation in after-school activities, sporting events and visitors,**' 73% of respondents said that they felt that St Mary's provides a good range of curricular and extra-curricular activities for their children.

Some parents/carers were unsure about all of the clubs on offer at St Mary's, especially some families who are new to the school; other respondents felt that there was not enough variation in the clubs offered. Having studied these results and comments carefully, we therefore feel that that it would be beneficial to share an overview of the clubs (both sporting and non-sporting) that we have provided during this academic year, as we are proud of the club choice on offer, particularly as we are a small school with a small staffing team.

Sporting clubs that St Mary's has offered over this academic year:

- ◆ Archery
- ◆ Dodgeball
- ◆ Karate
- ◆ Gymnastics
- ◆ Dance
- ◆ Rounders
- ◆ Mini Football (Key Stage 1)
- ◆ Football (Key Stage 2)
- ◆ Chess
- ◆ Cricket

Non-sporting clubs that St Mary's has offered over this academic year:

- ◆ Choir
- ◆ On-Track (Christian-lead workshop)
- ◆ Gardening
- ◆ Art and Design
- ◆ STEM (academic Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths) club
- ◆ Lego animation
- ◆ Board Games
- ◆ Drama (KS1)
- ◆ Drama (KS2)

Furthermore, due to the relaxation of COVID restrictions, we have been delighted to be able to resume attending local sporting events, which have included:

- ◆ *Tag rugby tournaments (where we even reached the finals)*
- ◆ *Netball*
- ◆ *Skipping day*
- ◆ *Girls' football festival*
- ◆ *football tournament (multiple)*
- ◆ *Multi-skills festival*
- ◆ *KS2 Indoor athletics event*
- ◆ *Tag rugby finals attended*
- ◆ *KS1 cross-country event*
- ◆ *Gymnastics*
- ◆ *KS1 Dance Festival*
- ◆ *KS2 Dance Festival*
- ◆ *Archery tournament (where we reached the finals)*
- ◆ *KS2 swimming lessons*
- ◆ *COVID recovery weekly sessions (in-school)*
- ◆ *Rapid Fire Cricket (Year 4, Year 5, Year 6)*
- ◆ *Quad Athletics*
- ◆ *District Sports Track and Field Athletics*
- ◆ *Bikeability (for pupils in Year 5 and Year 6)*
- ◆ *Learn to Ride (for Year 1 and Year 2 pupils)*

Future plans?

Each year, we carefully review all of the clubs we have on offer, and we take in account parent/carers feedback on the annual parents/carers survey and next year will not be any different. Please note that on occasions, when

uptake for certain clubs is really low (eg Dance club this year only had 4 pupils registered) the school may not be able to offer this club or remove it for the following year – as the club is not viable to run. Please keep an eye on our next year’s clubs offer – which will be coming out **very soon**.

Children’s progress:

One survey question asked, ‘**Do you get regular information about your child/ren’s progress?**’

85% of parents/carers said yes. 15% were either unsure or said no.

What we currently offer and our next steps:

This year we have offered the following opportunities to parents/carers to find out about their child’s progress and to share their learning:

- ◆ Parents/Carers Consultations in Autumn Term, Spring Term and Summer Term
- ◆ Share Our Work sessions in Autumn Term, Spring Term and Summer Term (before and after school)
- ◆ Tapestry is used throughout the year to share progress in Early Years
- ◆ One Plan Meetings (for pupils with SEND) in the Autumn Term, Spring Term and Summer Term
- ◆ End of year reports for all pupils

Next year we will be reintroducing termly data reports for parents/carers and developing the end of year report to encompass more information about a wider range of foundation subjects. This will ensure that some form of communication regarding your child/ren’s progress and learning will be in place for **each half term**.

Christian Distinctiveness:

Another question from this survey asked the question, ‘**Do you think School life is driven by its Christian Distinctiveness?**’ 25% of the parents/carers surveyed stated that they were unsure.

After following this up with some of our stakeholders, we feel it would be helpful to clarify what Christian Distinctiveness looks like at St Mary’s, Saffron Walden.

St Mary’s is a Church of England primary school and we are driven by our aim to: ‘Let your light shine... as you grow’, giving all our pupils the opportunity to be the best they can be, in an inclusive Christian learning environment. Using our values of: Compassion, Respect, Trust, Truthfulness, Friendship and Perseverance we aim to equip all of our children with life-long values and encourage children to nurture individual spirituality, develop an understanding of their own beliefs and the world around them. This will ensure that all of our pupils leave St Mary’s as valuable members of society, who are accepting and tolerant of others’ differences and faiths.

We recognise and understand that this is an area where the school needs to do some more work with the school community, so that everyone is clear about and aware of our importance as a church school in our unique primary school setting and the true meaning of Christian Distinctiveness and its impact on our pupils.



A fond farewell and a warm welcome...

Sadly, at the end of next week, St Mary’s says a fond farewell to Mrs Sonya Johnson, our School Business Manager (previously our Office Assistant) who has been at the school for four years, joining in September 2018. Sonya has worked tirelessly on behalf of the school during this time and I have found her support invaluable during these testing few years! Sonya moves on to a new position at Great Chesterford; I am sure you will all join me in sending her your very best wishes as she embarks on her next exciting journey.



Denise Finch will be joining the school as our next Business Manager from September. Denise joins us with extensive experience working in schools, including experience in HR, recruitment and premises management and she is also based in the area. Denise is very much looking forwards to joining us for the next chapter in her career.

Reception Class Graduation



Today, St Mary's held our annual Reception graduation event. 34 parents, carers and friends of the school attended this lovely event to see the children share a range of the work that they had completed throughout the year, as well as some beautiful songs that the Butterfly class had learnt especially for this special assembly. It was great to see how the children have developed in confidence and how they were able to speak in front of so many adults! It was also lovely to see the

children receive their graduation hats and their colourful certificates. Thanks to Mrs Jeewan, Miss Hunter and Miss Willis for arranging such a wonderful celebration of the children's achievements this year.

Year 6 residential

On Thursday afternoon, the Year 6 pupils returned from their residential to Danbury. They have told me that they had a really great time, trying out lots of new (and daring activities), developing their team work and building their resilience.

Huge thanks to Mr Clarke, Mrs Norman and Mrs Burgess for going away with the children and helping them to have such a memorable trip away.

Please note that there are lots of photos of this trip on the last pages of this newsletter, as well as on the school website.

Please remember that **the school breaks up at 1.30pm on Thursday 21st July** and the school will **re-open for the Autumn term on Monday 5th September**.

Do have a lovely weekend in the sun; see you all on Monday for the last week of term!

Kind regards

Mr C. D. Jarmain

Headteacher of St Mary's Church of England Primary school, Saffron Walden

Year 3 and 4 Visit to Cambridge Central Mosque

When we went to the mosque, we looked at the garden and saw a beautiful water fountain at the front. As we were going into the mosque, we had to take off our shoes before we could walk on the marble floor. You can wear shoes because Muslim's faces come near to the floor when they are praying. There was a secret door which led to a stage. It was disguised like a very beautiful patterned box. When the Imam opened the door, some stairs came down so he could climb onto the stage. They stand on this so people on the ground and at the back can see and hear. The tour guide was very kind. There was a men's prayer section, a lady's prayer section and another section where children to play and pray. We had a brilliant morning seeing and learning more about the mosque and how Muslims pray.

Evie (Year 4) and Holly (Year 3)



Year 6 Residential Danbury





Diary Dates



- Mon 18th July - Meet the Teacher - Year 1 & Year 2 @3.15pm
Year 3 @3.30pm
- Tue 19th July - Meet the Teacher - Year 4 & Year 5 @3.15pm
Year 6 @3.30pm
- Wed 20th July - Reception & KS1 Splash Party
- Thursday 21st July - Year 6 Leavers Service - 9.30am @St. Mary's Church
- Thursday 21st July - Last day of term - 1.30pm finish

