



**Believe Enjoy Strive Succeed**



### **Principal Comments**

The Beast from the East dipped his toe in the fringes of Folkestone and certainly tried to cause chaos amongst the local schools. However, with a wonderful site team here at St. Mary's, we were able to remain safe and open and ensure our children could come to school and you as parents could get to work. I can't say much for the local gritting service though as on the Friday of that week, we had lots of our parents and pupils sliding and skating into school. I'd like to thank you all for showing resilience at the snow we received and continued to push on. It seems the country was in carnage though.

#### **Attendance:**

The weather has affected our attendance a little and has taken our school average below 95%. We are still on track to meet our end of year targets and be above 96% but we will have to all work hard together to send the children in. Amidst all of the snow, the attendance of Years 1 and 3 remained strong, they averaged 98%. Kenya class in Year 4 also reached an amazing 99%. Well done to all of our parents in those year groups and thank you. Please note that we will not be authorising any term time holidays and will strongly consider issuing penalty notices to families whose attendance falls below the expectation of regular attendance or takes holiday without permission.

#### **Curriculum:**

You will have seen from Facebook that we have been busy across the school. Highlights for us are definitely the visiting local author Maz Evans who spent the day with us inspiring the children to write and launching our new library. I hope you have all had a chance to come and see our new Library. Seeing parents and children exploring the world of books at the end of the day is amazing. Please do feel free to come and use the library after school with your child. There will be a librarian in there most evenings. There are books for everyone to read – even grown-ups!

Thank you to everyone who dressed up for world book day. I hope you saw that we made the papers (again) but this time we had four pages of coverage. The children all looked amazing and some of the costumes made at home were inspiring. At times it was like walking through Hogwarts and along with the snow and ubiquitous Ice Queens, Narnia was well represented too! It was lovely to see a few Wallies, Spiderman, Hulks and other costumes from well-known comics.

#### **Pupil responsibility:**

We have been working to promote higher engagement in school life from our older pupils. Currently, they are taking on responsibilities for helping in and around the school. It has been interesting to see how they respond to responsibility, especially as the novelty wears off! I know that they will benefit from this as they get ready to transfer to secondary school. The roles are bringing out some lovely pastoral characteristics in the children. They are being very kind and helpful with the younger children, very responsible in both of the halls and some are now leading games on the playground. I have asked the school to adopt a responsible attitude towards our helpers too. I will keep you updated on the impact of this and hopefully we will see our Year 6 pupils thrive as they move on to secondary school in the very near future.

#### **After school:**

Please do remember that the school site closes at the end of the day. I expect all parents and children who are not in clubs to be off of the site by 15:30 at the very latest. This gives us the capacity to run clubs and be able to focus on the wider work of the school after the children have left. In particular, there seems to be an increasing number of children playing on the infant playground after school. This space must be kept free for Funky Monkeys After School Club. If you want to stay on the site for a short time with your child, please do come and use our library facilities.

#### **Staffing:**

You will have seen a few new faces around the school. This term, we have welcomed Mrs. Attwater, Miss Milton, Miss Skelton and Miss Bruce-Johnson to our team. They will be supporting across both Key Stages and are already settled in and making a big difference.

Miss Gardiner will be returning next week following her maternity leave. In typical Miss Gardiner style, she is highly motivated to get back to work and we are really pleased to have her back. She will be working three days a week so that she can be a great mum as well as a great Deputy Principal. In order to ensure the strength of the senior team is not affected by this reduced time, I have also appointed Mrs. O'Grady to the position of Deputy Principal. This means that both Miss Gardiner and Mrs. O'Grady will be Deputy Principals. Miss Gardiner will lead on Inclusion and Wellbeing and Mrs. O'Grady will lead on the Teaching and Learning.

For years 4 through to 6 - Miss Gardiner will be your main point of contact.

For years 1 through to 3 - Mrs. O'Grady will be your main point of contact.

For Nursery and Reception classes - Miss Lawson will be your main point of contact.

Once again, thank you for your continued support and helping us all succeed together.

Trevor North, NPQH

## **CAKE & CRACKER SALE**

**Tuesday 20th March at 3.15pm in the Infant Hall**

**This sale is in aid of Burkina Faso**

**Donations of cakes will be very welcome on the day**



### **Term Dates**

End of Term 4: Tuesday 27th March

Training Days: Wednesday 28th and Thursday 29th March

(the main school is closed for the children but the Nursery is open to the children who attend Nursery on Wednesday and Thursday)

Start of Term 5: Monday 16th April

Bank Holiday: Monday 7th May

End of Term 5: Friday 25th May

Start of Term 6: Monday 4th June

End of Term 6: Tuesday 24th July

### **Herald Cup Football Matches**

On Thursday evening last week, St. Mary's played Castle Hill Primary School at the start of the Herald Cup first round. The game kicked off and St. Mary's began to look dominant. At half time, St. Mary's were 3-0 up. A resolute Castle Hill mounted more attacks on the St. Mary's goal but Theo kept the score sheet clean. Both sides matched each other well but when the final whistle blew, the score was 6-0 to St. Mary's. A great start to the Herald Cup campaign.

On Friday after school, it was a dank and cold night, with rain pouring down. We took the team to the Marsh to play Palmarsh Primary. The game started as it had finished, St. Mary's were dominant in attack with a resolute defence in front of them. St. Mary's finished the first half 4-0 up. There was some tough challenging from Palmarsh, who had many chances. But as the referee blew the whistle at full time, St. Mary's finished the game 7-0 up.

A huge thank you to all the parents, not only for getting your children to the games but for the kind words and support that you give the team and teachers alike. Knowing that we can rely on your support makes our jobs so much more pleasant and really fills us with joy seeing you all on the touchline watching us battle through whatever the weather and other teams throw at us. We hope to see you for many more games this year!

Well done everyone.