



St Mary's Happy News!

News for our families and friends

www.st-marys.lewisham.sch.uk

Thursday 28th March 2024

Volume 69

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

Dear Parents & 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.

During the term, we have enjoyed many special events which bring our curriculum to life. KS2 children took part in a 'Viking Day' immersive experience complete with costumes, resources and role play. KS1 children visited the South Bank for a concert from the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Our school council visited the houses of Parliament to learn more about democracy. World book week was also a huge success and our children were thrilled to meet a visiting author Rachel Faturoti who shared her experiences and inspired our children to continue to find their own voice through writing. The Poetry competition inspired children to write their own poems based on 'The British Poem' which was written by the late Benjamin Zephaniah. Congratulations to all the children who took part in the Saxon Crown school Swimming competition. The swimmers thoroughly enjoyed the event and we were incredibly proud of their achievements.



Thank you to all parents who attended your child's consultation meetings. I know that many of you were impressed by the progress that your children have made and the feedback from staff. A further meeting is scheduled for those parents who could not make the original date.

I am hugely grateful to our school governors who give their time freely to attend meetings and events to support and lead the school. Thank you to our staff for their hard work and commitment to ensuring that our children receive the very best education.

On behalf of the staff and governors at St Mary's Primary School, I would like to wish all of our children a lovely holiday. Particularly, our Year 6 children who will be sitting their SATs exams after Easter.

I am wishing you all a very happy and peaceful Easter.

Best wishes, Christine Graham (Headteacher)

Dates for your diary

Monday 15th April 8:40
All children return to school
~ ~ ~

Wed 1st May 9AM
May Day worship in School
~ ~ ~

Thu 2nd May - Polling Day
~ ~ ~

Mon 6th May - Bank Holiday
~ ~ ~

Mon 13th - Thu 16th May
Year 6 SATS week
~ ~ ~

Wed 22nd May 9AM
Pentecost and Eucharist
worship in St Mary's Church
~ ~ ~

HALF TERM 27/05 - 31/05
~ ~ ~

Fri 28th June
Science Day
~ ~ ~

Fri 5th July
Sports Day
~ ~ ~

TERM ENDS FRI 19/07 1PM

FORGIVENESS

John 10:11 'I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.'

Mahatma Gandhi

"The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong."

Respect

Peace

Love

Forgiveness

Responsibility

Faith



EASTER AT ST MARY'S 2024

Planned and organised by our amazing children's Faith Group, the school community joined together to raise money at our Easter Fayre. The money raised will be donated to the charities supported by the Bishop of Southwark's Lent Appeal - including projects in Zimbabwe and Palestine. The children in the Faith Group included many exciting activities that were enjoyed by everyone - a cake sale, Easter egg hunt, egg painting, hook an Easter duck and an egg and spoon obstacle race. A huge thank you to everyone who supported the event by attending or by donating cakes - we raised over £400!



At this most important time of year in the Christian calendar, we welcomed Father Steve to lead us in our Easter worship. Our Year 6 Servers shared some Bible readings relating to the events of Holy Week. At the end of the worship, each child received a palm cross.



Parents and Children enjoyed taking time to follow in Jesus' footsteps as they journeyed through the Forest Garden, stopping to reflect at the key events of Holy Week: Palm Sunday, the Last Supper, the Garden of Gethsemane, Crucifixion and the Tomb.



Easter bonnets and Easter eggs designed by our creative children were celebrated at this special Easter worship. Well done to everyone who took part in our competitions, especially our prize winners! The worship ended with a lively Easter parade around the school.



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 all of the parents who planned our Christmas Fayre and Chinese New Year celebrations. Look out for the next Friends of St Mary's meeting or speak to a member of staff about how you can support the school community.



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.](#)

Parents can check online to see if they are eligible for Free School Meals:

<https://pps.lgfl.org.uk/>

All children are currently getting a free meal at school, but Free School Meals eligibility entitles them to food vouchers in the holidays, access to free Holiday Club provision and importantly, thousands of pounds of funding for the school which will go directly on supporting teaching and learning.

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 Expectations

What YOU must do:

- * Try to telephone the school before 8.30am each day of your child's absence.
- * Tell the school in advance, of any medical appointments and bring in appointment cards/letters.
- * If you are not sure whether your child is well enough to attend school, send them in anyway as they often perk up on arrival.
- * Have a backup plan for if your child misses transport, call on a family member, neighbour or friend.
- * If you and your child are experiencing difficulties with school attendance then talk to us as a first step so we can help!

What WE will do:

- * Check your child's attendance every day.
- * Phone home to discuss your child's attendance with you.
- * Invite you into school for attendance meetings if we are concerned.
- * If we cannot establish a reason for absence, then we may make a welfare home visit.

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.

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.

BOOK WEEK 2024

Once again, St Mary's enjoyed a fabulous week enjoying and celebrating books and reading. Our focus this year was adventures! The highlight of the week was a visit from local Author Rachel Faturoti - who signed copies of her books for the children as well as giving them tips on how to become an Author. In addition, Rachel led a creative writing workshop. Other events included a Teacher Swap as each class enjoyed books from a surprise visiting teacher! A Reading Banquet offered the children a captivating menu of books to enjoy. Finally, the week was rounded off in style with our 'Dress Up Day'.



Year Community Food Bank Project

Year 3 have been collecting food donations to support those most in need in our local communities. They have made posters and spoken to each class to advertise their project. The food donations have been taken to St Mary's Church who will ensure they are passed to local foodbanks.



Reception class visit Glebe elderly residents

The residents at Glebe elderly residents home were delighted to be visited by our Reception class, who kindly shared Easter cards and gifts with them. The children enjoyed talking about their school and what they had been learning about, as well as listening to the residents memories of their school days.

Housing Protest with Lewisham Citizens

We joined with local schools and community groups to make our voices heard as we joined a campaign to demand better housing for Lewisham residents. Our community conversations highlight that this is a key issue for our families. Children, parents and staff joined the protest, which began with speeches and a rally at Rushey Green primary school. Mrs Graham gave an impassioned speech to the prospective mayoral candidates and asked for them to make pledges. We then marched to Lewisham Town Hall, where we handed in a letter from several Lewisham headteachers, supporting the campaign.



RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch

St Mary's were excited to take part in this annual survey, along with thousands of people across the country. Our team of enthusiastic ornithologists used their binoculars to carefully observe and count the number of bird species in our Forest School Garden. The data sent to the RSPB will help them to build up a picture of how our wildlife is faring. We also filled some new bird feeders and hung them around the garden to encourage more birds to visit and hopefully nest in the Spring time.

WORSHIP AT ST MARY'S

We gave thanks to our Mothers in this special worship. We were joined by Father Steve from St Mary's Church, who was assisted by our team of servers. Our servers delivered the Bible readings and led us in prayer. Children reflected on what makes their Mothers so special and how we can help them. Thanks to all of the mothers who joined us for worship and received some Spring daffodils as a gift.



Our Ramadan Worship focused on the Muslim period of prayer, reflection and fasting. We shared readings from the Bible and the Quran. Children shared their beliefs and practises as well as sharing the significance of this special time in the Islamic faith.



Reflective worship for Lent - all of the children developed their spirituality in a space of peace and reflection. A central display was created and children sat around this display, with our Year 6 helpers adding items as we listened to Bible readings and took time to reflect on their meaning. The Bible passages focused on the events of Holy Week. Bread and wine represented the last supper, alongside a bowl and water as we remembered how Jesus washed the disciples' feet. The garden of Gethsemane was created using plants and finally, candles were added to show that Jesus is the light of the world. A multi-sensory experience was created with incense, scented candles and Taize music.



The Big Battery Hunt 2024

Our Eco Council have been active in supporting an important recycling initiative and they wrote this letter which was sent to all parents and members of the school community:

We are writing to ask you do something extremely important. We need you to take part in the Big Battery Hunt and recycle your used batteries. Did you know that over 600 million batteries are thrown away each year? That means that over 20,000 tonnes of batteries end up in landfill sites where they take over a hundred years to decompose. This is outrageous! The chemicals in the batteries can pollute the soil and water, harming poor innocent animals and endangering our lives too. Do you really want that?

But it doesn't have to be this way! You can do your bit to help our planet by going on a Big Battery Hunt to find all of our used batteries and bringing them to our recycling point in the reception area. Anyone that brings in batteries to be recycled will receive a ticket for our Prize Draw and could win a prize!

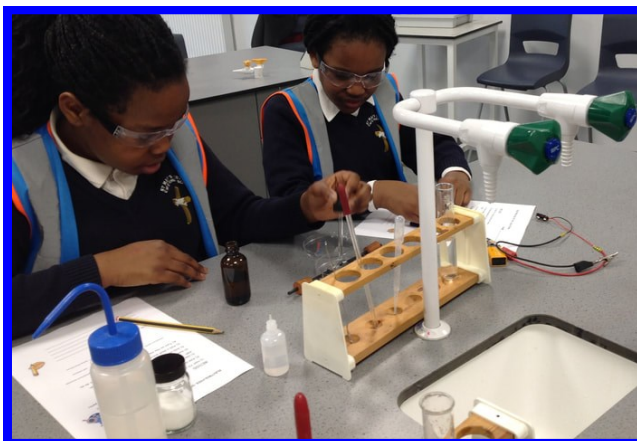
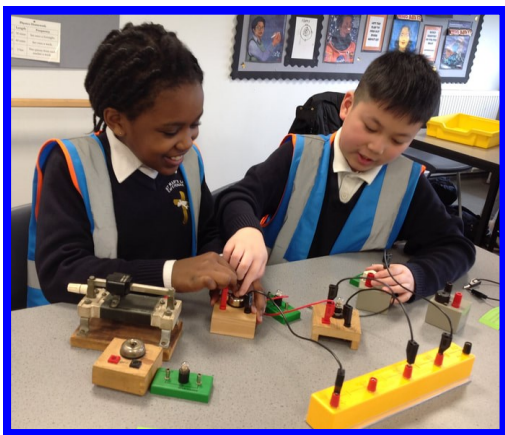
Multiskills Stars

Congratulations to our young sports stars, as they travelled to John Stainer School for an exciting Multiskills event. Competing alongside children from other Lewisham Primary Schools, our children performed amazingly across a variety of running, jumping, throwing and team events.



Year 5 STEM Challenges

Two teams of children from Year 5 took part in a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) challenge event. They joined children from schools across Lewisham and explored electricity, chemical reactions, microscopes and many other scientific challenges.



Lewisham Swimming Gala

Congratulations to all the members of our swimming team who took part in the Saxon Crown Swimming Gala on 8 March 2024 at the Glass Mill Leisure Centre. Swimmers thoroughly enjoyed the event and we are incredibly proud of how well they did.



Year 3 and Year 4 Football Stars

On a chilly afternoon, our Year 3 and Year 4 football stars travelled to Catford for a tournament against several local schools from across Lewisham. The children played with skill and determination, representing the school brilliantly!

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

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Friends of St Mary's
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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

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

Summer Term 2024

Monday 15th April - Friday 24th May

POLLING DAY (London Mayoral Election) - Thursday 2nd May

BANK HOLIDAY - Monday 6th May

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

Monday 3rd June - Monday 22nd July

INSET - SCHOOL CLOSED - Friday 14th June

SCHOOL CLOSURES FOR CHILDREN - FRIDAY 19TH JULY 1PM

INSET - SCHOOL CLOSED - Monday 22nd July