St Mary's CE Primary School

'Trust in the Lord and Flourish' (Proverbs 11:28)

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Wednesday 17th July 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

It is hard to believe the end of the school year is already upon us. I hope like me, you feel it has been a positive school year. I want to say a huge thank you for making me feel so welcome in my first year as Headteacher of St Mary's. I feel very privileged to be Headteacher of such a great school with lovely pupils and such a supportive school community of friends and families around us. Prior to the end of term, I wanted to take this opportunity to inform you of some of the important things myself and the Senior Leadership team, together with our staff and Governors, have been working on.

Whole School Behaviour Policy

As a whole school, we have taken the decision to rewrite our behaviour policy and we have already made some changes that your children may have been talking about at home. The new policy has been approved by governors and will be launched fully in September. Mr Holmes led whole school training on our new behaviour policy, for all staff, during our last PD day.

Our approach is largely based on restorative practice and the work of Paul Dix's book, '*When The Adults Change, Everything Changes*'. To ensure there are clear and consistent steps for children to follow, we have selected three behaviour expectations: **Ready, Respectful and Responsible**. Both children and staff have been working hard to begin to implement these around school.

We will continue to reward children with house points and star of the week certificates. However, we feel that we would like to reward children more, with extra certificates being given during celebration worship for reading, writing, maths and for following our school values. We will also be writing positive notes home and making positive phone calls to parents.

Conversely, where pupils do not follow these expectations, there is a system of consequence. Staff will follow the **Behaviour Blueprint**, a series of steps that will encourage behaviour to be managed in a positive way. At a more serious level, consequences may include removal from lessons to work in another classroom or with a member of the Senior Leadership Team – a full consequence ladder is listed in the behaviour policy below the blueprint.

It is important that all members of the school community - children, staff, parents and carers – support and follow these expectations and systems so that the school community operates effectively and for everyone's benefit. A copy of our behaviour policy is available on our website: https://www.stmarysalbrighton.org.uk/Behaviour/.

Thank you in advance for your support to ensure the highest standards of behaviour are maintained at St Mary's CE Primary School.

Vision and Values

As you will be aware, we sent out a parent questionnaire some time ago relating to the review of our school's Vision and Values. As Governors and Senior Leaders, having a clear vision with supporting values is of the utmost importance and allows us to provide the strategic leadership that forms part of our job role. The vision should be a strong declaration of our purpose, values and future. It will also guide our strategic decisions around curriculum, priorities, resource allocation, and progress monitoring. Most importantly, an effective vision will rally and motivate our staff, children, parents and the wider community around a shared goal.

We had 47 responses to the survey and are extremely grateful to those parents who responded. We found this feedback constructive in further developing and refining the draft vision we had originally proposed. 91% of respondents agreed that as a school, it is important for us to challenge our children to stretch their limits, even if that means facing occasional setbacks. 85% of respondents agreed with our draft vision statement, with nobody disagreeing. Some parents were reluctant to use the language 'reach beyond their grasp' as they felt it referred to something that may be forever unachievable for our children. We have therefore re-worded the Vision, taking into consideration parental feedback and ensuring it is relevant to every one of our children from their varying starting points. As a Church of England school, it is extremely important for our vision to be theologically rooted and hence we have chosen a bible verse that we feel aligns and underpins the vision. We have also reviewed our school values. Currently, we have 8 school values and we were keen to slim this down to 3 values that children would know really well and be able to speak confidently about. Therefore, we asked children and their class teachers to work together to vote for their top 3 values and these have been selected as our core values.

The process for reviewing and rewriting our school Vision and Values has been extensive and taken into account the views of all stakeholders including parents, children, governors, staff and the Lichfield Diocese and it has now been formally approved by Governors, ready to launch in September. We feel sure that this vision is right for our school community and will allow us to ensure every child achieves their full potential and is self-motivated and supported to 'Strive for excellence' in all that they do. Alongside, the launch of our new Vision and Values we will be launching a newly created school website. We will provide you with further updates regarding exact timings for this at the start of the Autumn term. I therefore have pleasure in attaching our St Mary's Vision and Values document which will be launched in September.

Staffing

We are extremely sad to say goodbye to Mrs Keise after many years of hard work and commitment to our school community. We wish her every success in the next stage of her journey, pursuing academic studies in Psychology and Counselling.

Mrs Tomkins, who has been working in the role of Teaching Assistant, providing support to some of our youngest pupils, will also be leaving us on Thursday. We wish Mrs Tomkins every success for the future and thank her for all her work for our school, particularly most recently when she has provided considerable support to our new arrival pupils who came to us with very little or no English.

I am pleased to inform you that Governors have appointed Mrs N Callicott to the role of class-based Teaching Assistant from September. We have also recruited two further new members of staff who will be providing support for some of our pupils with Special Educational Needs. Mrs Stewart and Miss Saul will take up their positions in September. For your information, Teaching Assistants will be supporting the following year groups.

Reception	Ms J Conner
Year 1	Mrs N Callicott
Year 2	Mrs K Ellis
Year 3	Mrs S Stewart Miss L Osborne
Year 4	Miss L Osborne Mrs E Griffiths
Year 5	Mrs S Spickernell
Year 6	Mrs E Griffiths

Year 6 Leavers'

Finally, we wish our Year 6 pupils leaving us every happiness and success as they start at secondary school. At their leavers' service tomorrow we will give thanks for the time they have spent with us at St Mary's as well as asking for God's blessing as they move forward on the next part of their journey. They have been a class full of personality and most recently we have loved seeing them showcase their talents through their performance of 'Shrek the Musical'. They should also be congratulated on their excellent SATs results; we are very proud of the fantastic progress they have made.

We wish you all a great summer break and will look forward to welcoming back all our children on **Tuesday 3rd September 2024**. Please be reminded of the slight change to our school day.

Morning gate opens - 8.40am
Morning gate closes - 8.50am
Afternoon school ends - 3.20pm

With kindest regards,

Nathalie Milhavy-Jones

Mrs N Milhavy-Jones

(Headteacher)