



Believe Enjoy Strive Succeed



Principal Comments

Just shy of six glorious weeks of rest and recuperation for our staff and pupils is a long time away from the school. As a parent myself, I felt the anxious build-up of school for my children as the holidays drew to a close and the unknown year ahead awaits us. However, being back at school brings a buzz and energy that we all secretly missed over the summer break and after the first few days we are all certainly back in to the swing of things. The first few days have gone amazingly well and the children are settled with their new teachers. The transition weeks we arranged at the end of last term have certainly paid off.

May I give a hugely warm welcome to the new parents of our Foundation stage and a massive congratulations to their children. Our new starters have been so brave coming in to school and embracing their new classrooms. There have been only a few tiny tears and these were mostly from the mums and dads as their courageous children strolled casually into school with only a small hint of a wave back.

I hope you have seen the new signs? They have really made an impact for signposting visitors and communicating our school vision. We are committed to ensuring that all of God's children flourish. This means that we will strive to ensure that our children staff and parents of the community flourish here at St. Mary's and that we all model our Christian values of **Compassion, Friendship, Service and Forgiveness.**

Uniform

At the end of last term, we sent a reminder for the uniform expectations and it is good to see that the children have come back to school looking smart and ready. Nearly all of the children are wearing the v-neck jumpers that they are expected to and the v neck cardigans too. I have asked the class teachers to speak with parents who still need to ensure this is adhered to. This will also be the case for the appropriate shoes as well. Trainers are not permitted.

Safety

With scooters and bikes being a popular mode of travel, it is important that all pupils stick to the safety request to wear a helmet. Pupils will not be permitted to ride their bikes to school unless they are wearing a helmet as it is a safeguarding issue. Our own School Council has raised this as a concern themselves and are blown away by the number of children they see riding on the road and without a helmet. It only takes a small accident, lapse in attention or a driver not paying attention and the damage could be permanent. A helmet can prevent a death or long term and substantial injury - ***is it really worth ignoring these risks?***

Worship

Our weekly worship this term has focused on trust and leaving the past behind. We are blessed to have Sarah's support again ([Harbour Church](#)) this year and we will also be joined by Kate McNeice (St. George's Church). Both are church leads and bring a lively and fun experience with them. We have thought about what we want to build on through this academic year and are all trying to forgive the wrongs that people may have shown us in the past. We have thought about God's promise to lead us to hope and success and his plan for us all to succeed. Our Worship Committee (children) have also been planning the Thursday class Worship. This year, we will be inviting parents in to join us for class worship. This term it will be Year 1.

Attendance

Our attendance has improved over the last few years and we will continue to ensure this remains so. As such there will be no holidays authorised during term time. We will of course listen compassionately to reasons for term time holidays but weddings, errors in bookings, birthdays etc. will not be seen as exceptional circumstances. The governors have altered the term dates and those were communicated last year. This ensures there is time in the school year to have a holiday at a cheaper rate and avoid having to do this. I urge you to take advantage of this. Your child needs your support to ensure they make the most of the education they are given. This is why it is a legal requirement to send your child to school every day and failure to do so is considered a neglect of their education.

Play Park

After school, we see many of our pupils and pupils from other local schools in the Southern Way park. Most of these children play well and safely and make good use of this space. Sadly, I have had some concerns raised from residents near the park about the conduct from some children who appear to be abusing the trust their parents have given them. The local residents have suggested that they are from Years 5 and 6 (as the residents have said that they do not have their parents with them). If you are aware of who these children are, then please inform the school via email so that they can be supported and the park can be a safe place for everyone to play in. We will deal with misconduct of this nature very robustly. There have been reports of damage to trees, abusive language and aggression to each other.

These pupils are representing families and the school they attend and it is a shame that they are presenting in this negative way. We would urge you to talk to your child about safe conduct in the park, particularly if they are being trusted to walk home on their own.

Mr. T.M. North, NPQH

Health Care Forms

Instead of sending home blank Health Care forms for every child, we will be using the Sims parent app to collect any new information that the Academy needs to know about your children. To do this, you will need to log into the app, click on your child's name and then on Data Collection. Have a look through this section and update any health or allergy details as necessary. We will then be alerted of any changes you make and may then ask for further details if needed, so we know how to best look after your child in school. If there are no changes, we will use the details we have on record from last year. If you require a new link to activate the app, please email office@st-marys-folkestone.kent.sch.uk. Parents of new Reception children will receive their activation link.

TERM DATES FOR 2019/2020

TERM 1

Monday 2 nd September 2019	Staff Training Day
Tuesday 3 rd September	Start of Term 1
Friday 18 th October	End of Term 1

TERM 2

Monday 28 th October	Start of Term 2
Thursday 19 th December	End of Term 2

TERM 3

Monday 6 th January 2020	Start of Term 3
Thursday 13 th February	End of Term 3
Friday 14 th February	Staff Training Day

TERM 4

Monday 24 th February	Start of Term 4
Friday 3 rd April	End of Term 4

TERM 5

Tuesday 14 th April	Start of Term 5
Friday 8 th May	Bank Holiday
Friday 22 nd May	End of Term 5

TERM 6

Monday 8 th June	Start of Term 6
Friday 17 th July	End of Term 6
Monday 20 th , Tuesday 21 st & Wednesday 22 nd July	Staff Training Days

School Meals

From September, the cost of school meals rose to £2.05 per day to £2.20 per day (£11.00 per five day week). Cheques should be made payable to Caterlink. All payments should be made on the Monday of each week for the week ahead. If payment is not received, Caterlink will chase this payment and it may well be that they will stop any further meals for your child until the outstanding amount is received. Caterlink money envelopes are available from the school office.

Year 6 Swattenden Trip 2019

May I remind you that a payment of £40.00 for the Year 6 Swattenden Trip was due on Friday 13th September, with the final instalment of £35.00 due on 11th October via Parent Pay. The trip will take place in the week commencing Monday 11th November 2019. Thank you.

Governor Election

We currently have a vacancy for a parent governor. Within the next few days, letters and forms will be sent out to parents to invite them to stand or nominate another parent to be a governor. Than you.

Key Dates

Thursday 26th September—Kittles Photographic Company will be in taking individual and group photographs (letter to follow)

Thursday 3rd October—SEN Parent Coffee Morning to take place in the FLO/CLO Mobile from 8.30 to 10.00 am, feel free to pop in and chat with members of staff