



Believe Enjoy Strive Succeed



Principal Comments

This term has started with a cascade of colourful Easter baskets making their way into our school. They were all so thoughtfully made and strongly reflected the Easter story and time well spent with the family. It was lovely to see some coming in from our Y6 pupils too.

Our Worship this term will focus on a wide range of our Christian values such as generosity, service and compassion, while we lead up to the ascension of Jesus on ascension day.

We will be asking pupils to think about how they can be generous, not only with their time but also their friendships. We see a lot of this in our school and are blessed with so many thoughtful and caring staff and children. We are also blessed with so many volunteers who are very generous with their time in helping our school and the pupils within it flourish. A good example of this is our PTA, who have made a huge effort to improve the road safety around our school. I know that the Council are finally starting to take heed and are being challenged to do something to reduce the impact of so many cars around Wear Bay Crescent and the two entrances to our school. We are still challenged by some of our community parking on the yellow zig zag lines, despite several conversations and pleas to park in a safer place away from the school. The Council will be working with us to ensure that those who park on these zig zag lines, despite the clear messages from the school and community, will incur penalty measures to ensure a safer entrance. There are many spaces just 200m away which would give a little exercise and help create a safer school.

Next week, our Y6 pupils will be sitting their final tests in primary education. They have all worked so very hard this year for these and have taken so much pride in their achievements. All of the staff in the year group and across the school have said how diligent they have been. Their work ethic is a credit to them and I am sure they will all flourish in their exams and will apply this ethic of excellence in their secondary schooling. These exams are an opportunity for them to celebrate their knowledge of the core subjects in primary school but these SATs won't test the greater and more important things in life. For example, their service to each other and the younger children in the school and their services to the wider school community and their work with the elderly, their wonderful and at times inspiring artwork, including some of the best World War 2 projects I have seen, their amazing level of sporting achievements, both in school and out and their ability to solve conflict and hold a strong argument to express their opinions in an appropriate way. The strongest success for us here is their team work, friendship and their resilience which has shone through the most this year. I know that they will be a little cautious for next week but they are so well prepared and ready, I know that they will all shine. Please send them all your best wishes.

Finally, we have received several complaints regarding the football which is being played on the KS1 playground in the morning and the afternoon after school. It is great to see the children playing and having fun in school and equally nice to see the community having an opportunity to get together for a short time. However, these children must also be supervised by their parents so that the play is safe and under control. In the morning, there should be no children playing on the playground after 8.35 am, as the classrooms are open and all children must be in class by 8.45 am, which is when lessons commence.

After school, all children should have left the school site by 3.25 pm, which is when the site manager will be locking the school gates. We ask you all kindly to help us with this by ensuring your children are playing safely on the playground and are supervised and leaving the site promptly once you have your children.

Mr. T. North, NPQH

School Council Report

At School Council, we have been helping to make things at our school even better. We wanted to improve wet play times, so we asked for games for each class! Luckily, they have not been used very much.

We made a successful bid to Kent Fire and Rescue Service to have a defibrillator installed in our school. This is now in the reception area for anyone who needs it.

We had a visitor from the school dinner service, who asked us about our school dinners. We have been set the task of monitoring the new menu and we will report back to them on the 15th May.

Following our survey on walking to school, we have been trying different ways to get more children walking to school. Shoesday was very successful due to the amount of children that walked. 90% compared to our other survey in term 3, when only 32% walked. Watch out for our walk to school week at the end of term 5!

Worship Council

At St. Mary's, we think it is great to have a Worship Council because Worship and Christian values are important to us. Our Worship Council is made up of children from Year 1 through to Year 6.

We all have different ideas to share in our meetings. We meet every week to plan the class worship for Thursday, to write prayers and to think about how to make our assemblies even better. Sometimes, we also help to lead the Worship in our classes.

We try our best to be role models of our Christian Values wherever we go, in and out of school.



Caterlink School Meals

On behalf of Caterlink, the outside provider of the children's school meals, I write to request that all school dinner money is sent into school on a Monday morning, in a named envelope. Thank you.

International Work - Visit to Malaysia

In April, our school bear Smarty was working with Mrs. Cotton in the Sabah region of Malaysia, visiting 7 schools, where some of the teachers who joined us at St. Mary's last year teach. They were training the teachers in further Global projects and also delivered the beautiful Easter cards that Y6, Y1 and our Global Councillors had made.

They saw displays of the E-Safety, Christmas Card, Weather Watch, Zero Waste and Life as a Muslim today projects, as well as some exciting Science and Maths lessons. They decided that they wouldn't use the rope bridge across the river that many of the children use to get to school but did join in the traditional dancing, planted a Rambutan tree and tried some very different types of healthy food. We will continue to work closely with these schools that made us so welcome and who gave St. Mary's so many gifts for Smarty to bring back.

At the moment, we have two German final year students working at St. Mary's. This is the fourth year we have welcomed students from Hüberts'sche Schule in Hopsten and they have been very impressed with what they have seen so far in our school.

Our Year 5 children will be joining six other schools from our FESI group for a Cultural Day on 21st May at The Grand Hotel where they will be playing their ukuleles, singing and sharing our work on Zero Waste. All the schools are making a padlock and key as part of the National 'Send My Friend to School' campaign, which is looking at Sustainable Goal 4 'Quality Education for all Children', which is what our students here at St. Mary's certainly have.

We have heard from Seethadevi, our partner school in Kandy, Sri Lanka that fortunately they are all safe after the tragic events in their country on Easter Day. We send them our best wishes for Peace.

Herald Cup Report

On a warm Wednesday evening at the Three Hills Sports Complex, St. Mary's saw their three year unbeaten run in the Herald Cup come to an end. For the hosts Stella Maris, the opening ten minutes was a tight affair, with few chances coming at either end. However, the deadlock was soon broken by Stella Maris, who took advantage of some indecisive defending to open the scoring. St. Mary's tried to hit back in response, with Cody trying his best to wriggle through to create an opening. However, he found it hard to break through what often proved to be several Stella Maris defenders. Our best chance of the first half came when some good work from the right from Dan and Kobe led to the ball breaking to Cody, who drilled a powerful strike from range, which was tipped onto the bar with an excellent save from the Stella Maris keeper. More frustration came shortly after when Stella Maris doubled their lead. Again, St. Mary's struggled to clear the danger and the Stella Maris striker tucked the ball into the corner to make it 2-0 to Stella Maris at half-time.

Some strong words of encouragement came from Mr. O'Brien and Mr. Cobb at half-time and St. Mary's returned to the field looking a different side at the start of the second half. However, disaster struck five minutes into the half when Stella Maris made it 3-0 on the break after St. Mary's had been applying some pressure. At this point, it would have been easy for the team to put their heads down and accept defeat. To the contrary, this spurred the team to find the sort of form that had led to their long-standing unbeaten record. Tackles were being won in defence, with Fin, George, Louie and Jai getting the better of the Stella Maris attackers. This was mirrored in midfield, where Dan and Cody were beginning to get the ball to our wingers, where David, Tom and Charlie were starting to get some crosses into the box for our strikers.

With St. Mary's piling on the pressure, it was a case of whether we could score before too much time ran out. The answer soon came and as the ball broke to Kobe in the box, he marked his debut with a goal by firing into the corner to make it 3-1. With just over ten minutes left, it was now very much game on. St. Mary's continued to apply pressure on the Stella Maris goal and Cody was left frustrated again as a powerful strike smashed against the crossbar. Time ebbed away and Harry was called into action at the other end, clinging onto a couple of shots from Stella Maris. Right at the end, St. Mary's survived a penalty appeal, which signalled the final whistle and the end of their run in this year's competition. Good luck to Stella Maris in the semi-final against Sandgate, who were worthy winners on the night. Credit must go to the team for their performance in the second half and their battling qualities after being 3-0 down.

Thanks also to the parents who have provided transport and given their support.

Easter Parade and Easter Gardens

