St Mary's C of E Junior School Newsletter

Care. Believe. Succeed.

'All things are possible for one who believes.'

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND DIOCESE OF ST ALBANS

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Curriculum & Enrichment

World Mental Health Day

Mental Health Day
This afternoon the children took part in discussions about their own, and others mental health and the importance of recognising internal and external factors that may affect us and the way that we behave or respond. Children in all year groups discussed this sensibly and openly, sharing ideas about how we can look after our own mental health. It was a valuable lesson opportunity to talk about this important issue that affects us all.

Vision and Values

At St Mary's VC Junior School, we have put our vision and values at the forefront of our curriculum and the opportunities we provide for your children. Our theologically rooted vision is as follows:

Care. Believe. Succeed.
'All things are possible for one who believes' – Mark 9:23
St Mary's Junior School works to foster a culture of respect and compassion, where children are confident to take risks, persevere and embrace challenges. We strive to provide dynamic learning without limits, to give everyone the wisdom, skills and knowledge they need to aim high and achieve their full potential as unique individuals within an inclusive environment.

This vision has been carefully developed by staff and governors to encapsulate everything that St Mary's is about. At the core is ***caring***. We care that your children are safe, happy and reaching their full potential, and we strive to ensure that our pupils show the same care and compassion for each other. Having a growth mind-set and believing that you can achieve anything if you persevere is also at the heart of our ethos; we are dedicated to ensuring that all our pupils are able to succeed in their goals and achieve great things.

Each week in our collective worship, we promote our school vision and focus on one of our six core values which are:

School Values & Christian Value links	
Ambition *Courage, Hope and Freedom*	**Curiousity** *Awe and Wonder*
Independence *Humility and Honesty*	**Co-operation** *Patience, Faithfulness and Peace*
Inclusivity *Unity, Peace and Compassion*	**Growth** *Joy, Self-control and Courage*

We share books, read bible stories and study influential people to explore these values and try to apply this throughout our week. At the end of the week, a child from each class is chosen for a special effort award which demonstrates the value of the week. We are so proud of our amazing children and the way they demonstrate our school values within the classroom, playground and beyond. Perhaps ask your child what value we are focussing on each week and see what they can tell you!

Miss Scammell (Assistant Head)

School Reporters

I am delighted to introduce our new School Reporters at St Mary's. Children across the school had to apply for this journalistic leadership opportunity and it was a tough decision for Mrs Atkinson and I to choose the final sixteen children across the school. Our School Reporters are:
Year 3 – Orla, Millie, Ellie-Ann and Khayra
Year 4 – Tia, Stanley, Pippa and Emily
Year 5 – Hannah, William, Yurelma and Chloe F
Year 6 – Kenenna, Maya, Ava and Oscar

The first task that children were set was to find out what children, staff and parents love about St Mary's Junior. Our School Reporters interviewed lots of people and wrote some interesting reports! Here are a few extracts from the children's writing.

What do you love about St Mary's School?

Children look forward to socialising with their friends at break and lunchtimes. The Eco-Committee has really helped to encourage children to bring in healthy snacks (fruit and vegetables) and have also helped to make our school lunches better by meeting with Herts Catering. (Maya Y6)

I interviewed some staff. Miss Linnell loves St Mary's because we are all so different in many ways. We are kind and we work together. (Pippa Y4)

I interviewed lots of children and found out that they love St Mary's because of Mr Hagland's PE lessons. Some children love the science lessons and the fact that we get to do fun things. (Oscar Y6)

Children love St Mary's because there are multiple clubs that everyone is open to join. Staff at St Mary's are really nice. Children also enjoy maths, English, art, music and PE lessons. (Hannah Y5)

Members of staff love the school because each and every pupil is different, we all work together, and they are kind and helpful. Children love making friends. (Emily Y4)

I like that St Mary's School is friendly and we co-operate – we use teamwork and we persevere. We are encouraged to never give up and keep going. St Mary's has so many fun events and is a great place for education. St Mary's also teaches you to be independent and responsible. (Khayra Y3)

I love it that we help each other and that everybody is included. (Ellie-Anne Y3)

I love it that St Mary's is so inclusive, and they make sure we are all happy. I love it that the teachers are so kind and dedicated to their job. Staff say that working here is never boring and we try to make it fun. (Ava Y6)

I love the way Mr Hagland teaches PE and always makes it fun. Some children love the school dinners. I personally think that the school values are my favourite thing because they teach us to be kind. (William Y5).

Staff at St Mary's are great – they are kind and make lessons fun. There are lots of clubs and lots of space to use at breaks and lunchtimes. (Chloe Y5)

My mum loves the welcoming smile she receives from staff at the school gates. She also appreciates the hard work and care that staff aim to provide. My dad loves the communication from school on Dojo. (Tia Y4)

My mum thinks that St Mary's is amazing because everyone cares so much about people. My dad thinks that the school has lots of fun sports events and that everyone is given a chance to take part. (Stanley Y4)

I love the pet snails that we have in class. (Millie Y3)

Some of our enthusiastic journalists also decide to report on other events that have happened in school during the last two weeks.

Year 5 Guiness Book Of Records event

On 3rd October, Year 5 children took part in the World's Largest Poetry lesson. We did a Zoom call with Laura, a poet, and we voted on lots of different sections. I can't wait for the results! (Hannah Y5)

Everyone loved the voting and we were in the lesson for 2 hours. (Chloe Y5)

500 Word Challenge

This challenge is great because is not only great fun, but it also encourages children to explore their journey through writing. Mrs Atkinson runs a club, and this inspires us to improve our writing. Each winner can take home a bundle of books and have their writing published. (Maya Y6)

Y6 Tag Rugby event

On 3rd October, we travelled to Letchworth to play in a tournament. There were some great scores! Everyone had fun and played fair, shaking hands with the other players. It shows that St Mary's is a fair school and that it's not about the winning but the taking part. It was great to see over 300 children taking part. (Oscar Y6)

I'm so proud of our new School Reporters for embracing this leadership responsibility.

Sports Update

Netball

Well done to our new Netball team, playing their first tournament together this week. They had a brilliant time and showed some real class as they managed to win 4 of their 5 games. This puts the team in good stead for the future.
The big tournament comes in February. With many more practise sessions and some friendlies coming up, could St Mary's become netball champions for the first time in 17 years?

St Mary's continued their netball season in storming fashion, winning 7 of 9 games in the latest Netball festival at St Francis. Many of our team were making their Netball debut, with most of them having never played a netball match in their lives.
After a brain filling warm up of teaching the team the positions and where they could and couldn't go, the team picked it up quickly and began to shine. We've worked a lot on special awareness and calling names when passing in Invasion Games in PE, and it showed as we moved the ball from defence to offence in quick, smooth motions.

Tag Rugby

Many of our Year 4 children had a great time representing the school in a tag rugby festival. There were plenty of tags taken and plenty of tries scored. They had a really good day and have earned a St Mary's Sports Cap.

Our Year 6's did our school proud on 3rd October in a day of Tag Rugby.
Over 300 children enjoyed a sunny day at LRC, playing some fantastic rugby.
We took four teams, with two of our teams winning every single match. They all had a great time and made some nice memories.

Today, the children came to school wearing red to show support against racism. As a school, we are deeply committed to fostering an environment where every pupil feels valued, respected, and safe. As part of our school's core value of inclusion, we actively promote anti-racism and stand firmly against all forms of discrimination. By teaching our children the importance of diversity and cultural understanding, we aim to create a community where everyone, regardless of their background, can thrive.

Year 6 Crucial Crew visit

We had an informative morning at Crucial Crew on 16th October.

We had the following talks/ sessions:
The police on cyber safety and knife crime.
The fire safety team about fire hazards in the home.
The children learnt some CPR from the ambulance service.
The British transport police about railway safety.
Safeguarding and staying safe.

The children were exceptional all morning and made us very proud. Well done year 6 ☺

Attachments with this newsletter:

- The Herts Parent Carer Involvement 2024 Survey
- Y6 Moving on leaflet

Autumn Term 2024

Mon 2 Sept 2024 to Fri 20th Dec 2024 ***(Break up at 1.00pm)***
INSET DAY: Monday 2nd September 2024
INSET DAY: Friday 25th October 2024

Autumn Half Term: 28th October 2024 to 1st November 2024
OCCASIONAL DAY: Friday 29th November 2024

Christmas Break: Mon 23rd Dec 2024 to Fri 3rd January 2025
INSET DAY: Monday 6th January 2025

February Half Term: 17th February to 21st February 2025

Easter Holidays: 7th April to 22nd April 2025 ***(Break up at 1.00pm)***
INSET DAY: 22nd April 2025
MAY BANK HOLIDAY: 5th May 2025

Spring Half Term: 26th May to 31st May 2025
INSET DAY: Monday 2nd June 2025

Summer Term Ends: 23rd July 2024 ***(Break up at 1.00pm)***

Summer Holidays: 24th July to 2nd September 2025