

St Mary's Newsletter

Autumn Term – Friday 7th January 2022

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Website: www.stmaryssw.org.uk

Attendance Weekly - 96.7%

Attendance Year - 96%

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,

Welcome Back!

Happy New Year and a very warm welcome back to our Spring term, at St Mary's!

I am delighted to report that it has been a calm and positive start to our new term and I have noticed that the children have settled in really, really well after the Christmas break.

I would like to say a big hello to Miss Brooks, who has re-joined us to support a pupil in Key Stage 1. I am sure that you will all join me in helping her to settle in really quickly to our lovely school and that you will make her feel really welcome again! I would also like to say welcome back to Mrs Slade who has changed roles from a 1:1 Learning Support Assistant to a member of our Midday Support Team.

I have been extremely impressed with all of the cheery 'Happy New Year' greetings and 'good morning' and 'good afternoon's' that I have received by both children and their parents on the school gate – proving that our St Mary's community have the very best manners in the whole of Essex!

Thank you, once again, in advance for all your undoubted support this term – I look forward to another positive and rewarding one.

Have a really lovely weekend and a happy and fulfilling term!

Thank you and welcome!

I would like to start off this week by saying a HUGE thank you to Mrs Victoria Boraster-Sharpe, who – as you will be aware – stepped down as Chair of Governors at the end of the Christmas term. Victoria first started as a governor just over 5 years ago, and then moved into the Chair of Governors position when the previous Chair left her role. I fondly remember Vicky showing me around St Mary's back in February 2019 on a very cold Winter's day, when the school was recruiting for a new headteacher, but she immediately welcomed me to this lovely school and its wonderful pupils, and its unmistakable charm. Vicky was a crucial part of the headteacher's interview panel, which then led to me taking over the headteacher's position at the start of the next academic year in September 2019.

Vicky, on behalf of all of the staff, pupils and parents and carers I would like to thank you for all of your help and support since I took over as head and particularly through the challenges of the COVID pandemic!

I would like to say another big thank you to our previous Vice-Chair of Governors, Mr John Westnedge, who has kindly stepped into the new Chair of Governors position from this month. John was first a governor at an independent school (NewHall) for about 19 years. At that point he decided that he wanted to move on to new challenges at a different school setting – one closer to his home. He joined St Mary's in the Spring term, around 4 years ago. He has lived in Saffron Walden for 21 years since moving back from living in Prague for 3 years in 2000. John has no other background in Education, though his father was a teacher for most of his working life. His main experience is 30 years in systems and project management with Tesco which is, undoubtedly, proving a useful skill set!

I am sure you will all join me in thanking Vicky for her service to the school and to John for taking over such a vital role at the school.

COVID updates:

We are sending a further update this week as you may have seen the latest update to national guidance regarding positive LFD tests, and we wanted to clarify what this means for you.

The requirement for confirmatory PCR tests is to be temporarily suspended for positive lateral flow test results. From Tuesday 11 January 2022, in England, people who receive positive lateral flow results for COVID-19 will be required to self-isolate immediately and won't be required to take a confirmatory PCR test. This is a temporary measure while COVID-19 rates remain high across the UK. Whilst levels of COVID-19 are high, the vast majority of people with positive LFD results can be confident that they have COVID-19.

Anyone who develops one of the three main COVID-19 symptoms should stay at home and self-isolate and take a PCR test. They must self-isolate if they get a positive test result, even if they have had a recent negative lateral flow test - these rules have not changed.

Under this new approach, anyone who receives a positive lateral flow device (LFD) test result (including for their child or children) should report their result on [Gov.uk](https://www.gov.uk) and must self-isolate immediately but will not need to take a follow-up PCR test. After reporting a positive LFD test result, they will be contacted by NHS Test and Trace so that their contacts can be traced and must continue to self-isolate.

In line with the reduced self-isolation approach announced on 22 December, anyone who tests positive will be able to leave self-isolation **7 days after the date of their initial positive test if they receive two negative LFD results, 24 hours apart, on days 6 and 7**. The [DfE guidance](#) has also been updated in line with the UKHSA announcement, and clarifies that children can return to school after day 7 if they have had two negative LFD tests.

Mrs Robinson:

Unfortunately, just before Christmas, Mrs Robinson (one of our fantastic Year 5 teachers) was diagnosed with breast cancer and therefore will not be returning to St Mary's whilst she receives treatment. I am sure that you will join me in wishing her the very best during this time and sending her our love and support and keep her and her family in our prayers.

Should you have any questions about this matter please do not hesitate to contact me.

Best Wishes

Mr C. D. Jarmain

Headteacher at St Mary's

Diary Dates



Monday 10th January	-	After School Clubs start
Tuesday 11th January	-	Year 3 Botanical Garden Visit (Cambridge)
Tuesday 11th January	-	Year 1 Local Museum Trip
Friday 14th January	-	Year 4 Swimming starts
Thursday 20th January	-	Special CENSUS Dinner Menu
1st-28th February	-	LGBT History Month
2nd February	-	Year 4 Rivers Trip (Epping Forest)
Mon 14th Fri 18th February	-	Half-term
Friday 1st April	-	INSET Non Pupil Day
Mon 4th - Mon 18th April	-	Easter Holidays