



Believe Enjoy Strive Succeed

Principal Comments

Welcome back to a new term and hopefully a bright and sunny one at that! We have a busy term ahead with lots of exciting events for your children which have already started. If you follow our Facebook page you will have seen the many immersive experiences the pupils have engaged in. To name a few, YR have been pirates, Y4 have immersed themselves into the 1940s and Y2 have launched their woodland animal topic – Fantastic Mr Fox. On top of this, our Y5's were developing survival skills in Forest School. They prepared and cooked a stew on our camp fire, learnt how to keep safe and some basic First Aid. You can be sure that if you are ever stuck in the woods with your child, they will have the skills of Bear Grylls to get you back to safety! Again, a huge thanks to Mr. Warner and Mrs. Judd for providing such an enriching and immersive experience.

This term is also the term that the Y6 SAT tests are sat. They are designed to assess the knowledge and understanding of pupils as they transition to secondary school. They are certainly challenging and show us all just how much the standards and expectations have risen. I know the team in Y6 have been doing everything they can to prepare our pupils for these tests. Mr. Wright even gave up his holiday to run a SATs booster group over the half term which is a huge credit to his dedication to the pupils in ensuring their success. Thank you! In addition to these tests, towards the end of this term and the start of Term 6, we will also be asked by the government to assess the pupils in Y1/Y2 with Y2 pupils sitting formal tests in the core subject areas. It is refreshing to hear the government are likely to scrap this testing of young children in the near future. Please speak to your child's class teacher if you would like support in preparing your children for these tests at home.

The Christian ethos of the school permeates in all that we do. To guide us in our decisions and service to the school community we have two parables; The Good Samaritan and The Two Sons. From this and the wider aspect of the school, we have four main Christian values which we believe in to help us strive and to succeed in delivering the best education available. These are Friendship, Forgiveness, Compassion and Service. Our assembly themes focus on these, as well as our school values of Believe, Enjoy, Strive and Succeed.

Friendship: Trust, feeling comfortable in each other's company, being able to share joys and sorrows are all features of friendship and we know that friendship is a high priority for our children. During term time, the children will actually spend more time with their friends than their families! We encourage healthy friendship where people can grow, have faith and confidence that they can be themselves without judgement.

Forgiveness: In school with so many pupils interacting on a daily basis, there will be times when pupils have altercations and fall out. Sorry can be said very easily, so we encourage our community to really think about the impact of their actions on others and seek to restore the peace, finding true forgiveness with a conscious effort to not repeat the action. Of course this can take time and with a team effort from home and school, we are certain we can achieve this.

Compassion: The father in the parable of The Prodigal Son is not just forgiving. He is described as being filled with compassion, but while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him. (Luke 15:20) The father seems to understand everything that his son is feeling and responds by giving him everything he needs: a whole-hearted welcome, acceptance and love. Understanding that others need more to achieve their potential is also valuable learning from this parable.

Service: The parable of The Good Samaritan shows we should serve those in need whoever they are. Such service is not offered to gain some advantage for ourselves. 'Going the extra mile' involves sacrifice, putting ourselves out for someone else's benefit. This is modelled in all that we do here at St. Mary's—our staff in the work with our pupils and you as a wider community in the work we do for our charities; particularly Burkina Faso.

Facebook: Our Facebook page is becoming very popular and we get such positive feedback from this. It really encourages our staff to go even further in providing rich and meaningful experiences for your children. Just take a look at the wonderful things that happen here on a daily basis. It really is inspiring. Social media is an excellent tool for communication and enables us to reach a wider audience of very busy parents. By picking up your phone or tablet you can get quick updates on what has happened in school and join us in our celebrations. We hope that with continued safe use of this by our stakeholders we can continue. It is really sad to hear that some other schools have had to stop using it due to misuse by their wider school community. Using derogatory or defamatory comments about staff or the school in the public domain is actually a criminal offence and will be addressed accordingly. As a school community, we have a legal and moral obligation to teach our children how to use social media in a safe manner. This is most successful when modelled by the people the children care about the most; thank you for your support in this. Should you have any concerns over the use of social media, please bring them to my attention in confidence.

Finally, this year we are celebrating a huge success in that we are officially a Good school in the eyes of Ofsted, a Good school in the eyes of SIAMS (the Diocese inspection) and we are now officially an oversubscribed school with nearly 100 first choice applications for September. This is more than there has ever been! Thank you again for your continued support, the staff here really appreciate it.

Term Dates

Bank Holiday: Monday 1st May

End of Term 5: Friday 26th May

Start of Term 6: Monday 5th June

Training Day: Friday 14th July

End of Term 6: Friday 21st July

THANK YOU!!

We would like to give a big thank you to Liv Pennington for her generous donation of books that she recently donated to the academy.

Message from Mr. Bird

Following Mr. Bird's retirement last term, he has asked that we pass on his deepest thanks to all parents, past and present, for the numerous and overwhelming kind messages he received, he is sincerely very grateful.

Sainsburys Vouchers

If you receive any Sainsburys vouchers when shopping, please could you bring them into school. Thank you.

Easter Baskets

The winners of last term's Easter Baskets were as follows:-

Religious 1st—Reuben Haines, 2nd—Lucas Gilchrist, 3rd—Lorelai Stanton

Nursery—1st—Joseph Hampson, 2nd—Violet Wilkinson, 3rd—Miley-Jade Thompson

Year R—1st Ellie Murphy, 2nd—Ben Ashdown, 3rd—Poppy Pickford

Year 1—1st Mia Grzesko, 2nd—Rianna Spencer, 3rd—Lola Ellis

Year 2—1st—Jaydon Harris, 2nd—Ava Moore, 3rd—Albert Senton

KS2—Antonia Grzesko

A selection of Easter Craft Activity Photographs

