



Dates for your diary

**Monday 8th Jan INSET DAY
SCHOOL CLOSED**

~ ~ ~

Tue 9th January 8:40
Children return to School

~ ~ ~

Wed 10th January 9:00
Epiphany Worship
St Mary's Church

~ ~ ~

Mon 22nd January
Poetry Competition Launch

~ ~ ~

Fri 9th February
Chinese New Year
celebrations and own
clothes day (wear red)

~ ~ ~

END OF TERM
FRIDAY 9th Feb 3:10PM

PEACE

Isaiah 9: 2-6 *'The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light... for unto us a child is born... and his name shall be called Wonderful, Mighty God, the Prince of Peace.'*

John 14:27 *'Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you... Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.'*

Respect

Peace

Love

Forgiveness

Responsibility

Faith

St Mary's Happy News!

News for our families and friends

www.st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk

Thursday 21st December 2023

Volume 66

"Personal Development at St Mary's is Outstanding" - Ofsted Dec 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

I would like to thank our wonderful children for their hard work throughout the term. They have enjoyed learning from an enriching and creative curriculum and I am proud of their achievements and progress.

Our KS1 Nativity performance and KS2 Carol Service was a lovely celebration of singing and choral speaking. Thank you to all of our families who attended both events. We were blessed to have such a magnificent turnout at our annual school Christmas Fayre, which was a brilliant success.

We raised over £2,000! None of this would have been possible without the support and dedication of our parents, carers and staff. We appreciate your generous food and gift contributions as well as everyone who ran a stall or spent some money on the day.

A huge well done to our 'Friends of St Mary's,' who worked tirelessly to wrap presents and organise the event. A special thanks to our committee members: Natreema, Dionne, Andrea, Keisha, Hadijah, Iyere and Dovile as well as Stephanie who sourced all of the Santa gifts.



I know that each and every parent and child has contributed to the school's continued success by living our school vision and values both in school and in the community. One of our parents with a child in reception class demonstrated the value of Love by donating their raffle prize of a bike to a family unknown to them - thank you so much Miss Albert and Shakur for your generosity and kindness. I also appreciate our school governors who generously give their time freely to attend meetings and events to support and lead the school.

Thank you to our dedicated staff for their hard work and commitment to ensuring that our children receive the very best education. Christmas is such an exciting and special time in the Christian calendar. A time to meet with family and friends to celebrate the birth of Jesus or just to eat, drink, and enjoy each others company. During this period of fun and celebration, it is worth remembering that Christmas can also be a tough time for many people, including those who are homeless, recently bereaved, lonely or struggling to make ends meet. Let's remember to keep them in our hearts, thoughts and prayers. On behalf of the staff and governors at St Mary's Primary School, I would like to wish all of our children and parents a very happy and peaceful Christmas and every blessing for the New Year.

Christine Graham, Headteacher



Nativity

Always a highlight of the Christmas season at St Mary's, our Nativity show performed by Year 2, Year 1 and Reception class was enjoyed by parents and children. The children looked amazing in their costumes, the singing was wonderful and Year 2 brought the Christmas Story to life through their enthusiastic acting. Many thanks to all of the staff who helped to make it such a special performance.



Greenwich Theatre Pantomime

Every class from Year 1 to Year 6 travelled to Greenwich Theatre to enjoy a professional and highly entertaining performance of 'Snow White'. The costumes and set design were amazing and all of the children had an amazing time. We didn't forget our youngest children as we arranged for them to watch a performance of 'Little Red Riding Hood' back in school.



Christmas Lunch and Special Visitors

We were blessed to be joined at our annual Christmas lunch by elderly visitors from Bentley Court, Lloyd Court and the Glebe. The day started with a special performance of our wonderful Nativity show performed by our youngest children. Our visitors were guests of honour at our delicious Christmas lunch, before enjoying festive songs from our choir and refreshments in the Community Hub.



Big thank you to Projectfivek

A huge thank you to Reverend Charles and his wife Ann - long time supporters of St Mary's school, who have provided food vouchers to many of our families, not just at Christmas but throughout the year. Acts of generosity like this are a wonderful example of how important it is to support those who are in need or struggling at this time.

If you need help with food or any other basic necessities, please contact Mrs Graham via the school office or have a chat with her at the school gate.

Our Vision

To be a learning community that promotes the unique gifts, wellbeing and potential of every person. Our work is founded on the life and teaching of Jesus Christ, building on His message of equality, peace and justice, guided by His words 'As I have loved you, so you must love one another' (John 13:34).



INFORMATION FOR PARENTS

Please see our website for [WHERE TO FIND HELP WITH FOODBANKS, HOLIDAY MEALS, COST OF LIVING AND FAMILY SUPPORT](#). There are more links to a range of support on the back page of this newsletter. Please speak to a member of staff if you require any additional support.

[CLICK HERE FOR LOTS OF FAMILY ACTIVITIES TO ENJOY IN LEWISHAM.](#)



Friends of St Mary's

Thank you to everyone who attended our AGM and the other meetings held this term. Our Friends helped to plan and organise the Christmas Fayre, raising over £2,000 for the school!



School Fund

Thank you to all the parents who have already paid this vital funding, which we rely on to maintain the school premises. Please pay via ParentPay - £30 for the year or £10 a term. Sibling discounts are available.

Punctuality

Thank you to the vast majority of parents who have been on time at the beginning (8:40) and end of the day (3:10). If you are late for school in the morning, you will need to sign in using the electronic screen in the school lobby. Late charges of £5 per 15 minutes apply for any child not collected by 3:30. [Late charges for Enrichment Club apply from 5:45 and are £10 per 5 minutes.](#)



We are here to help!

If you have any concerns related to your family's wellbeing, finances or practical issues, please get in touch by emailing the school at: admin@st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk or by ringing the school on **0208 6902613**.

Free School Meal Vouchers

We have continued to provide food vouchers to cover the school holidays for all pupils who are entitled to a free school meal. I am conscious that some families may not know whether they are entitled to free school meals so we are encouraging all of our families to apply by following this link: <https://lewisham.gov.uk/myservices/education/student-pupil-support/free-school-meals-and-extra-support-for-your-child>

Attendance

We were recently visited by the Lewisham Local Authority, who praised the strong attendance at St Mary's. Please continue to ensure your child is in school every day to ensure they reach their potential.

Medication

If you require your child to take any prescribed medication during the school day, please speak to the school office and complete the required form.

Parent Workshops

Our Community Hub continues to host a range of meetings and workshops to support our families in many areas of life. Feedback from our 8 week 'Being A Parent' classes has been extremely positive!



CHRISTMAS FAYRE

We enjoyed an amazing Christmas Fayre as all of the School community joined together for a wonderful event. Among the many activities were Santa's grotto, Christmas raffle with 20 amazing prizes, food, drinks, live music from our Brass Band, Choir performance, face painting, stalls and games. There were many outdoor games to enjoy including hook a duck, tombola, raffle, ring toss, balloon pop, coconut shy, football and tin can alley! There was so much to enjoy and we were delighted to have raised a large amount of money for the school. All of the money raised will support the children in their learning.

Thanks to all those that helped organise the event, especially to our Friends of St Mary's.



Candlelit Carol Service

All of the children from Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 created a wonderful and reflective atmosphere in St Mary's Church. Each class excellently performed their Choral reading, sharing key Bible passages to tell the story of the birth of Jesus. Christmas Carols were sung by the whole congregation and the choir also performed, before Mrs Graham shared her Headteacher's address.

Choir Perform at Lewisham Hospital

Lorraine Hassan, Dementia Specialist Nurse at UHL said: *"Another wonderful visit from St Mary's Lewisham CE Primary School. It was lovely to have the children perform on the elderly wards again and lots of our patients were able to come out of their bays to sit and join in. I could tell they were excited by the emotions on their faces. It was a reminder that music can do so much for our patients and colleagues."*



Advent and Eucharist

Father Steve and Father Max welcomed us to St Mary's Church to celebrate Advent. We also included a Eucharist in the worship, which meant that the children who had recently completed their First Communion could join us in taking the Bread and Wine. Our team of servers helped to lead the Worship. We lit the special Advent candle and learned about why this is such an important time of year for Christians. Many thanks to School Governor Mr Stringfellow, who joined us to play the organ.



Lambeth Palace Nativity

Children need to be in school every day and on time, in order to reach their full potential. We celebrated those children from Years 4, 5 and 6 with 100% attendance as they went on a very special Christmas Journey. Set in the beautiful gardens of Lambeth Palace (the home of the Archbishop of Canterbury), the children travelled around 5 different sites, meeting key characters from the Nativity Story, with time provided for them to reflect on the deeper meaning of the story. Each child was given a special artefact to represent each stage of their journey.



Black History Month

Children loved our Black History Month theme 'Saluting our Sisters' and learnt about past and present remarkable and inspirational BAME women. They learnt how to cook African and Caribbean recipes and play the Djembe Drums. The children were learning from an experienced and talented performer and every class made great progress. They also learned about West African culture and the importance of Drumming throughout the History of the region.



Community Projects

Each year, every class choose a Community project to support. Projects can focus on a local, national or global community and the children plan actions to make a difference. In a special worship, each class shared their plans for this year.



Climate Network Meeting

Our newly formed Eco Council representatives went to St Winifred's School to take part in a Climate Action Network Meeting. They went on a tour of the school to see what measures they had put in place and then took part in a workshop working with children from other schools to design their own artwork with an environmental message.



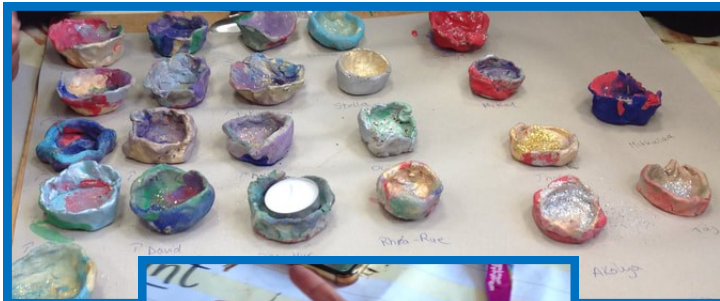
Borough Market

Our Year 4 class took part in an exciting project to learn all about the process of growing fresh food from seed, before selling the produce at the world famous Borough Market in London Bridge. All of the money raised was donated to the Felix Project, which delivers food directly to almost 1,000 charities, serving people in need.



Diwali

In November, our children learned about Diwali, the Festival of Lights. Every class learned special dances, made diya lamps and children in KS1 were offered the chance to have a mehndi pattern painted on the palms of their hands.



Year 3 visit the new Playground in Lewisham Park

Our Year 3 class visited the construction site as developers created a new playground in Lewisham Park for the whole community to enjoy. The children learned about the designs for the playground and how fundraising has enabled this amazing new space for children to enjoy. A few weeks later, the children were invited to the Grand Opening with the Mayor of Lewisham, Damien Egan.



Forest School

Every Wednesday at 8:45, our Forest Friends meet to enjoy exploration, games and fun in our Forest School. All pre-school children are welcomed and it's a good chance for their parents to enjoy our lovely Forest School Garden and meet with school staff.



Times Table Challenge Finals!

Congratulations to all of our children who practised hard, learnt their times table facts and took part in their class heats. 2 finalists from each class battled it out in front of the whole school to find our 2023 champions!

**ST MARY'S LEWISHAM
C of E PRIMARY SCHOOL**

329 Lewisham High
Street, SE13 6NX

Phone: 020 8690 2613
E-mail: admin@st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk

Friends of St Mary's
email address:
fosm@st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk

Parents news

We welcome all parents to join the Friends of St Mary's (FOSM) and support the school with fundraising events and other ways to improve the school for our children. Email at the above address or speak to a member of staff to find out more!



HELP AND SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS

Where to find help - CLICK HERE

Please visit a new section of our school website, which contains information and advice for all of our families:

- **Support with Domestic Abuse** - posters in several languages
- **Cost of Living Crisis** - we know that everyone is feeling the effects of the crisis, and we want to support our families that are most affected
- **Local Authority support** - help available from Lewisham Council
- **Help with feeding your family** - details of local food banks
- **Worrying about money** - advice and guidance including hardship funds
- **A warm welcome** - local spaces offering a warm and welcoming environment
- **Local organisations that support families** - directory of local services

Mental health and Wellbeing

Please can we ask you to keep the school up to date with any concerns you have regarding your children's mental health and wellbeing. Here are some links to places where families can find additional support:

- [Loneliness and Re-connection](#) - information and a toolkit for parents
- [Mental Health Resources](#) - links to many resources for children & parents
- [Every mind matters](#) - mental health advice from the NHS
- [Government guidance for parents and carers](#) - support with Covid-19
- [Childhood Bereavement Network](#) - support for children who have experienced the death of someone important to them

E - Safety

Please continue to be aware of what your child is doing online. Support for parents and carers to keep their children safe online includes:

- [National Online Safety](#) - register your St Mary's account
- [Internet matters](#) - support to keep children safe online
- [Thinkuknow](#) - advice from the National Crime Agency to stay safe online
- [UK Safer Internet Centre](#) - advice for parents and carers from the NSPCC
- [Kiddle](#) and [KidRex](#) - child friendly search engines

TERM DATES

Spring Term 2024

Tuesday 9th January - Friday 9th February

INSET - SCHOOL CLOSED - Monday 8th January

HALF TERM - Monday 12th February - Friday 16th February

Monday 19th February - Thursday 28th March

EASTER HOLIDAY - Friday 29th March - Friday 12th April

Summer Term 2024

Monday 15th April - Friday 24th May

POLLING DAY - Thursday 2nd May

BANK HOLIDAY - Monday 6th May

HALF TERM - Monday 27th May - Friday 31st May

Monday 3rd June - Friday 19th July

INSET - SCHOOL CLOSED - Friday 14th June